

Family Guide: Learning in First Grade



About 1st Grade:

First grade is a special time in which students transition into the primary grades which emphasize academic growth by engaging in developmentally appropriate learning experiences. While there's an academic focus, we also work to develop a child's sense of well-being both socially and emotionally. Through their learning experiences, students will develop their creativity, communication skills and problem solving. Students will also become more aware of their school community and the community they live in to enhance their global competency.

THIS GUIDE INCLUDES:

- **What Your Child Should Know & Be Able to Do**
- **Activities to Support Learning**
- **Education Words**
- **Questions to Ask your Child's Teacher**

LITERACY

As readers and writers in first grade, students are growing in confidence. Throughout first grade, students are immersed in the workshop model as they engage in partner work, small group work, and whole group instruction daily. Together these components assist students by increasing phonological awareness, teaching valuable strategies for decoding and comprehension.

First graders continuously build upon their foundational reading skills while enjoying new and varied kinds of text. As writers, first graders learn the strong connections between the sounds they use as readers and those that are needed to create text of their own as they become authors of original pieces of writing.

Reading/Phonics

Students in 1st grade should know and be able to:

- Read and understand grade level text
- Use a variety of reading strategies to monitor comprehension
- Demonstrate fluency to include accuracy, appropriate rate and expression
- Understand story elements including setting, problem, solution, and characters
- Explain how specific words and phrases express feelings and appeal to the senses; or determine the meaning of content-specific words within a text
- Compare and contrast two texts
- Understand important details in a text
- Apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills to decode words

Writing

Students in 1st grade should know and be able to:

- Engage in the writing process (plan, organize, revise and edit) through a variety of genres
- Create a piece of writing that contains complete sentences, an introduction, transitions, and a conclusion
- Elaborate writing using reasons and details
- Include content specific words, descriptive words, and vivid examples of feelings, events and images in writing pieces
- Participate in shared and independent inquiry and writing projects
- Apply grade appropriate capitalization, punctuation and spelling



MATHEMATICS

Mathematics in first grade will build upon the foundations learned in kindergarten. Students will learn that they are mathematical thinkers as they develop their ability to reason with, make sense of, and communicate important mathematical concepts.

First graders develop number sense while building strategies for adding and subtracting within 20, with a focus on fluency within 10. Students will see connections within the areas of whole numbers, geometry, measurement, data, and early algebra.

Students in 1st grade should know and be able to:

- Build strategies to accurately add and subtract equations to 20, with a focus on fluency within 10
- Identify and write the numbers in the counting sequence up to 120 and understand that numbers are built of tens and ones
- Understand, represent and solve word problems within 20 through modeling of mathematical thinking (using pictures, equations and manipulatives)
- Describe, identify, compare, compose, and decompose 2-D and 3-D shapes
- Tell time to the hour and half hour
- Understand that a fraction is an equal part of a whole that can be divided into two or four equal parts
- Demonstrate accurate measuring techniques when measuring an object



ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT LEARNING

Literacy

- Encourage your child to read a book of their choice each day
- Ask about the books your child is reading
- Share your reading life with your child
- Talk with your child to expand their vocabulary (don't be afraid to use words they don't know, you can explain them)
- Model writing in the real world (such as grocery list, thank you notes, emails, journaling, activities on a calendar)
- Learn about an interesting topic with your child by reading books, looking online and exploring places together



Mathematics

- Encourage a growth mindset about mathematics
- Encourage students to use math in their everyday activities
- Talk with your child about all the ways you use math in your daily life
- Play board, card or dice games with your child (such as Uno, Monopoly, Yahtzee and Checkers)
- Create and solve your own story problems
- Measure and count as you cook and bake together

EDUCATION WORDS

Brave Speller (Inventive Spelling): Spelling a word using spelling attempts based on letters that the child knows to represent each sound.

Compose: To put together using its parts

Decodable Words: Words that can be sounded out easily.

Decompose: To break apart

Digit: Any of the symbols 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9.

Inquiry-Based Learning: Inquiry promotes engagement, curiosity, and experimentation. Students are empowered to explore topics through questioning, investigation, and research.

Mathematical Fluency: Fluency includes accuracy, efficiency, and flexible use of strategies in solving math problems.

Performance Task: A real-world task that requires students to apply their knowledge and skills that have been learned to show understanding.

Phonics: The relationship between sounds and their spellings, and is associated with print.

Phonological Awareness: The ability to recognize the sounds of spoken language, including rhyme, syllables, and the sounds in words.

Place Value: Every digit in a number has a place value based on its position in the number. (In the number 548, the digit 5 is in the hundreds place and its place value is 500. The digit 4 is in the tens place, and its place value is 40. The digit 8 is in the one place, and its place value is 8.)

Reading Fluency: Fluency includes accuracy, rate, and expression when reading out loud.

Rote Counting: Counting numbers in order (5, 6, 7, 8, 9...).

Snap Words: Words that a child can read automatically (also known as sight words).

Social and Emotional Learning: Learning to effectively manage emotions, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships and make responsible decisions.

Workshop Model: The workshop framework is designed to offer a simple and predictable environment. The workshop typically includes a mini-lesson (teacher-led instruction), independent work time, small group instruction, individual conferring (teacher meets with student), and sharing.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER

- What can I do to help my child succeed in school?
- What classroom activities seem to keep my child best engaged in learning?
- What type of play does my child engage in?
- Does my child play with a variety of classmates?
- How does my child act in an unexpected situation?
- Does my child show concern for others?
- What book(s) is my child reading during independent reading time?
- What topics is my child learning about through reading and inquiry?
- What topics is my child writing about?
- What kinds of math problems are children learning to solve this year?
- What should my child be able to understand and talk about as a result of what they have learned?
- What are my child's overall strengths at this time?
- What are my child's overall challenges at this time?
- What specifically can I do at home to support my child's overall learning and growth?