First Grade Touring Guide

This Touring Guide is meant to be read in combination with the other information provided at GreatFirstEight.org.

Great First Eight is a groundbreaking, all-day, open educational resource (OER) curriculum for children from birth to age eight that is strengths-based and research-aligned. It is designed for classrooms with a number of children from historically underrepresented racial and ethnic backgrounds. Great First Eight provides children with the education they need to thrive and create a more just and caring society.

First Grade Touring Guide

MARSAL FAMILY SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Project-Based Units

The Great First Eight First Grade Curriculum provides 165 full days of instruction divided across a launch week and six project-based units.
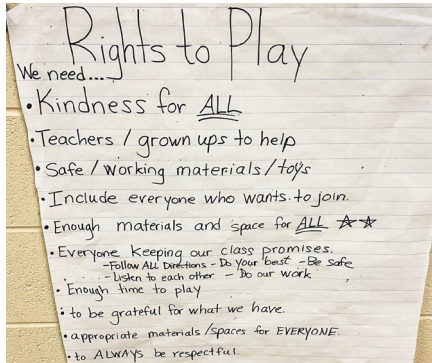
Play for All

Shadow Shows

Sound Stories

Game On

Critical Consumers

Birding Adventures

Project-Based Units: Driving Questions

Play for All (led by social studies)	**How do we create opportunities for play that are inclusive and just for all people in our community?**
Shadow Shows (led by science & engineering)	**How can we use shapes and shadows to entertain and inspire?**
Sound Stories (led by science & engineering)	**How can we help storytellers enhance their stories through sound?**
Game On (led by social studies)	**What can games teach us about life in the past and present?**
Critical Consumers (led by social studies)	**How can people make informed and just decisions as consumers?**
Birding Adventures (led by science & engineering)	**How can we help our community learn about birds and living with birds?**

Project-Based Units: Primary Project Product(s) **with focal writing genre(s) in bold**

Launch Week	• (The first five days of the year are focused solely on launching the year)
Play for All	• "Rights to Play" for the classroom (i.e., a classroom constitution) **(informative/explanatory text)** • Letter to local government officials (or school board) with an accompanying map **(persuasive writing)**
Shadow Shows	• Stories to be performed by children using shadow puppets **(fictional narrative text)** • Shadow puppets designed using children's understandings of light and shadow • The program/playbill for the show **(functional text)** • The performance of the Shadow Shows for families
Sound Stories	• A collection of sound effects to enhance a librarian's read aloud or oral story, with instructions about how to make each sound **(procedural text)**
Game On	• "Did You Know . . ." bookmark on the history of checkers or jump rope **(informative/explanatory text)** • Memory matching game and instructions about how to play the game they made **(procedural text)** • Both products are for a community center or for senior citizens in an assisted living community
Critical Consumers	• An informative graphic about the ways that advertisements can trick consumers **(informative/explanatory text)** • A video for school and community members about why they should make informed decisions when consuming goods and services **(persuasive writing)**
Birding Adventures	• A field guide for a pre-K classroom with written information and drawings about relationships among birds, humans, land, plants, and waters **(informative/explanatory text)**

Project-Based Units: Examples of Interdisciplinary Connections

Play for All	Each discipline/domain makes direct or indirect contributions to the project. The concepts of ability, disability, inclusion, and collaboration are addressed across multiple domains. For example, children examine playgrounds in their local community and consider whether they are inclusive.
Shadow Shows	Each discipline/domain makes direct or indirect contributions to the project. The concept of shape and the composition of objects in terms of shape is addressed in multiple domains. For example, children create a structure in their shadow shows using 3D and 2D shapes.
Sound Stories	Each discipline/domain makes direct or indirect contributions to the project. The concept of procedure (steps to accomplish a goal) is addressed across multiple domains. For example, children design and write about a procedure to create drums that are then measured during math.
Game On	Each discipline/domain makes direct or indirect contributions to the project. The concepts of history and coming to shared understandings of fairness are addressed across multiple domains. For example, children work toward fair play in games used in several domains.
Critical Consumers	Each discipline/domain makes direct or indirect contributions to the project. The concepts of applying a critical perspective on advertisements and making informed decisions are addressed across multiple domains. For example, children read a book about ways advertisements can trick people and discuss how advertisements can make you feel and influence your choices.
Birding Adventures	Each discipline/domain makes direct or indirect contributions to the project. The concepts of responsibility and connection are addressed across multiple domains. For example, children learn through observation, research, and social interaction.

Project-Based Units: Examples of Addressing Identity

Play for All	Children develop identities as change agents who can recognize injustices in play spaces and work to create opportunities for play that are inclusive and just.
Shadow Shows	Children develop their identities as creators who can design objects, tell stories, and engage in artistic expression.
Sound Stories	• Children develop their identities as sound engineers. • Children develop their identities as friends and classmates who help each other. • Children develop their identities as storytellers and creators and broaden/connect those identities to social justice.
Game On	Children develop their identities as collaborators and teammates.
Critical Consumers	Children develop identities as informed, critical consumers who think about how to spend their resources and can analyze advertisements in critical ways.
Birding Adventures	• Children develop identities as observers and people who have relationships with the natural world (building from World Watchers in kindergarten). • Children develop identities as experts who can inform community members and support change.

