

into the earth, while the end with the bud and leaves turns up to find the light from the sun.

Many years will pass before the tree will be very big. The sun will warm it and the rain and snow will water it. The wind will blow against it and make it strong. Someday it will be big enough to have seeds of its own. They may be apples, acorns or nuts, but they, too, will leave the parent tree to find a spot to open and grow.

- Have your child draw a picture of a plant with roots, stem, leaves, and seeds. Explain that the plant needs food, water, air, sunlight, and a place to live.
- Now you are ready to begin your collection of the various seeds available in your area (acorns, pinecones, holly and juniper berries). The evergreen cones are hard, in order to protect the seeds growing inside. Three kinds of evergreens that have cones are the fir, the pine and the spruce. However, some evergreens do not have cones, and instead, seeds grow inside berries, such as with the holly and juniper berries. When you have collected some cones and berries, you may have your child draw pictures of the cones in his book, or glue individual seeds onto the page, with labels of tree names.
- Seed saving: We have discovered that everything a plant needs to start new life is contained in each seed. This activity will allow you to follow the process of growth from its inception. To begin, watch the plants in your area closely as the blooms turn to seedpods. Wait until they are dry and crisp, then pick a pod and open it gently. If the seeds are green and soft, wait until they are brown and dry. Spread the contents of the seed pod on a piece of paper and separate the seeds. Put the seeds into an envelope and write the kind of seed on it. Draw a picture of the plant from whence it came. Save until it is planting time in your area. Then, plant the seeds, water and watch what happens!



FURTHER STUDY:

This is a perfect opportunity to visit a working orchard, if possible, in your area. Often, they will give tours and discuss the development of a garden. If you choose to follow this activity, make sure that it is as experiential as possible. Children at this age do not follow didactic learning exercises for long!

MUSIC

Continue with recorder playing and singing. Progress through the *Beginning Recorder* book following the instructions.

CRAFTS

Continue knitting.

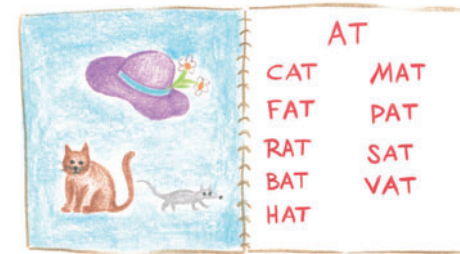
INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND QUARTER

LANGUAGE ARTS

Word Families

In the Second Quarter, we try to develop the ability to recognize patterns of similar sounds in groupings of letters. These groupings are often called “word families.” We have included the Oak Meadow *Word Family Reader* with this curriculum. This is for your use as your child is learning the basics of reading.

Read a word family story to your child. Then have your child list the words from the particular word family in their Main Lesson Book. Encourage them to draw a picture as well. After the story has been told, the drawing finished, and the words in the family listed, the book might look something like this:



There are 38 word families to be covered in the next twelve weeks. You should introduce three word families a week for ten weeks, then four word families for two weeks.

MATHEMATICS

Written Format

In the second quarter, we will introduce the written format for problems. To do this, we must present the equals sign, which can best be accomplished by means of a story as follows:

The four gnomes, Plus, Minus, Times, and Divide, loved their King dearly, as you know. Now we have never mentioned this before, but the King's name is King Equal. He is well known for the deep love he has for all the gnomes and also for his great strength. But the quality for which he is most respected is his wisdom. He always seems to

know just the right thing to do about anything, particularly when any arguments come up about the jewels and who should have what. King Equal always sees that everyone has an equal share. That is why he's called King Equal. One day the King noticed that the gnomes were meeting together in small groups and whispering to each other. That was very unusual because they usually were singing aloud happily or else arguing and fighting. He knew there must be some big secret that the gnomes were trying to keep. The next day the four gnomes came to see the King.

"We have something special for you," said Times. "Yes, our friends, the dwarves, helped us make it," said Plus. "Now you must close your eyes," said Minus.

The King put both hands over his eyes. "And promise not to peek!" said Divide. "Oh, I promise!" said King Equal. Then Divide, who had been holding the surprise behind his back all the time, stood on tiptoe and put the surprise on the King's head. "Is it what it feels like it is?" asked the King. "What does it feel like?" they asked. "A crown!" exclaimed the King. "It is!" yelled Times, who was so excited he couldn't stand still.

