



A Day in the Life of Brooke Students

A Day in the Life of a Brooke 2nd Grader

Marcus, a 2nd grader at Brooke Mattapan, hops out of bed every morning at the sound of his 6:20AM alarm. It only takes him a matter of minutes to get dressed because he lays out his Brooke uniform every evening before bed. He washes his face, brushes his teeth, and scurries downstairs to grab his backpack and wait for his mother to walk him down the street to the bus stop. His bus arrives at 6:46AM and makes several more stops before dropping off Marcus and a load of other Brooke scholars at school by 7:15AM. Marcus waves goodbye to Mr. Parker, his bus driver, and walks to the school entrance, where he receives a warm greeting from Ms. Taylor, the Director of Operations. Marcus says a friendly, "Good morning," in response, and walks up a flight of stairs into the cafeteria. He drops his backpack at his assigned classroom table and joins the breakfast line to grab some milk, cereal, and fruit. After choosing a seat, he eats and chats with his friends. At 7:44AM, music starts to play, signaling the end of breakfast and the beginning of Morning Motivation. Upon hearing the music, Marcus knows he needs to finish eating and help clean up his table in preparation for one of his favorite parts of the day. One minute later, Ms. Walsh, the energetic assistant principal, claps to get students' attention and kick off the FIRST Chant. In unison, students shout:

F - I - R - S - T: These are the things we want to be!
F is for FOCUS, wait and see, when you concentrate, how great you'll be!
F - I - R - S - T: These are the things we want to be!
I is for INTEGRITY, do the right thing - it's HONESTY!
F - I - R - S - T: These are the things we want to be!
R is for RESPECT, it's true! How you treat others is how they'll treat you!
F - I - R - S - T: These are the things we want to be!
S is for SELF-DETERMINATION, I am in charge of my own education!
F - I - R - S - T: These are the things we want to be!
T is for teamwork it opens the door, to all work together and learn A LOT more!
F - I - R - S - T: These are the things we want to be!

Following the FIRST Chant, teachers give "shout-outs" for students who have recently gone above-and- beyond to show the school's core values of focus, integrity, respect, self-determination, and teamwork. When shout-outs are completed, Marcus and his classmates line up in front of the group to perform, "Sick" by Shel Silverstein, a poem they have worked to memorize over the course of a week. After finishing the poem and taking a bow, the students join the rest of the group to sing the core value song of the day, "Focus Time!" At 8:00AM, each class is dismissed to walk silently and quickly to their classrooms. Students in 3rd-8th grade have already begun class, so it's important to respect their learning time by keeping the hallways quiet.

Marcus enters his classroom, hangs up his backpack and turns his lifework folder into the lifework bin. He knows that his teacher, Ms. Jones, will check to make sure everyone in class did their reading and math practice and he is excited for her to see how neatly he completed his subtraction worksheet, a goal they had set together. Once organized, Marcus and his classmates



walk to their spots on the carpet, take a seat and begin playing a quick game of telephone before they jump into learning. For the next two and a half hours, Marcus and his classmates are immersed in rich literacy instruction that includes read aloud, writing workshop, independent reading, phonics, and grammar. Between 8:10 and 8:45, the class listens to Ms. Jones read a chapter of the book, *Ribsy*, by Beverly Cleary, after which they use text evidence to debate whether *Ribsy* is an obedient dog. They also answer other comprehension questions about the characters and plot. Then, from 8:45 to 8:55, Ms. Jones teaches a writing lesson on how to explain evidence when writing a literary essay. Marcus and his classmates then have 35 minutes to write about the same question they debated in reading class – whether *Ribsy* is obedient – focusing specifically on explaining their evidence well. After working on his own essay for about 20 minutes, Ms. Jones calls Marcus to her desk for a writing conference. She tells him that she has noticed that his handwriting has been much neater on his lifework and classwork, so he is ready for a new goal: remembering to make a new paragraph for each new idea he writes. They look at his current essay, and then Ms. Jones prompts Marcus to practice chunking sentences that are about the same topic.