Standards Addressed in Great First Eight

Science & Engineering

The Next Generation Science Standards, including practices, crosscutting concepts, and disciplinary core ideas

Social Justice

A modified version of the Learning for Justice standards, augmented to include environmental justice

Social & Emotional Learning

Developed in alignment with the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) Framework—self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision-making—with an additional strand devoted to agency, cultural identity, and creativity

Social Studies

The College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards, with grade bands converted to grade-level-specific standards and greater specificity added to standards

Literacy

The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, & Technical Subjects, with some additions, for example in handwriting (these standards can be crosswalked with other state standards)

Great First Eight addresses standards in six domains.

Math

The Common Core State Standards for Mathematics, with some additions, for example, regarding recognizing and valuing the contributions of mathematicians from varied cultural backgrounds (these standards can be crosswalked with other state standards)

Standards Addressed in Great First Eight

A Standards Crosswalk identifies which standards are
addressed in each unit of the curriculum.

Standards: Next Gen Science Standards	Launch Week	Play for All	Shadow Shows	Sound Stories	Game On	Critical Consumers	Birding Adventures
Science and Engineering Practices							
Developing and Using Models: Modeling in K–2 builds on prior experiences and progresses to include using and developing models (i.e., diagram, drawing, physical replica, diorama, dramatization, or storyboard) that represent concrete events or design solutions. • Use a model to represent relationships in the natural world.			■	■			■
Asking Questions and Defining Problems in grades K–2 builds on prior experiences and progresses to simple descriptive questions that can be tested. • Ask questions based on observations to find more information about the designed world.		■	■	■			
Analyzing and Interpreting Data: Analyzing data in K–2 builds on prior experiences and progresses to collecting, recording, and sharing observations. Analyze data from tests of an object or tool to determine if it works as intended.			■	■			■
Engaging in Argument from Evidence in K–2 builds on prior experiences and progresses to comparing ideas and representations about the natural and designed world(s). • Construct an argument with evidence to support a claim.				■			
Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information in K–2 builds on prior experiences and uses observations and texts to communicate new information. • Communicate solutions with others in oral and/or written forms using models and/or drawings that provide detail about scientific ideas.		■	■	■			■
Planning and Carrying out Investigations to answer questions or test solutions to problems in K–2 builds on prior experiences and progresses to simple investigations, based on fair tests, which provide data to support explanations or design solutions. • With guidance, plan and conduct an			■	■			

Daily Schedule: Introduction

The Great First Eight First Grade Curriculum full-day daily schedule has been carefully designed to enact the Great First Eight principles. With a few exceptions, we encourage teachers to schedule the components of the day in any order that works for them.

Connect and Launch

Word Wonders

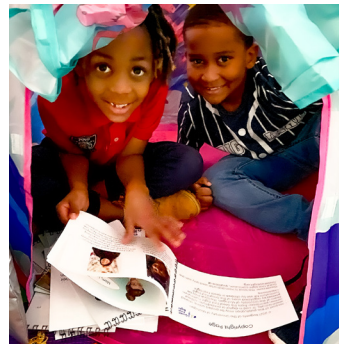Wonder Co-Lab

Recess/Play 1

Math Marvels

Lunch & Recess/Play 2
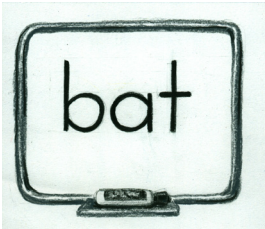
Community Time

Self Time

Quest Co-Lab

Arts, Movement, or Media

Peace Out

Daily Schedule

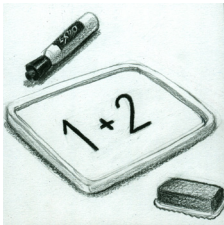| Part of Day & Length*	Description
Connect and Launch (20 minutes)	Connect and Launch is a daily opportunity for children to: • store their belongings • indicate their attendance and their lunch choice, if applicable in your setting • talk with one another and with the teacher to build relationships • process events happening in their community, if needed • write and/or draw in personal journals, if they choose • eat breakfast, if that is aligned with your school scheduling • transition smoothly from home to school We encourage the teacher to stay focused on these important activities. Some other activities that are commonly used in classrooms in the morning are not well-aligned with research (e.g., worksheets, daily oral language, morning message).
Word Wonders (20 minutes)	This portion of the day targets children's development of literacy foundational skills—in particular, concepts of print, phonemic awareness, phonics, spelling, and word-reading and spelling strategies—in a whole-group format. The approach involves a combination of explicit instruction, structured inquiry, experiences that strengthen children's memory for phoneme-grapheme relationships, and opportunities to read and write words and sentences. Children transition with movement to and from Wonder Co-Lab using our Great First Eight Hip Hop phonics songs.

