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KINDERGARTEN SYLLABI SAMPLE

KINDERGARTEN—Karen Gregg and Sue Lewellen

The classroom environment in kindergarten is intended to establish learning that helps students progress from more physical, body-centered ways of learning, to more conceptual, symbolic ways. As children engage actively with the environment and make sense of their experience, they grow and learn. Time is built into the schedule for play as it is an important aspect of learning that helps children in their understanding of complex ideas, flexibility in thinking and shifting of viewpoints. As the curriculum unfolds, it is common for children to bring questions and contributions to the class that the teacher recognizes are important. An individual student, a small group, or the whole class may lead the experience in a new direction. In this way, accumulated knowledge from the past and present is constantly being examined and reconstructed with fresh ideas and inquiries in collaboration among the teacher, parents, and students.

We are a community of learners. In our classroom we work both independently and cooperatively in pairs or groups. We recognize that each of us has different strengths and weaknesses, but we are all doing our best to learn and care for ourselves and each other.

LANGUAGE ARTS – Karen Gregg

Language arts is integrated into each area of the curriculum, which includes oral language, as well as reading and writing. The children are surrounded by print and quality literature that will excite them and enhance their desire to learn. They will participate in activities that will help with story prediction, sequencing, and comprehension. Several forms of literature will be used throughout each day such as big books, poems, chants, finger plays, and language charts. The children will act out familiar stories, make their own books to share with the class, and begin journal writing using invented spelling and illustrations. Letter recognition, sounds, and formation will be taught through games and constant exposure.

Circle time each morning is a time where we gather as a class to sing songs, go over the schedule for the day, investigate the surprise box, share exciting news and participate in a short greeting activity. It is a chance for the class to gather as a group and build a group identity.

Programs:

Handwriting: The *Handwriting Without Tears* program will be used to help the children form letters correctly making their writing more proficient in the future.

Reading: The *Guided Reading* program is used and the teaching resource from that program, called *Phonics*, is used to introduce beginning reading and writing skills. The individual needs of each child will be taken into consideration, as many activities are open-ended for each ability level.

MATH – Karen Gregg

Kindergarten uses the *Investigations in Number, Data and Space* math program developed by TERC of Cambridge MA. This highly respected program takes a hands-on approach that encourages exploration, questioning and sharing. The children are frequently asked to share their thinking and strategies. Students participate in classroom routines such as *The Counting Jar* and *Question of the Day* and use materials like snap cubes, pattern blocks, geoblocks, tiles and counters to help them in their problem solving. Through playing a variety of math games, both at school and at home, students apply and strengthen many of the concepts introduced during the math class. Some of the topics we will study are: patterns,

shapes and geometry, counting and comparing, measuring, data collection, sorting and classifying, number sense, beginning addition and subtraction. Whenever possible, we introduce children's literature that helps to highlight the math topic.

SCIENCE – Sue Lewellen and Todd Schongalla

The children will be encouraged to explore and discover the world around them. They will be taught to question, hypothesize, and research many different areas of interest. We will spend a great deal of time outside collecting samples and taking a closer look at what is outside our door. Some of the areas that will be explored will include insects and spiders, seasonal changes, birds, mammals, fish, reptiles and amphibians, and plants. The children will learn to use many scientific materials including magnifying glasses and microscopes, learn the process of data collection, and tour the High School science lab.

SOCIAL STUDIES – Karen Gregg

Many discussions will revolve around the children and their communities. We will spend time learning about each other and our families and talking about differences and similarities. The children will be encouraged to share special family traditions and holidays. The class will develop their own set of rules to make sure the environment is a place where they can take risks and feel safe. We will spend time working on conflict resolution strategies, problem solving, developing social skills, and a sense of community. Beginning map skills will be introduced as children create their own maps of the classroom and school.

KINDERGARTEN, FIRST, AND SECOND GRADE WORKTIME – Tina Busch, Carol Dulac, Hillary Martin, and Sue Lewellen

Worktime is a period of time allotted during the day for the children to make their own academic choices in a variety of areas throughout the kindergarten, first and second grade classrooms. Art, science, computers, books, math challenge, writing, painting, blocks, drama, and cooking are many of the subjects available for the children. Along with these areas, children will also be developing their social skills and problem solving techniques. Each area will have activities that will encourage children to explore their natural environment in a meaningful, hands-on atmosphere. The students will be asked to plan ahead for their worktime period and reflect on the work they have done through journal writing and art.

CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS – Karen Gregg and Sue Lewellen

The children will be strongly encouraged to express their creativity not only through art, but also through stories, movement, dramatic play, songs, and ideas. New and alternative ways of doing activities will be shared with the group to demonstrate that there is more than one way of completing a task. Activities will be open-ended to encourage imagination. The children will be exposed to different art mediums and be able to experiment with a variety of materials. The process the children use to complete their work and the experience gained will always be more important than the final product.

MULTICULTURAL ARTS - Dana Mark

Drawing

Young children spontaneously draw, sing, build, and dramatize long before learning to read and write. Some leading educators now assert that the arts, in addition to being more truly basic than we thought, actually support and enliven the child's academic development throughout the grades in many essential ways. Therefore, the following describes not only what we cover this year but also some of the reasons why.

We explore the principles of color, design, and composition via the rainbow. Imagination and observation are focused through color, rather than line. At early stages the children dive fully into each color--radiant yellow, majestic crimson, flaming scarlet, and serene blue of distant skies--exploring the dynamic mingling of the primary hues from which all other colors arise, and discovering their own natural sense of beauty and harmony.

Modeling

During the year we sculpt stories from colored beeswax, enhancing fine motor skills and allowing the children to express artistic principles in three dimensions. The stories themselves, drawn from cultures from around the world, give verbal expression to pictorial consciousness: the language of imagination, which children understand so well.

Music

Our focus is beautiful children's songs from around the world that celebrate the seasons and festivals. French songs are also part of our repertoire. Listening exercises form a small but essential part of each class. This potent activity

helps increase attention span, as well as nurture the quiet, open space within a child's being. Musical games in French and English are always favorites with the children; they encourage healthy social development, as well as open new cultural vistas.

We create simple plays from fairy tales and folk songs, often accompanied by musical instruments such as chimes, cantela, and the recorder.

HEALTH EDUCATION - Deb Stanton

The goals of the Health Education program are twofold: to encourage students to make choices that promote physical wellness, personal safety and positive self-esteem and to foster the development of a caring community.

Cooperative games, class challenges, classroom activities and literature will be used to emphasize common courtesies that promote a caring environment. We will pay particular attention to fostering an awareness of physical safety during both class activities and recess. Throughout the year, the children will have opportunities to discuss and practice basic social skills and communication skills that contribute overall to both a caring community and cooperative classroom. In addition, units on "fighting germs"; nutrition; seasonal safety strategies; bus safety and child abuse prevention will be presented.

Resources will include: *Creative Conflict Resolution: more than 200 activities for keeping peace in the classroom* by Bill Kriedler; *Starting Small- Teaching Tolerance In The Early Grades* by the Teaching Tolerance Project; *Make Someone Smile* by Judy Lalli; *The Learning To Get Along Series* by Cheri Meiners; *Kids & Co.: Together For Safety* a child abuse prevention program.