After writing workshop ends at 9:30, it's time for 35 minutes of independent reading and 25 minutes of word study. Marcus is mid-way through *The Stories Julien Tells*, a book of really funny short stories about a character, named Julian, and his hilarious family and friends. Following a 15-minute snack and bathroom break after independent reading, the class splits into word study groups. Marcus is working on spelling all the different long vowel spelling patterns and is practicing this by playing a game with two other students that involves spelling words that his partners read to him and then rolling a die and moving forward if he spells the word correctly. When the game is over, students take out their writing once again to make sure that they spelled all the vowel patterns correctly in their own independent work.

At 10:45, it's time to transition to Spanish class. Currently, Marcus's class is learning how to say the names of different fruits and vegetables. They also recently learned how to ask questions in Spanish, such as "How old are you?" "Do you have siblings?" and "Where is the subway?"

At 11:15, Marcus's class goes straight to co-curricular class. Depending on the day, they have art, music, P.E., or dance. Today is art day and Marcus is excited to keep working on a self-portrait he is drawing using oil pastels.

After art class, Ms. Simmons, the art teacher, walks Marcus and his classmates up to the cafeteria and they take a seat at their table for lunch. A few minutes later, Mr. Francois, the Dean of Students, invites Marcus's class to grab their food - enchiladas with black beans and apples are being served today. Marcus talks with his friends throughout lunch and 20 minutes later, it's time to clean up to return to class. The teacher monitoring Marcus's table reminds his classmates to leave their table looking neat (especially the floor!) so that cleaning up is faster for Mr. Johnson, the custodian.

At 12:20, Marcus transitions back to class and he and his classmates gather on the rug for mental math and logic stories. During mental math, the class practices adding 25 and 33 by decomposing one of the numbers. Marcus chooses to break apart the number 33 into 30 and 3, quickly adds 30 and 25 to get 55 and then 3 more to get 58. One of his classmates, Janick, did something similar, except she broke apart both numbers: 33 into 30 and 3 and 25 into 20 and 5.

She then added 30 and 20 to make 50 and 5 and 3 to get 8, ending up with 58, just like Marcus. In Logic Stories, Marcus works with Janick and Julio to solve a multi-step problem requiring them to figure out which information they need to solve the problem and which bits of information they can ignore. After mental math and logic, it's time for the problem-solving task of the day. For the next hour, Marcus and his classmates work on solving one very challenging problem connected to the recent work they have been doing with subtraction. Today, Marcus and teammates must figure out how to use a pile of base ten blocks to show two different ways to subtract 15 from 41. He knows, from doing mental math that the answer is 26, and he knows that he can easily show this by subtracting 15 ones cubes from 41 ones cubes. However, he's not quite sure how to show it a second way using place value blocks. 10 minutes later, his tablemate, Myra, discovers that if they decompose one of the four groups of ten into ones, they can take away 6 ones from the 11 total ones that they now have and then another group of ten to make 26! It's 1:45 by the time math instruction ends.

Next, it's time for another bathroom break. Then it's off to recess at 1:55. Marcus plays basketball and then a game of black top "tic-tac-toe" with some chalk. At 2:20, he heads back to class for a snack and then 20 minutes of science. In science, students are making clay models of different landforms, utilizing resources such as encyclopedias and Google Earth to inform their designs. One group has formed a mesa, another group has built a valley, another is finishing up a riverbank and still another is designing a dune. Today, they are using paint to make the terrain of each landform look realistic. Tomorrow, they will begin writing informational essays about how each landform is created in nature.

At 3:00, Marcus and his classmates travel to the library for computer science. They are using the coding program, Scratch, to create animated figures that move and make noise. Today, he learns how to make his figure move backwards and turn 180 degrees. Marcus finishes this task a bit early, so he spends the rest of class helping his friend Henry, who is struggling to make his figure move. Marcus's class is back in their classroom at 3:30. Ms. Jones always ends the day with a non-fiction read aloud and today they are finishing up the book, Exploding Ants. Each chapter reveals something unexpected and shocking about a different animal or insect. He can't wait to see what he learns today! The chapter is called, "Dog Mucus and Other Tasty Treats."