Daily Schedule

Part of Day & Length*	Description

Wonder Co-Lab
(70 minutes)
	Wonder Collaborative or "Co-Lab" engages children in small-group and individual activities that foreground literacy development, although many other domains are also entailed. This portion of the day involves three kinds of learning opportunities:
	
	1) ***Small-group instruction with the teacher, which we call "Meet with the Teacher."*** The teacher meets with children in small groups formed based on children's instructional needs, strengths, and/or interests for differentiated instruction and experiences reading and writing project-related texts. There are three types of Meet with the Teacher lessons:
	
	   a) *Wonder Book Reading:* The teacher leads lessons on Wonder Books. Wonder Books are often connected to the project, are decodable based on phoneme-grapheme relationships children have been taught, typically feature phoneme-grapheme relationships and high-frequency words that have been taught or reviewed the previous week, and have other features that research suggests support reading development.
	
	   b) *Interactive Writing:* While leading children in writing a text that is typically related to the project (e.g., a thank-you note to a guest speaker), the teacher reinforces instruction (e.g., concepts of print, phonemic awareness, spelling) and provides opportunities for application.
	
	   c) *More Time With . . . Lessons:* The teacher chooses from a bank of lesson plans to provide additional instruction based on specific children's strengths and needs (e.g., to review a particular orthographic pattern). Letter tiles are often used during these lessons.
	
	Each group meets for five-20 minutes. Teachers should aim to meet with at least three groups on the first day of a five-day cycle and at least four groups each of the subsequent days of the cycle, with each child meeting with the teacher at least three times per week.
	
	2) ***Small-group and individual experiences, which we call "Dives."*** In frequently changed groups intentionally formed such that children have complementary strengths and needs, working alone or with their group-mates to varying degrees, children engage in a series of Dives that fall into two categories: Definitely-Dos and Up-to-Yous.
	
	3) ***Whole-class reflection.*** The teacher concludes Co-Lab with a time in which children discuss (a) what they learned in relation to the driving question of the unit and (b) what they learned about reading and writing. Children transition with movement to the next portion of the day. Children who qualify for literacy intervention services receive them when they would otherwise be working on Definitely-Dos and Up-to-Yous.

Daily Schedule

Part of Day & Length*	Description
Recess**/**Play 1** (20 minutes)	This recess takes place outdoors whenever possible. When possible, research-supported training in the facilitation of play (e.g., by Playworks) should be provided to the staff members involved, and equipment made available on the playground should be informed by relevant research. In addition, children are never denied Recess/Play for disciplinary reasons.
Community Time (20 minutes)	In this portion of the day, children engage in instruction designed to support their development of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision-making, as well as creativity, agency, and cultural identity. Standards for reading literature are also frequently addressed during this time. Instruction is largely whole-group, often includes read alouds of narrative text, and sometimes incorporates small-group, partner, or individual learning activities.

Daily Schedule

Part of Day & Length*	Description
Lunch† (30 minutes) and **Recess/Play 2** (20 minutes)	Children engage in a lunch period of up to 30 minutes followed by a period of recess/play of at least 20 minutes. This recess takes place outdoors whenever possible. When possible, research-supported training in the facilitation of play (e.g., by Playworks) should be provided to the staff members involved, and equipment made available on the playground should be informed by research. In addition, children are never denied Recess/Play for disciplinary reasons.
Math Marvels (50 minutes)	The Math Marvels portion of the day begins by targeting children's development of number sense, computational skills, and mathematical argumentation. The approach involves a combination of structured inquiry and experiences, such as engagement with number talks that strengthen children's understanding of numbers and operations, shapes, and spatial orientation. Periodically, a read aloud anchors the Math Marvels time. Within the Math Marvels block, a Marvel Activity engages children in small-group and individual activities that foreground mathematics development, although many other domains are also entailed. This portion of the day involves three kinds of learning opportunities: 1) **Whole-class activities.** During whole-group instruction, the teacher elicits children's mathematical thinking around project-related topics. For example, the class might engage in a whole-class discussion to reflect on the number of places that provide goods and services close to the school, or the teacher might conduct an interactive read aloud to connect ways to compose and decompose numbers with a theme from the current project. 2) **Small-group and individual experiences.** Working alone or with their group-mates to varying degrees, children engage in activities selected by the teacher. For example, the teacher might facilitate a high-level, group-worthy mathematics task in which small groups use children-generated strategies to solve a problem from the current project. Children who qualify for math intervention services receive them when they would otherwise be working on small-group experiences. 3) **Whole-class reflection.** The teacher concludes Math Marvels with a reflection time in which children evaluate the accuracy and efficiency of multiple problem-solving strategies, try these strategies, and draw connections between their mathematical activity and themes from the current project.

Daily Schedule

| Part of Day & Length*	Description
Self Time (10 minutes) (This may be longer early in the year.)	During Self Time, children spend time alone, quietly sitting or snuggling into a spot in the classroom while calming music plays to either look through books, draw, or engage in other quiet activities individually. Individual quiet time helps children develop their independence, and it gives them an opportunity to relax and learn how to entertain themselves.
 Quest Co-Lab (80 minutes) (This may be less time early in the year if Self Time is longer.)	In this portion of the day, children focus especially heavily on the unit's project. Science and/or social studies lead this time, but there is also considerable involvement of literacy, mathematics, and social emotional learning. Quest Co-Lab has three major components: 1) **Opening Co-Lab (30 minutes):** This is a whole-group time that includes an experience with an informational text that builds content knowledge, typically through a read aloud, but at times, through presentations provided by experts related to the project or other activities. Reading Informational Text and Listening standards are also addressed during this time. 2) **Co-Lab Quests (round one: 20 minutes, round two: 20 minutes):** These involve children in working toward a project goal, typically in collaborative small groups or pairs. In some cases, all children work on the same task ("Quest") that serves the project. In a typical week, five Quests are available, with each child doing a given Quest twice. During the Quests, the teacher provides small-group instruction, targeting specific content or skills in the context of the project. 3) **Walking Reflection or Dance Party (10 minutes):** To help get to 60 minutes of physical activity per day in Great First Eight First Grade (more on days with PE), children engage in either Walking Reflection or Dance Party. **Walking Reflection:** Children walk, outdoors when possible, as they reflect on a question related to that day's Quest Co-Lab. We provide information about the rationale for and approach to Walking Reflection. **Dance Party:** Children have an opportunity to engage in physical movement to music.