"May I look now?" the King asked.

"Oh yes, yes!" said Plus who was jumping up and down. The King reached up slowly and took the crown off of his head. It was a beautiful golden crown, set with many precious and beautiful jewels. "This is the most wonderful crown I have ever seen!" he said. "What have I ever done to deserve such a beautiful gift?"

"You have been a strong, wise and loving King," said Divide. "We just wanted to show you how much love we have for you."

"There are so many lovely jewels in the crown," said the King. "You must have worked very hard to find such beautiful jewels. But please tell me one thing: What is this strange shape which is on the front of the crown?" He pointed to two rows of jewels which were set very carefully in a certain pattern. The pattern looked like this:



"That is the best part of the surprise!" squealed Plus. "Do you remember when we were fighting over our hats and you gave us each a special sign to wear on our hats?"

"Yes, of course," said the King. "Do you mean that this is my special sign?"

"Yes, your own special sign!" they all exclaimed.

"What does it mean?" asked the King.

Times stepped forward, "Your Majesty, the gnomes all know what a wonderful King you are: strong, loving, and very wise. But the one thing that we all agreed made you so special was that you always treat everyone fairly and make certain that everyone receives an equal share. So the sign that you have on your crown reminds us all to treat each other as equals, because the two rows of jewels are equal in length and the lines that they make are straight and true."

"Just like you!" chimed in Plus. The King laughed gently.

"Although you may feel that I am a wonderful King, I can only feel that I am very blessed to have such wonderful gnomes to help me in my work. Thank you for the crown. I will wear it always to remind me of how kind and thoughtful you all are, and also how very wise you are all becoming. Soon you will all be wise enough to rule yourselves, and you won't need a King to help you anymore."

"You won't leave us, will you?" said Minus sadly.

"No, dear Minus, I won't leave you for a long, long time; there is still much to do. But someday my King will call me on to other work, and I must go when I am called."

"Your King?" said Divide. "I didn't know you had a King, too."

"Oh, yes," said King Equal softly. "He is a grand and glorious King, much more wonderful than I can ever hope to be. I serve him joyfully, just as you serve me." King Equal paused thoughtfully for a moment. "But you will learn more about that later. For now, there's work to be done. Many jewels have to be sorted and counted, so we can divide them equally. For the wonderful gift you have given me, you shall all receive an extra share of the jewels today."

"Thank you!" they all cried at once. With laughter and singing, they returned to their work.

After you have told a story such as this, you can then explain to your child how to use the equals sign. Tell a story-problem as you did in the past, using the solid objects to count with. Then transfer the

problem and answer to paper in this form:

$$3 \text{ nuts plus } 2 \text{ nuts equals } 5 \text{ nuts } (3 + 2 = 5).$$

Work through several addition problems in this manner, and then do the same with subtraction problems, using the form $4 - 1 = 3$.

Then follow with multiplication ($3 \times 2 = 6$). Then division ($6 \div 2 = 3$).

Be sure that your child understands the concept that an equals sign separates two things that are equal in value; that the group of numbers on the left is equal in value to the numbers on the right. You can use the image of a balance scale or a seesaw to help convey the idea, and perhaps even make a balance of your own to demonstrate and experiment with.



Use as many pages of the Main Lesson Book as you need to illustrate and write such story problems. A common approach is to illustrate the story on one page and write the problem in the above form on the opposite page. In some cases, the illustration and the form can be combined on the same page, or you may want to have several pages with only written problems and no illustrations. However you choose to approach this section of your child's mathematics notebook, help them to do it carefully and colorfully, making it an enjoyable learning experience. Use crayons and feel free to decorate the borders of the pages. Drawing little pictures here and there may also add to the enjoyment of the subject.

Horizontal Format

When children first begin to work with numbers on paper, it is convenient to introduce them to the horizontal format ($5 + 3 = 8$) because this allows them to see the relationship which exists between the two sides of an equation, and also gives them practice in the use of the equals sign. However, as they become more familiar with numerical operations on paper, they need to begin working in the vertical format because it is more helpful in working with place values of larger numbers.

Whenever we introduce something which a child will be using regularly for many years, such as the letters of the alphabet, the signs of the four processes, or the vertical format in mathematics, it is very important that we approach that introduction as consciously as possible. Whenever the child uses that element in the future, they experience in a small way what they experienced when it was first introduced.