At 3:50, it's time to pack up and move to the rug for closing circle. Ms. Jones invites students to share one thing that happened today for which the students are grateful. When the clock strikes 4, it's time for the students to transition to their bus rooms, where they will wait with a teacher and bus monitor until the bus arrives. Marcus's bus arrives to school at 4:05 and he is at his bus stop by 4:20. He hops off the bus and runs over to his dad to give him a big hug, and then they head home. Marcus completes his homework before anything else. Then, he places his lifework folder inside his backpack and stores it by the door. At 5:30, Marcus eats dinner with his family, takes a shower, watches a bit of TV, and then settles into bed to continue reading a few chapters of The Stories Julian Tells with his parents. He is sound asleep by 8:30pm in preparation the full day that tomorrow will bring!



A Day in the Life of a Brooke 4th Grader

Mikayla, a fourth-grade scholar at Brooke East Boston, wakes up every morning 6:45AM. She hurries to the bathroom to wash her face, brush her teeth, and comb her hair. Then, she puts on her uniform and dashes downstairs to eat breakfast. Before Mikayla walks out the door, her grandfather hands her a brown bag filled with snacks and lunch for the day. She then walks three blocks to school, arriving at 7:15AM, just as Ms. Mathieu, the principal, opens the front doors. After receiving a friendly greeting from Ms. Mathieu, Mikayla heads into school. She walks up a flight of stairs and down the hallway into Mr. Jenkins's classroom. She is the first one to arrive today, so she helps Mr. Jenkins sharpen pencils for a few minutes while they wait for the others to arrive.

Between 7:30 and 7:45AM, Mikayla and a few of her classmates gather on the classroom rug to drill each other with vocabulary flashcards for the quiz they'll be taking later in the week. Then, at 7:45, Mr. Jenkins welcomes the whole class to the rug for a quick and fun game, called "20 Questions." At 7:50, the class begins learning time with some mental math drills (multiplying and dividing various whole numbers and decimals by ten), followed by a problem solving task requiring them to use what they learned about volume yesterday (i.e. "You can find the volume of a 3-D square by counting how many cubes it takes to fill the inside space of the shape.") to find the volume of a rectangular prism using an equation. After using cubes to replicate yesterday's strategy, Mikayla and her friend, Jaden, work together to solve today's task. 20 minutes later, they have discovered that multiplying the base of a 3-D shape by its height will provide you with the volume. Mr. Jenkins asks Mikayla and Jaden to present their work and afterwards another student raises her hand and says, "I think you're wrong. You need to multiply the length by the width by the height – not just the base by the height." Several other students agree. Mr. Jenkins gets really excited by this comment and leads the class in a 10-minute debate about who is right. Soon, they all realize that they both are correct, because finding the area of the base is the same thing as multiplying length and width!

At 9:00, it's time for social studies immersion to begin. This year, Mr. Jenkins is experimenting with a new way of teaching social studies, reading and writing. Rather than separating them into their own components, he is using social studies as a way of connecting all literacy instruction. So far, Mikayla is enjoying the new approach. From 9:00-9:45, the class reads a nonfiction text called, *The Seeker of Knowledge: The Man Who Deciphered Egyptian Hieroglyphics*. As they read, they analyze the author's main idea and how it was developed (this is the 4th text on hieroglyphics that they have read, and they've been making hieroglyphics in art class). From 9:45-10:15, students write an essay comparing the main idea of *The Seeker of Knowledge* with a prior text they read about hieroglyphics. At 10:15, they receive a quick grammar lesson on checking for complete sentences and then peer review work on complete sentences using the essay they just wrote. At 10:30, Mr. Jenkins distributes a new anthology of short Egyptian myths. After reading three different myths, students discuss the features that the myths have in common and then set out to write their own original myth.

Mikayla and her class eat lunch and go to recess between 11:30 and 12:25 and then it's back for more social studies at 12:30. For the next hour, Mikayla and three other classmates work on their independent research project. Mikayla's group is making a city model out of clay to show

the pyramids as well as the types of houses that most Egyptians inhabited. Another group is making a map of ancient cities that existed along the Nile River as well as Egyptian cities that still exist along the river today. A third group is creating a play based on a myth they recently read in class. A fourth group is researching what ancient Egyptians ate and discussing how they can replicate an Egyptian feast for their upcoming presentation. The last group is researching the range of clothing worn by the poorest and the wealthiest of ancient Egypt and using recycled fabric to design samples of the styles.