Daily Schedule

Part of Day & Length*	Description
Arts, Movement, or Media (50 minutes)	This model schedule assumes that there is a daily 50-minute block, including transitions, devoted to art, music, gym/physical education, library/media, and/or other activities (commonly called "specials"). We provide a document that suggests ways that art, music, physical education, and library/media teachers can coordinate with Great First Eight projects.
 Peace Out (5 minutes)	Peace Out is an opportunity to close out the day with intentionality. With the children, establish a routine for each day's end that is positive, efficient, and fosters connection (e.g., a song, a specific cheer, or a class gesture as each child goes out the door). The highest priority is to conclude the day on a positive or hopeful note with all children. For example, even if there is something that did not go well during the day, we encourage teachers to cast it in a positive orientation, such as, "Tomorrow, I look forward to us continuing to help each other during Dives."

*   We realize that the length of school days varies considerably from district to district and state to state. This schedule is close in length to the average length of a school day in the United States, which is six hours and 38 minutes. ***We intend for the length and description of each part of the day to remain as close as possible to what is indicated here.*** Also, please note that children should transition, with movement, between each part of the day.

**   Great First Eight requires that children get an average of 60 minutes of physical activity each day. That includes a morning recess (20 minutes), a lunch recess (a minimum of 20 minutes), a walking reflection or dance party (10 minutes), and one or more physical education periods per week (listed as "Arts, Movement, or Media").

†   The CDC recommends children have a minimum of 20 minutes of "seat time" (i.e., time seated with their meals) to eat and socialize. To ensure children meet this recommendation, and in alignment with research, we have built in a 30-minute lunch period that allows additional time for children to get their meals, as well as take their seats, while accommodating transition time to and from lunch and recess.

Daily Schedule: Dives
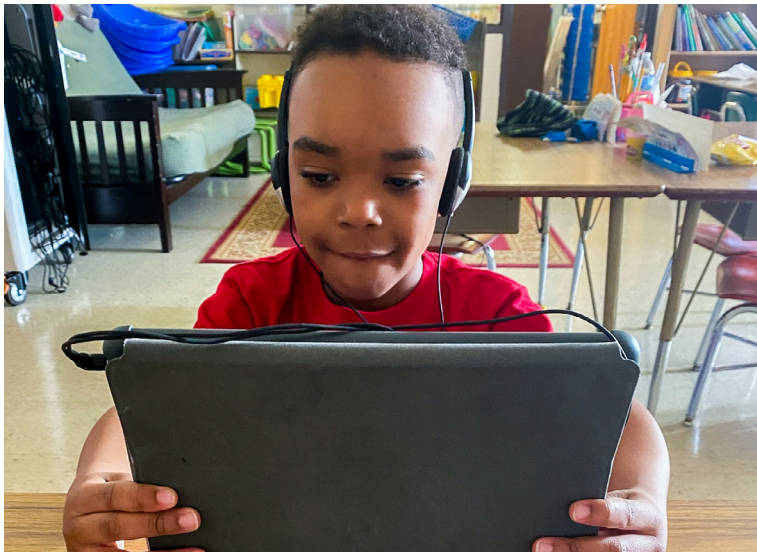
e-Games

During the e-Games Dive, children build or apply their background knowledge for the project through digital games, such as select games available at pbskids.org.

Daily Schedule: Dives

Imagine It

During the Imagine It Dive, children are given opportunities to engage with project content in ways that develop their speaking, listening, and creativity. Children are prompted to engage in various forms of play, such as sociodramatic play or block/construction play.

Daily Schedule: Dives

Look, Listen, & Learn

During the Look, Listen, & Learn Dive, children build background knowledge about the content by engaging with curated texts, such as video read alouds and procedural texts. Children use the Look, Listen, & Learn Response Menus that are provided to write responses to the texts.

Make Your Mark

During the Make Your Mark Dive, children work to develop their handwriting of letters, numbers, and other symbols. Children work with a handwriting application or engage with paper-based handwriting practice sheets.

Daily Schedule: Dives
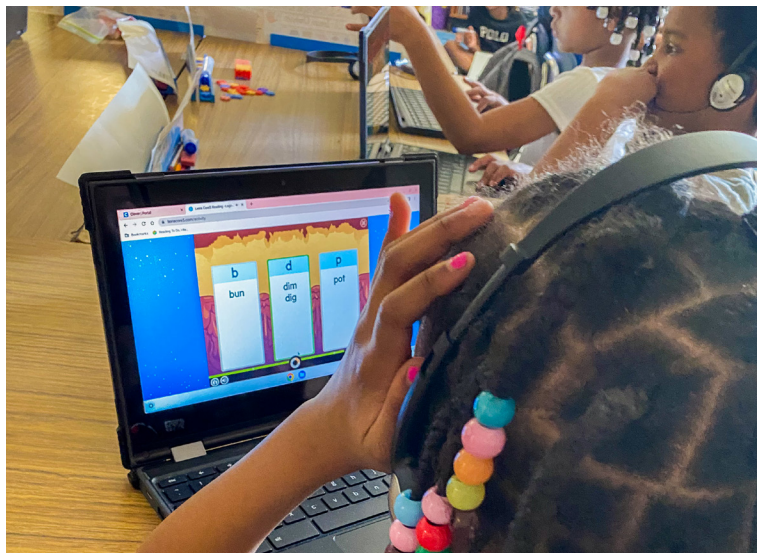
Computer-Adaptive Program

During the Computer-Adaptive Program (CAP) Dive, children develop their literacy foundational skills through research-aligned computer-adaptive software.