For example, suppose a child were introduced to the signs of the four processes in a manner such as that of the four gnomes in the First and Second Quarters of this Curriculum. Because of the manner in which they were introduced, each of those signs conveys a certain image. Whenever a child uses the minus sign they remember Minus, the gnome, who was always losing jewels through the holes

in his sack and his pockets. In addition to remembering that a minus sign means losing things, or subtraction, the child also experiences compassion for this sad little gnome. Or, in using the equals sign, they remember that it means two things have the same number value, but they also remember King Equal, who was so loved by all of the gnomes, and they also feel love for this wise old King, and perhaps want to be like him.

Of course, all of this happens in a brief instant; it isn't something that the child dwells upon. At first, they are aware of the connection; later, it becomes unconscious. Nevertheless, the thoughts and feelings which were evoked initially continue to be stimulated each time the symbol is used, and become, however small, a part of the child's being. Thus, by being conscious of the images we create as we introduce these elements, we can plant a seed which will be watered each time the child uses that symbol, and which will bear a measure of fruit in their lives.

For this reason, we should not be too anxious to push a child into abstract problems ("How much is $4+5$?"). There is great benefit in these little imaginative stories which may seem to be superficial contrivances to get to the "important" part of the lesson. However, at this age, the child needs imaginative pictures far more than they need to master all the intellectual facets of mathematics. Math is merely a convenient means we use to create imaginative pictures which affect their feelings about the world and their inner character. The actual mathematical concepts which need to be learned at this age are simple, but basic. Give children depth and imaginative richness at this time and you will be feeding not only the intellect, but also preparing a fertile soil in which a deep moral sensitivity can grow.

For example, a story about a squirrel gathering nuts can be told in such a way that the nuts become a means of expressing his love for the other animals (by sharing or dividing his store with them), or of his compassion for a weak friend (as he gives away some of his nuts — subtraction). In the same spirit he could have such a deep love for Mrs. Squirrel and all their baby squirrels that he gathers many nuts (addition) and stores them in six holes for each member of the family (multiplication). Told in this way, stories become much more than mere contrivances to present mathematical concepts. Instead, they present an attitude toward life. Such attitudes become part of the moral nature of the child and will benefit the lives of every person your child meets throughout life. With these points in mind, we can now approach the introduction of the vertical format in mathematics when we get to the third quarter.

Odd — Even

The next number concepts to learn are those of odd and even. This can be accomplished very easily with much enjoyment. The easiest way to present it is to explain that there are two kinds of numbers; odd and even. You can say that even numbers are numbers that can be divided evenly into two groups (that's why they are called even numbers.) Then give a tangible example that can be seen and touched. Pick an even number between one and ten and have your child count out that number with nuts or stones, or whatever they have been using for counting. Then ask them to divide the items into two equal piles. When they do that, you can explain that they can do it because that was an even number. Try it again with another even number. Then give them an odd number. When they try to divide the nuts into two piles and can't do it, explain that it's because it is an odd number. Try it again with another odd number. After trying a few odd and even numbers in this way, say that there is a secret way to tell if a number is odd or even, and if they learn that secret they can always tell if a number is odd or even no matter how large or small it may be. The secret is this: If the number ends with 1, 3,

5, 7, or 9, it is an odd number. If it ends with anything else (2, 4, 6, 8, or 0) it is an even number. Then show them how it works.

Write a one-digit number on a piece of paper. Ask your child whether it's odd or even. Help them if they need help. Try it again with a two-digit number. Help them again if they need it. Show them that it's the last number that tells you what it is. Try it with a three-digit number. Remind them that it doesn't matter how many numbers are in front, it is the last one that tells you whether it is odd or even. Then try it with four digits, five digits, etc. Keep going until you reach very large numbers. By this time it will have probably turned into a game that they delight in playing; keep making up all kinds of numbers to try to trick them, but they know the secret and win every time. Try numbers like 2,248,641 or 111,111,112 until they know the secret so well that they can't be fooled. Then you can reverse roles and have them try it with you.