The class transitions to P.E. class at 1:35. Today, students are finishing up a stamina and endurance fitness unit by running a full mile. While a small group of students run the mile, the larger group practices speed drills for shorter distances. At the end of class, the students with the five fastest times challenge each other to another mile-long race. Mikayla comes in third place with a six minute and 30 second mile – her personal best!

Mikayla's computer programming class takes place in the science lab on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:15-3:05. Building off their work in social studies, the class is designing a game that involves irrigation, farming and trading in Ancient Egypt. Today, students are learning how program the computer to make their animals move back and forth.

Mikayla and her teammates are back in class at 3:10 and after a quick bathroom break and snack, they jump into Logic Stories, another math block that involves solving tricky, multi-step math problems that draw upon concepts they have previously learned in math. Today they are working on finding the rule for a complicated geometric pattern. Once they identify the rule, they must extend it three times.

At 3:25, students pull out their independent reading books and read for the next 30 minutes while their teacher confers with individual students. Today, Mikayla and her friend Talia are invited to Mr. Jenkins's table for a quick conference on telling the difference between character traits and character feelings (they had missed a question about character traits on the most recent quiz). After ten minutes, Mikayla is back at her desk reading the book, *Wonder*. She has a goal of finishing 100 books this year and after *Wonder* she'll only have 20 left books to read. Students begin packing up at 3:52. After grabbing their lifework folders and organizing their desks, they head to the rug with their coats and backpacks for a quick closing circle. Every student shares what happened today that made them feel grateful. Mikayla shares the news about her new personal record for the mile.

At 4:00, Mikayla meets her mother outside of the school building and together they walk home. She completes her homework from 4:30-5 and then spends another 30 minutes finishing up *Wonder* – she just HAD to get to the ending! Tomorrow she'll get started reading her 81st book. After eating dinner and relaxing with her family for a while, Mikayla settles into bed at 8:45 and is sound asleep a few minutes later.



A Day in the Life of a Brooke 7th Grader

Jasaan is a 7th grade student at Brooke Roslindale. Every morning, he wakes up at 6:20AM, quickly gets ready, chats briefly with his parents, and zooms out the door and down the block to his MBTA bus stop. The bus arrives at 6:45AM and after a second bus transfer a mile down the road at 7:00AM, Jasaan arrives at the stop right in front of school. On his way into the building, Jasaan greets Ms. Thurman, the school's Director of Operations, and Mr. Martinez, the Dean of Students. Then he heads to the cafeteria to grab his breakfast. Next, he walks up the stairs to his third-floor homeroom, saying hello to several friends along the way. Jasaan is warmly welcomed by Mr. Atkinson and Ms. Porter as he enters his classroom. Unlike most middle school students who have a different teacher for each subject, Jasaan only has two main teachers. Ms. Porter teaches math and science and Mr. Atkinson teaches English Language Arts. Jasaan has learned that Brooke calls this structure a "semi-self-contained" design. The purpose of this model is to give middle school students more time with their teachers and peers so that they can build stronger, more trusting relationships.

Jasaan eats breakfast at his desk next to several friends and then, at 7:45, he cleans up and gets ready to play the daily community building game. Today, a student named Jayla is tagged to step out of the room for a moment while another classmate, Gregory, is chosen to start clapping a pattern. Every time Gregory changes the pattern, everyone else does too - without looking in Gregory's direction. The trick is to try to stay together as a team without revealing the leader. When Jayla steps back into the room, she immediately catches Gregory as he changes the pattern and the whole class erupts in laughter.

Next, Mr. Atkinson steps out while Mr. Porter chooses Jasaan to set the pattern. Five minutes later, Mr. Atkinson still can't identify the leader. He gives up and the class bursts out laughing again. Ms. Porter teaches math for a full hour following the morning game, during which Jasaan and his teammates are challenged to solve, discuss, and present solutions to one, very challenging problem, called a problem-solving task (PST). After that, the class participates in a quick round of cumulative review. For this, students use small, erasable slates to solve problems related to previously learned skills. Following cumulative review, students tackle another challenging applied math problem that incorporates a combination of skills learned early in the year or in previous grades. Applied Math problems are always rooted in real world scenarios. Today, Jasaan and his peers work together to choose which of two different investment strategies will yield a higher return.