Daily Schedule: Dives

Play with Words

During the Play with Words Dive, children reinforce their literacy foundational skills from Word Wonders through games and puzzles that follow up on instruction from the previous week of Word Wonders. Children are provided with phonics and/or spelling games and puzzles to play/do independently or with peers.

Daily Schedule: Dives

Record a Response

During the Record a Response Dive, children rehearse and express themselves in response to a unit-related prompt using the tools in Seesaw™.

Daily Schedule: Dives

Wonder Book Reading

During the Wonder Book Reading Dive, children build their identities and skills as readers by rereading Wonder Books they have studied with the teacher. Children are encouraged to use tools to help them reread, such as the Great First Eight Bookmark and Great First Eight Sounds and Spellings Card. We also provide a Wonder Book Reading Menu to motivate a variety of ways to reread.

Write What You Know

During the Write What You Know Dive, children work on project product development and/or content-related writing in response to a prompt.

Daily Schedule: Dives

Write What You Want

During the Write What You Want Dive, children will develop their identities and skills as writers through freewriting opportunities of their choice across a variety of genres. Templates are provided to support children with writing in genres that they have learned about previously in the curriculum, such as templates for book reviews and procedural texts as well as story-planning organizers.

Math Minds

The Math Minds Quest is mathematics focused. Children engage in activities that use games or puzzles to foster fluency. They may pose and solve their own problems related to the theme of a project or try out others' problem-solving strategies. They may also work on mathematical aspects of a literacy task.

Daily Schedule: Quests

Play & Learn

During the Play & Learn Quest, children have opportunities to engage in sociodramatic play relevant to the project. Children also engage in a variety of games that connect to the unit and support the development of civic qualities. For example, during Sound Stories, children are introduced to the game of checkers and have the opportunity to practice it in various Play & Learn Quests through the remainder of the year.
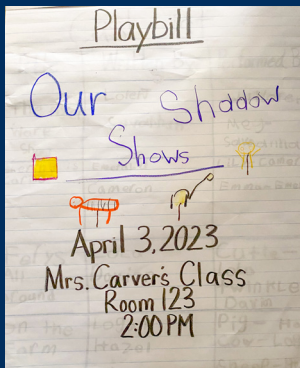
Message-Making

The Message-Making Quest is composed of teacher-directed learning experiences that focus on writing and literacy activities that support children in completing project products. For example, in Shadow Shows, children analyze playbills and eventually contribute information about their own shadow plays to the class playbill.

Daily Schedule: Quests

Exploration/Investigation

Known as the Exploration Quest in social-studies-led units and the Investigation Quest in science-led units, this Quest involves children engaging in project-related work that supports the conceptual development of ideas and practices.

Look, Listen, & Learn

Look, Listen, & Learn is a literacy-focused Quest that involves listening and looking at videos of read alouds as well as content-specific videos. This Quest builds background knowledge related to the project.

Makerspace

The Makerspace Quest focuses on a science activity related to creating an artifact or part of a product that supports the project's driving question.

Daily Schedule: Quests

Quest with the Teacher

In Quest with the Teacher, the teacher works with a small group. The content of this Quest is typically similar to what children engage with in Exploration/Investigation or Message-Making.

Lesson Plans

Great First Eight Lesson Plans were carefully designed, with input and feedback from many classroom teachers, to provide a great deal of support for planning and carrying out the lesson while also providing room for teachers to be responsive to the children in front of them.

Many lesson plans include "Grow What You Know" and other boxes designed to support continued professional learning related to implementation of the curriculum.

GROW WHAT YOU KNOW

Wr- is a particularly challenging consonant digraph for children because it does not spell the sound associated with the first letter in the digraph (/w/), nor does it spell a unique sound as "ch," "sh," and "th" do. Rather, wr- spells the sound associated with the *second* letter in the digraph (/r/). We explicitly teach this, expose children to many wr- words, and contrast those with wh- words. Children's Sounds and Spellings Card lists wr-, with the example word "wrist," under the "ring" key word and picture.

Materials & Tools

Great First Eight includes many materials and tools that support learning, such as the Wonder Books described earlier, Alphabet Wall Cards and individual Sounds and Spellings Cards, slides that go with specific lessons, and much, much more!

Making a Soundproof Box
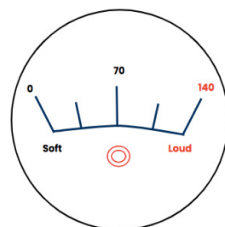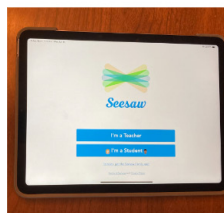

First Grade Sounds and Spellings Card

(NOTE FOR ADULTS: This is not an exhaustive list of spellings or of high-frequency words. This card includes some sounds/spellings and high-frequency words that are the focus of instruction in first grade. It also includes some high-frequency words taught in kindergarten that include those sounds.)