In a very short time your child will have learned odd-even numbers and found a fun game in the process. Later, you can enter your new-found secret into their Mathematics book, if you wish. There are many ways to do this, such as writing a page of odd numbers and another page of even numbers:

ODD		EVEN	
1	11 21 31	0	10 20 30
3	13 23 33	2	12 22 32
5	15 25 35	4	14 24 34
7	17 27 37	6	16 26 36
9	19 29 39	8	18 28 38

After you have introduced this concept, come back to it occasionally to reinforce the concept which has been learned. After a few times of this, it will become integrated and you will not need to keep reviewing.

Ordinal Numbers

Another concept to be learned is that of ordinal numbers. In all probability this would be learned through imitation of the speech patterns of adults, but by presenting it we can be sure that the child is aware of it. *Ordinal numbers* is the term given to numbers as they occur in a certain order (first, second, third, fourth, etc.) as opposed to cardinal numbers, which are the “regular” numbers (one, two, three, four, etc.). For children, it is usually better to use the term *place numbers* rather than *ordinal numbers*. Basically, ordinal numbers are formed by adding TH to the end of the cardinal numbers, except for *one, two* and *three*, which change entirely and become *first, second* and *third*.

To present the concept of ordinal numbers, approach it very informally. You may want to tell the story of “The Golden Goose,” from *Grimm’s Fairy Tales*, in which there is a long line of people all stuck together, following a simpleton with a golden goose. When the story is finished, you can put several objects in a line and pretend that each object is a character in the story. Then you can explain

that there is a way of naming things that come in a certain order: number one is called “first,” number two is called “second,” etc. You can mention that we call these place numbers. Your child may already know how to count in this way. If not, they will learn quickly. If they do already know, ask how far they can go, and help fill in the gaps in their knowledge. Later, they could put this experience in their math notebook, perhaps with a drawing of the line of people on one page and the ordinal numbers up to twenty on the opposite page.

Twos, Fives, and Tens

Another skill to be learned is counting by twos, fives, and tens. This is a prelude to the multiplication tables, which we develop more fully in the Second Grade Course. There are many ways to introduce this, and you should consider possibilities of ways that are appropriate to your situation. Usually it helps if the child has an understanding of what is happening before they jump into it. One way to develop this understanding is by counting a large number of objects. The most effective way would be to look for an opportunity when they have lots of things scattered on the floor, such as blocks, cards, marbles or something similar. It is best if the objects are generally of the same size and shape, but it's not necessary. Ask them to count how many there are on the floor, and stop when they get to twenty-four (or twenty, or some other convenient even number that is not too big). This may take a while, depending upon their ability. When they are finished, count the objects to see if they do have the number that you asked for.

Then tell your child that there is another way to count which is very helpful when you are trying to count large numbers of objects, and proceed to count the same objects by twos: 2-4-6-8-10-12-14-16-18-20-22-24. You may do it several times to see if they understand what you are doing; each time you count a number, you should move two objects aside out of the larger group of objects. When you have done it several times, ask them to try it. They may have difficulty at first, and you should help him when he stumbles, but sooner or later he will begin to understand and be able to do it. After several days, when they seem to have a solid grasp of it, you may ask them to put it in their notebook. If so, he can just write out the sequence of counting by twos on one of the pages. Tell them to put a dash or little yellow star between the numbers so that it will look like this: 2-4-6-8-10-12-14-16-18-20-22-24 or 2*4*6*8*10*12*14*16*18*20*22*24* instead of like this: 24681012141618202224.

After they have developed an understanding of what it means to count in multiples by working with twos, you can introduce counting by fives and tens. To do this, you can use somewhat the same approach, only it will require a larger group of objects. For this purpose, you should try to add to the bag of counting objects that they have been using for solving the problems in math thus far. You should add to the contents of the bag until it has one hundred objects in it. Then, sit down at a table, or on the floor, or any place that has a large area, and empty the contents of his counting bag. Demonstrate how to gather the objects together in groups of five, keeping them separate from each other. This is done most easily by seeing a group of three, pulling a group of two in with it, and setting it aside. After setting aside several groups of five, your child will gradually begin to spot patterns of five easily, without having to look for three and two. Make patterns with groups of five and ten items in a variety of ways, to get an idea of the different ways these amounts can look.

As innocent as this may seem, children benefit greatly from such exercises, as they help develop the ability to shift the focus from smaller units to larger patterns, an ability which has far-reaching effects on later learning. When perhaps ten groups of five have been set aside, you can show your child how to count by fives, then continue on with the rest of the pile of objects, counting by fives as you pull a

group of five out from the pile. In this way, your child will soon learn how to spot groups of five easily and count by fives. A similar exercise can be done with ten, making it a grouping of two fives.