Morning tutoring time is next, from 9:45-10:30. A huge benefit of having two main teachers is that it allows both adults to spend more time getting to know the individual needs of each student. Two times per day, the class gets 45 minutes of sustained tutoring time. During these periods, both teachers are in the room working with students who need extra help or an added challenge while the other students get lots of time to read or complete independent classwork. Jasaan received individual math and reading conferences with both teachers earlier in the week, so today he reads his independent reading book, *Ender's Game*, for all of morning tutoring time. He plans to work on an unfinished math review packet in preparation for an upcoming quiz during afternoon tutoring.



Science follows tutoring from 10:30-11:15. Today, Ms. Porter passes out a sheet that outlines an experiment involving the use of a black light to test the effectiveness of different hand-cleaning solutions. Ms. Porter tells the students that they must rely on the instructions to figure out what to do rather than following her lead because “reading instructions is one of the most important aspects of lab- based lessons.” After rubbing their hands with a substance called “Glowgerm Powder,” Jasaan and his classmates wash their hands as they normally would – for about five seconds. They then evaluate the cleanliness of their hands using the black light. Under the light, they see tons of powder still on their hands, including in their nails and between their fingers. Through this experiment, they see that even the recommended 30 seconds of washing is still barely clean to remove the germs from all parts of their hands!

Jasaan’s class returns to the classroom after science, grabbing lunch from the cafeteria on the way upstairs. Brooke Middle School students eat lunch in their classrooms with their teachers and classmates because the extra time gives the team more opportunities to bond. 7th graders can choose their seats at lunch time, but Ms. Porter and Mr. Atkinson always challenge the students to sit next to at least one different person each day.

Reading class begins right after lunch at 11:50. Today, Mr. Atkinson reads the last five pages of *To Kill A Mockingbird* as an extension of the 7th grade social studies focus on the legacy of slavery. Jasaan wasn’t sure if he would like the book at the start because he thought it was a little boring. Now, however, he can’t stop thinking about Atticus Finch’s kindness or the wisdom that Scout displays at the end, when she realized that it was Boo Radley’s who had saved her and her brother, Jem. At the conclusion of the book, the class discusses the different ways in which the legacy of slavery played out in the text.

As a follow up to reading class, students begin writing their own personal essay to explore the reading question in more depth. Jasaan chooses to focus on the diction in the scene when Jem and Scout attend Calpernia’s all-black church. He wants to analyze this scene in connection with the dialogue between Atticus and Aunt Elizabeth (after Elizabeth finds out about the church visit and flies off the handle).

At 1:30, it’s time for the class to transition to dance class. For the next 45 minutes, the students practice the “Buchata” in preparation for their end of year Arts Night performance. Jasaan loves dance class because Ms. Johnson, the dance teacher, has a way of making difficult steps easier to follow.

Coding class begins next door in the library promptly at 2:20. Today, students continue their robot- programming project. Jasaan and his partner, Rosemary, begin their attempt to get their robot to move backwards by entering an algorithm into an iPad application. It takes them almost the whole period to get the application to transmit the correct signal to the robot, but they eventually figure it out by the end of class. Tomorrow, they will program the robot to turn 45 degrees to the right and left.

Back up in the classroom, students begin social studies class by reading ten more pages from the book, *On Common Ground*, a very long, dense, but interesting, account of how three different families (two white, one black) experienced busing integration in Boston in the 1970s. Jasaan and



his peers have been reading a bit of the book each week since the beginning of the year, each time discussing how the events in the book reflect the legacy of slavery and the difficult dynamics that arise from integration, gentrification, unfamiliarity and racism. Today, the students discuss the abolitionist roots of Union Methodist Church in Roxbury, where Jasaan goes to church. He had no idea that this church was part of the Underground Railroad!

The second tutoring block begins at 3 and runs until 3:50, at which point Jasaan's class concludes the school day with a quick gratitude circle. At 4, the students are dismissed. Jasaan is back at home by 5 and finished with homework by dinnertime at 6:30. At 9:00, he reluctantly gives his mom his cell phone and heads to bed. He has another full day tomorrow!