Assessment

Too often assessment practices in U.S. schools do not actually improve the quality or appropriateness of individual children's education but rather serve to perpetuate a narrow, deficit-laden view of children's capabilities and unequal opportunities for children to engage in the most intellectually engaging work. In the Great First Eight First Grade Curriculum, we take a different approach . . .

Principles Guiding Our Observation and Assessment Plan

The following principles shape our approach to assessment:

1. Observation and assessment practices should **align with our 15 Great First Eight Design Principles**.

2. Observation and assessment practices should **help teachers maintain high expectations for all children**.

3. Observation and assessment practices should **emphasize what children can do**.

4. Observation and assessment practices should **be equitable**.

5. Observation and assessment practices should **enable children to be active participants** in the assessment process.

6. Assessment tasks should **offer learning opportunities** for children.

7. Observation and assessment practice should **be aligned to the curriculum**, including the curriculum's aims with respect to:
   - procedural knowledge, practices, and skills
   - conceptual knowledge
   - discourses
   - dispositions

   We should not test what we have not taught.

8. Observation and assessment should **offer children multiple opportunities to show what they know and can do** over the course of a unit or over multiple units.

9. Observation and assessment should **offer children multiple ways to express their thinking**.

10. Assessment practices should **be educative when needed** (e.g., about central components of science practices).

11. Observation and assessment **must inform instruction**.

We enact these principles through a three-pronged approach to assessment:

(1) guided observation,
(2) rapid, systematic assessments, and
(3) a structured portfolio

Assessment

Strengths	Obser-vation Period	Level of Support Provided				Comments
		Substantial	Moderate	Minimal	None	First Last #1
MATH						**MATH**
M1: Sees themselves as mathematical thinkers and doers, & recognizes & values the contributions of mathematics ideas from various cultural backgrounds and individuals.	Ob-1	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	Ob-2	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	Ob-3	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	Ob-4	☐	☐	☐	☐	
M2: Makes sense of problems and perseveres when solving problems.	Ob-1	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	Ob-2	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	Ob-3	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	Ob-4	☐	☐	☐	☐	
M3: Uses numbers, math tools, and/or words to help explore and make sense of problems.	Ob-1	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	Ob-2	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	Ob-3	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	Ob-4	☐	☐	☐	☐	
M4: Communicates their own reasoning effectively, and considers the reasoning of others by listening, asking questions, and making connections.	Ob-1	☐	☐	☐	☐	Described addition as, "I put this one and then I put this one." We worked on using the words "together," "in all," and "adding" with counters.
	Ob-2	☐	☐	☐	☐	Correctly sorted flat (2D) and solid (3D) shapes, with the exception of the cylinder. said the cylinder was a circle so he put it with the square and triangle. When asked probing questions, stated the shape was a circle but also solid so he wanted to choose both categories.
	Ob-3	☐	☐	☐	☐	Subtraction: Watched his partner draw five circles and then cross out two circles. He said, "why did you put an x on two cookies?" and his partner indicated it was because he was ate two of the "cookies."
	Ob-4	☐	☐	☐	☐	Was able to describe several attributes of a basketball (light, round, not flat) with no assistance. He said, "But the baseball is smaller than the basketball because it fits in my one hand."
M5: Develops and recognizes multiple paths to solve problems.	Ob-1	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	Ob-2	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	Ob-3	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	Ob-4	☐	☐	☐	☐	
M6: Attends to math vocabulary, symbols, and labels when solving mathematical problems.	Ob-1	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	Ob-2	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	Ob-3	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	Ob-4	☐	☐	☐	☐	
M7: Recognizes, creates, and uses patterns or relationships when reasoning.	Ob-1	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	Ob-2	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	Ob-3	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	Ob-4	☐	☐	☐	☐	

We provide a structured online observation spreadsheet, "Seeing Strengths," to guide and record observations of children's developing strengths. The spreadsheet is created with individual children's names and photos in the column headings and Strengths organized by domain within the row headings. These Strengths typically reflect clusters of standards rather than just a single standard, making them powerful and relatively efficient foci for observation.

The spreadsheet offers space to record brief comments about observed strategies or skills, evidence of content knowledge, or other dispositions for each child. There is also a set of four checkboxes for each Strength: substantial, moderate, minimal, and none. These checkboxes don't put the onus on the child but rather refer to the amount of support the teacher needs to provide for the child to show this Strength. Teachers may work in the Seeing Strengths spreadsheet during the day or during a reflective period of the teacher's choosing. We also provide prompts in some lessons that offer especially good opportunities to observe for specific strengths.

Assessment

Rapid, Systematic Assessments

Child Name _____ Date _____

Play for All

Play for All Words for Reading

Word to Read	Child's Response	Notes	Word to Read	Child's Response	Notes
trot			granted		
snaps			blimp		
wring			jumping		
fist			left		

Please note: If you believe that children may have memorized these words, rather than actually used each grapheme-phoneme relationship to read them (which is unlikely given the rarity of some of the words but is theoretically possible), please look particularly carefully at their writing assessment responses, and if needed, engage in further word-reading assessment using pseudowords (words that follow a language's spelling/orthographic patterns but don't happen to be real words in that language).