When your child has an understanding of what it means to count in this way, you can begin to sing or chant these sequences together at times during the day. Count while clapping, marching, or drumming, and make tunes with a good, strong beat. The rhythm of these sequences can be very compelling, and once shown how to play with them in this way, children enjoy saying them to themselves over and over. In addition to helping them learn to count by twos, fives and tens, such rhythmical repetition has a harmonizing influence which is very beneficial to their balanced growth. We will also begin to explore freehand drawing of basic geometric forms.

SOCIAL STUDIES

This quarter in Social Studies your child will become well acquainted with the development and use of simple maps. We will begin with a study of North, South, East and West. Your child will then draw a map of their room. Each week we will develop your child's map-making skills as they expand their geographical map, moving from their room to their home, to the neighborhood, town, state, country, and finally, the entire world. Your child will complete their study of geography this quarter with a look at how location, climate and physical surroundings affect the way people live.

Children at this age are just beginning their journey into the world outside themselves. They still view the world from an egocentric position. Everything is seen from the perspective of how it affects the child directly. Our geographical study reflects their world view by gently expanding their position on the maps they draw. We intend to gradually increase their understanding of the world as a larger whole in which everything is contained and interconnected. In the final lesson, though we identify the different manner in which people live, we will bring the attention back to your child's specific environment once again.

By introducing Geography and map skills in this way, we hope to reflect for your child the world as simultaneously vast and inclusive. Your child may then begin to experience themselves as part of something grand, perhaps small in the world scheme, while at the very same time existing as a large and vital member in their home. The world family includes us all!

SCIENCE

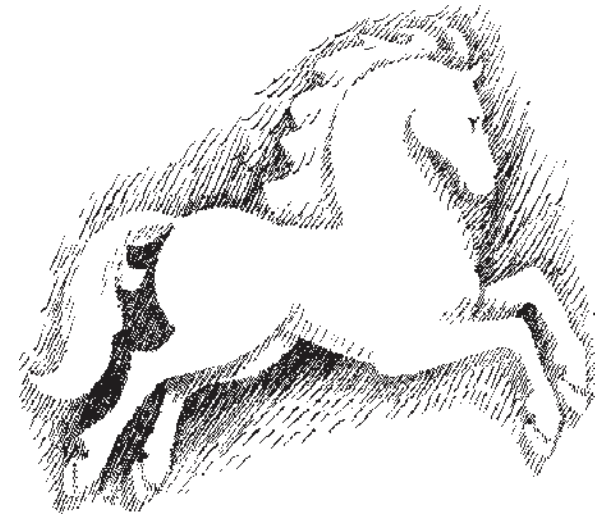
This quarter of First Grade science is designed to be completed during the winter months of December, January, and February.

ART

This quarter your child will use form drawing to decorate the pages of his Main Lesson book. Please refer to the *Home Teacher's Process Manual* for form drawing instructions.

AG

There was an old dog named Mag, who lived with a nag. Mag would wag his tail and wanted the nag to play with his rag. One day Mag got a bag and wanted to play with the nag, but the nag just wanted to play tag.





READING MUSIC: A Brief Introduction

Music Theory is a very involved and exacting study, but for our purpose here, we are going to simplify and present only the basic information you'll need to play the Soprano Recorder.

This introduction to music theory is not intended to be taught to young children. It is simply meant to be an introduction for parents who don't know how to read music, so they can learn how to play the songs included here. Instead of burdening your children with concepts about time signatures, clefs, eighth notes and measures, you will have greater success (and more fun!) by simply learning to play the recorder yourself, then letting your children imitate what you do. Soon they will know how to play many songs completely on their own, with very little effort.

The notes you will learn in the first quarter are: B, A, and G. In the second quarter, you will learn high D and C. The third quarter will consist of learning more songs using all five of these notes. Each note will be introduced by showing the placement of the note on the staff and a drawing of the recorder, with an explanation of the fingering. The holes that are blackened in are the holes to be covered to produce that note. Following this will be a simple exercise to practice the new note, a simple exercise to practice previous notes, then a few simple songs. Have fun with it!