A Day in the Life of a BHS Student

Alex is a junior at BHS. She started at Brooke East Boston when she was in its founding 5th grade class and is a member of the founding class at BHS. Alex and her family live in East Boston and each morning she wakes up at 5 am. She gets dressed in her gym clothes and packs her school bag for the day. She and her mom leave their apartment by 5:30 am to drive across the city to Brooke High School in Mattapan to ensure that Alex arrives by 6:15 am, when her basketball practice begins. Though it makes for an early morning, Alex loves the opportunity to start her day with some exercise.

Basketball practice runs until 7:30 am. Alex hurries to the locker room to get cleaned up and dressed before heading to the auditorium by 8 am for Community Meeting. CM is a time where the entire high school community gathers for about 15 minutes each morning to begin the day with various performances and announcements. Today during CM, Alex listens to a few announcements given by Ms. Megrian, the principal. The BHS step team also performs and the students in the audience give them a huge round of applause. Finally, a member of the student government delivers news about upcoming elections for next year's cabinet that will be held in a few weeks.

After CM, Alex heads to office hours, which begin at 8:16 am. Where students go for office hours is determined by GPA and teacher recommendation. This morning, Alex heads to Ms. Horne's room, her physics teacher. She is hoping to review a few concepts that she's been struggling with before the midterm, which is in 2 weeks.

First period begins at 8:56 am. Alex has one of her favorite classes at BHS, AP computer science with Mr. Liang. For this unit, students are working on a series of exploration tasks to identify all of the components of innovation, including benefits and drawbacks. Today they are looking at 3D printing and analyzing the pros and cons of using the 3D printer they have at BHS. From there, Alex heads to her next period which begins at 9:54 am. She has pre-calculus with Ms. Goldberg. Her class is reviewing for the upcoming midterm through group work and today's problems all focus on linear functions.

At 10:52 am, Alex is off to AP Language and Composition with Mr. Kelly. They are reading "The Handmaid's Tale" which Alex is really enjoying but also finding very disturbing. Today, her classmates are discussing what the author's main argument is and what her warnings for society are. When class is over, her head is still spinning a bit from their discussion. She heads to lunch, where she is excited to see her friends and chat about the day so far, her upcoming basketball game, and weekend plans.

At 12:15pm, Alex has AP Spanish with Ms. Brito. Currently in class, they are discussing being socially aware and responsible with respect to worldwide issues like hunger, poverty, and domestic violence. The class is run entirely in Spanish. In fact, if you speak in English during the class, students receive a demerit. So far, Alex hasn't received any! After AP Spanish, Alex heads to World History with Ms. Monaco. They are halfway through their unit on slavery, and since it is "Current Events Thursday", her class is talking about how slavery is currently affecting race



relations in the U.S. Unfortunately, there are a lot of examples in the current news about violence and racial injustice to fuel the class discussion.

At 2:15 pm, Alex has her last class of the day, Physics with Ms. Horne. This is the class in which Alex struggles the most. Currently, they are doing group problems that require discussing momentum and how it's conserved. Ms. Horne checks in often with Alex's group, and Alex is feeling more confident thanks to the conferencing she did with Ms. Horne this morning in office hours!

Alex ends the day in her advisory with Ms. Ko. Advisory is a time where students gather in small groups in their advisor's classroom. Most of time, students are independently reading and advisors are conferencing with students on their grades and classes. Alex has built a strong relationship with Ms. Ko over the past three years and is excited to report to her about her progress in Physics class.

The school day ends at 3:45pm and Alex heads to play practice with Ms. Sharpe. They are performing "Testing, Testing" this spring and Alex is part of the stage design team. Practice runs until 6 pm, which is when her mom picks her up at school and they drive back home. Alex eats dinner around 7:15 pm with her family. She enjoys hearing about her two younger brother's days (Gabriel and Luis) who attend Brooke East Boston. After dinner, Alex showers and heads to her room to begin her homework. She usually has about 2- 3 hours of homework each night, and tonight she works until about 10 pm. When she finishes her homework, she texts with some of her friends, organizes her gym clothes and school bag for the next morning and heads to bed at 10:30 pm, ready for another day tomorrow!