Play for All Words for Writing

Word to Write	Child's Response	Notes	Word to Write	Child's Response	Notes
blend			clumped		
twigs			grunting		
bank			slump		
slob			rang		

Rapid, systematic assessments in Great First Eight First Grade include any assessments the school must administer due to state mandates as well as systematic formative assessments developed by Great First Eight. The Great First Eight assessments are administered at various points throughout the year for the purpose of informing instruction.

The Great First Eight rapid, systematic assessments are very carefully aligned to our curriculum. For example, we only test children's ability to read and spell words with phoneme-grapheme relationships that we have explicitly taught. This alignment is uncommon in U.S. assessment and crucial for achieving equity and effectiveness in assessment.

Assessment

Structured Portfolio
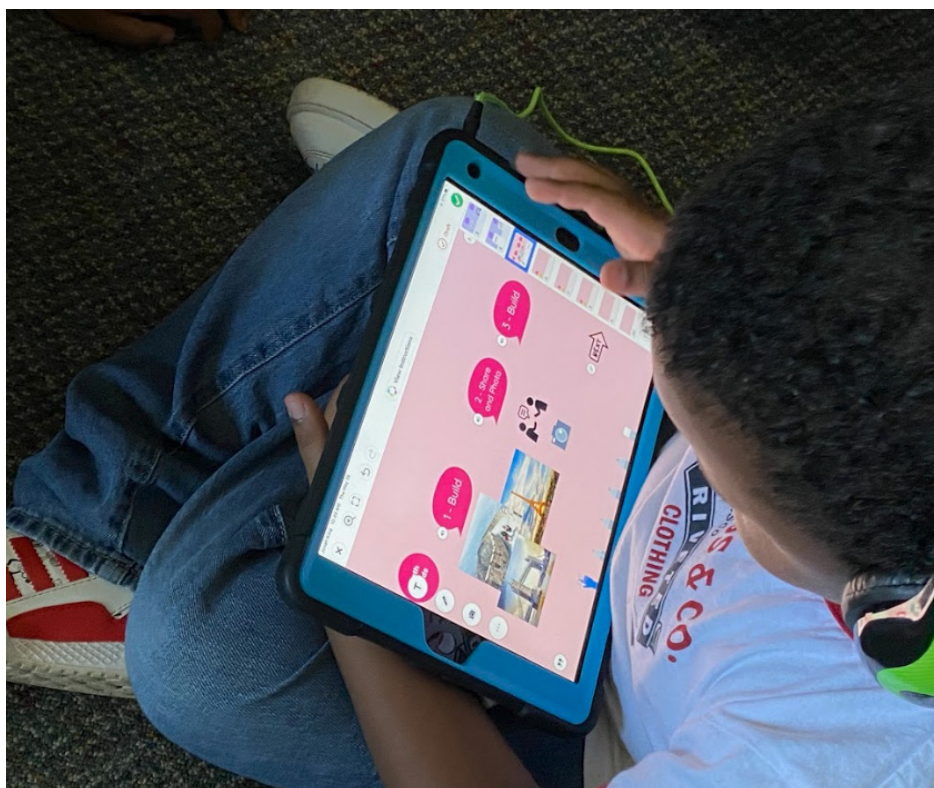
The third and final component of the Great First Eight First Grade approach to assessment is a structured portfolio that captures key accomplishments of children in each unit/project. The portfolio is created using the digital platform Seesaw™ to encourage two-way communication with families about children's learning and to allow for children to use multiple channels or methods to demonstrate what they know or can do, such as photos of drawings, writing, or artifacts, as well as video and audio recordings.

The unit/project portfolio includes at least one entry per domain and is designed to incorporate student choice. For example, in Game On, for literacy foundational skills, children choose a Wonder Book from the unit to record themselves reading out loud, and for math, they choose a problem to share from their work that demonstrates adding and subtracting within 80 using a range of strategies. For each portfolio entry except in social and emotional learning, we provide a rubric the teacher can use to evaluate the entry; in some cases, child-facing versions of the rubrics are also provided.

Professional Learning

Great First Eight teacher professional learning in year one involves:

- Daily planning time

- Weekly or biweekly teacher study group/ professional learning community/lesson study/inquiry meetings

- Thirty hours of professional learning modules to engage in with colleagues before implementing Great First Eight

- Fourteen hours of professional learning modules to engage in with colleagues

during the first year of implementing Great First Eight

- Additional professional learning materials for use in subsequent years

All modules come with facilitator guides so that a coach, lead teacher, or other member of the school or center community can lead the professional learning internally. It's the best of both worlds: high-quality, research-aligned professional learning materials used in a job-embedded, ongoing manner.

The Year One Professional Learning Modules include the following:

Fundamental Understandings about Great First Eight:

- Introduction to GF8 First Grade
- Professional Learning in the GF8 First Grade Curriculum
- Designing a GF8 First Grade Classroom
- Lesson Plan Walk-Through in GF8 First Grade
- Assessment in GF8 First Grade
- Language Diversity in GF8
- Project-Based Learning in GF8
- Positionality (four sessions)
- Frameworks for Family and Community Engagement in GF8 First Grade

Professional Learning About Parts of the Day:

- The Daily Schedule in GF8 First Grade
- Word Wonders and Meet with the Teacher
- Wonder Co-Lab
- Math Marvels
- Community Time
- Quest Co-Lab
- Classroom Culture & Climate in GF8 (across the day)

Professional Learning About Specific Units:

- Launch Week
- Play for All Launch Deck
- Shadow Shows Launch Deck
- Sound Stories Launch Deck
- Game On Launch Deck
- Critical Consumers Launch Deck
- Birding Adventures Launch Deck

Professional Learning

Specific Domains of Learning:

- Social and Emotional Learning and Identity in GF8 First Grade
- Social Studies Teaching and Learning
- Science and Engineering Teaching and Learning
- What Are the Social Justice Standards?
- Vocabulary: POWords
- (Other aspects of math and literacy are addressed in modules about parts of the day)

Tools and Techniques in Great First Eight:

- Wonder Books & Other Texts in GF8 First Grade
- Classroom Discourse
- Interactive Writing
- Differentiation
- Hip Hop in GF8 First Grade
- Family Engagement Curriculum—Parts 1 & 2
- Intro to Seesaw™ (for those not already familiar with this platform)
- Seesaw™ in Great First Eight

Revisiting Modules of Choice:

- The Great First Eight Curriculum and professional learning materials are accessed by registering and logging into "Great Gate." Great Gate keeps track of where you left off in the curriculum and brings you back to that spot the next time you log in.

Community Time in Great First Eight First Grade

Welcome

to Community Time in Great First Eight

Family Engagement

Families First: The Great First Eight Curriculum Family Engagement Approach K–2

In Great First Eight, we recognize that families are children's first and most enduring teachers. We help teachers learn from families. We provide opportunities for families to learn from one another. And we share with families ways they can support children's curriculum-related learning at home.

In Great First Eight K–2 classrooms, teachers have daily opportunities to learn from and with families, including through:

- ✔ Talking at pick-up and drop-off (if applicable)
- ✔ Text messages
- ✔ Phone calls
- ✔ Video messages
- ✔ Seesaw™ (a digital platform for sharing children's work)
- ✔ Our family folder
- ✔ School/community events, including project celebrations
- ✔ Conferences
- ✔ Feedback on children's work
- ✔ Opportunities to volunteer

Our family engagement approach also includes:

Family curriculum and unit introductions: We share with families about Great First Eight and each curriculum unit

Family Journal: Weekly opportunities for families to write, draw, or video- or audio-record responses to prompts related to the in-class project-based unit

Family Studios: Get-togethers in which families learn from one another and the teacher about ways to support children's learning through everyday activities at home

Great First Eight's approach goes beyond traditional "parent involvement":
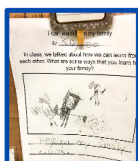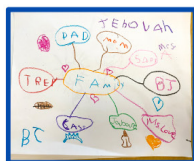
- ↗ We include many family members, not just parents
- ↗ Educators learn from and with families to support children at home and at school

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School & Community Events

Teacher Reflection 💭

- How can teachers invite families to attend and participate in school and community events?
- How can school and community events be designed to be inclusive of families' needs and interests?

School and community events provide opportunities for children and families to engage with and build relationships with teachers, other families, and community partners.

The Great First Eight Curriculum is designed to intersect with the community. Units culminate with the children's work on a purposeful product and often include special events where children will be able to share their ideas and learning with families and community members.

Getting Started

Create a year-long family calendar of school and community events.

Include events that can be located within the school building and within the broader community.

Share the calendar with families at the beginning of the school year.

As events approach, send reminders to families using student-created invitations.

Tips

1. Integrate a wide range of opportunities to volunteer, including ways families can be involved even if they cannot attend the event.

2. Recognize family contributions publicly at events and express appreciation for participation.

 Links to Principles

Principle 1:

The Great First Eight Curriculum values children's engagement by providing them with real-world purpose and an authentic audience. So the events you plan are critical for evoking jubilation. Learning in GF8 is fun! Children should feel joy and agency when they share their hard work with an audience.
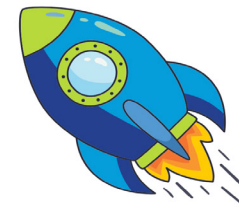
Name the shapes!
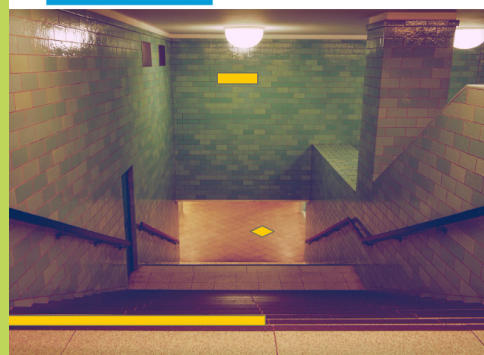
As you observe objects or places in your community together, name the shapes you see.

- triangle
- square
- circle
- rectangle
- trapezoid
- hexagon

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Next Steps

Eager to learn more about Great First Eight?

Explore the GreatFirstEight.org website. To sign up for an informational webinar about the curriculum, write to GreatFirstEight@stand.org.

Ready to Apply to Adopt the Curriculum?

Click on "Inquire about Great First Eight Adoption" on the website and complete the form.

Thank you for your interest in Great First Eight!

MARSAL FAMILY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN