



Pre-Kindergarten

English Language Arts

The inclusion of high-quality early language experiences is essential to enhancing students' development in pre-kindergarten. As identified by the National Early Literacy Panel, there are five characteristics most closely linked to later literacy achievement: oral language development; phonological/phonemic awareness; alphabetic knowledge; print knowledge; and invented spelling. The pre-kindergarten standards were developed with these in mind.

In pre-kindergarten, students are expected to demonstrate increasing awareness and competence in such skills as asking and answering about details in a text and demonstrating an awareness of relationship between sounds and letters.

How Can I Help?

- ✓ Read with your child every day. Ask your child to explain his or her favorite parts of the story. Share your own ideas.
- ✓ Encourage your child to tell you about his or her day at school. Keep paper, markers, or crayons around the house for your child to write letters or words or draw a picture about his or her day. Have your child describe the picture to you.

Mathematics

Mathematics is very important in pre-kindergarten, as it sets the stage for future understanding of and success with mathematics concepts and tasks. Developing a solid foundation in math aids in students' cognition and knowledge of the world. In pre-kindergarten, students are expected to demonstrate increasing awareness and competence in such skills as knowing number names and the count sequence, understanding simple patterns, and describing and comparing measurable attributes.

How Can I Help?

- ✓ Encourage your child to demonstrate an understanding of addition and subtraction by using objects, fingers, and responding to practical situations (e.g., if we have 3 apples and add 2 more, how many apples do we have all together?).
- ✓ Describe objects in the environment using names of shapes, and describe the relative positions of these objects using terms such as top, bottom, up, down, in front of, behind, over, under, and next to.

Sample Pre-Kindergarten Tasks in ELA:

With prompting and support...

- Retell familiar stories
- Ask and answer questions about characters and major events in a story
- Engage in a picture walk to make connections between self, illustrations, and the story
- Describe the connection between two events or pieces of information in a text
- Use a combination of drawing, dictating, or writing to express an opinion about a book or topic (e.g., I like.... because...)

Sample Pre-Kindergarten Tasks in Math:

- Identify and describe shapes (squares, circles, triangles, rectangles)
- Count to 20
- Sort objects into categories; count the numbers of objects in each category (limit category counts to be less than or equal to 10)
- Identify measurable attributes of objects, such as length, and weight. Describe them using correct vocabulary (e.g., small, big, short, tall, empty, full, heavy, and light)



Kindergarten

English Language Arts

Learning new language skills is a hallmark of kindergarten. Your child will learn about the alphabet and its role in reading. Your child will practice rhyming, matching words with beginning sounds, and blending sounds into words.

The size of your child's vocabulary is another key factor in his or her ability to read and comprehend books and stories. Your child will also begin to experiment with writing and will be encouraged to use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing letters to share information, ideas, and feelings.

How Can I Help?

- ✓ Read with your child every day. Ask your child to explain his or her favorite parts of the story. Share your own ideas.
- ✓ Encourage your child to tell you about his or her day at school. Keep paper, markers, or crayons around the house for your child to write letters or words or draw a picture about his or her day. Have your child describe the picture to you.

Mathematics

Young children arrive in kindergarten with widely varying knowledge in math. By the end of the year, one of the most important skills your child should develop is the ability to add and subtract small numbers and use addition and subtraction to solve word problems. This will rely on gaining some fundamentals early in the year, such as counting objects to tell how many there are. Addition and subtraction will continue to be a very strong focus in math through 2nd grade.

How Can I Help?

- ✓ Play "Write the next number." You write a number, and your child writes the next number.
- ✓ Ask your child questions that require counting as many as 20 things. For example, ask, "How many books do you have about wild animals?"
- ✓ Ask your child questions that require comparing numbers. "Who is wearing more bracelets, you or your sister?"

Sample Kindergarten Tasks in ELA:

- Naming upper- and lower-case letters, matching those letters with their sounds, and printing them
- Comparing the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories, such as fairy tales and folktales
- Retelling familiar stories and talking about stories read to them using details from the text
- Using a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to describe an event, including his or her reaction to what happened
- Stating an opinion or preference about a topic or book in writing (e.g., "My favorite book is . . .")

Sample Kindergarten Tasks in Math:

- Counting objects to tell how many there are
- Comparing two groups of objects to tell which group, if either, has more; comparing two written numbers to tell which is greater
- Acting out addition and subtraction word problems and drawing diagrams to represent them
- Adding with a sum of 10 or less; subtracting from a number 10 or less; and solving addition and subtraction word problems



Grade 1

English Language Arts

In first grade, your child will become a more independent reader and writer. Your child will continue to learn and practice rules for recognizing the sounds that make up words and will be able to sound out more complex words. Such foundational skills are necessary and important components of developing proficient readers with the capacity to comprehend a wide range of materials. Students will learn to think about what they read and talk about the main ideas of simple stories. As they write and speak, first graders will learn to use language appropriately; this includes using complete sentences and spelling words with increasing accuracy.

How Can I Help?

- ✓ Act out stories together from books, television, or your child's imagination.
- ✓ Pick a "word of the day" each day starting with a different letter. Have your child write the word and look for other things beginning with the same letter.
- ✓ Visit the library with your child every week. Have your child sign up for a library card.

Mathematics

In first grade, your child will build on last year's work and gain important new skills. One of the most important outcomes for the year is to improve speed and accuracy: adding with a sum of 20 or less and subtracting from a number 20 or less (e.g., $17 - 8$).

Another important goal in first grade is adding with a sum of 100 or less; this will rely on understanding what the digits mean in a number such as 63 (namely, 63 is six tens and three ones). Working with multi-digit addition this year will set the stage for second grade, when your child will be working with three-digit numbers and adding and subtracting with larger numbers.

How Can I Help?

- ✓ While putting away toys into bins, count the number of toys in two bins and ask your child how many more are in one bin compared to the other.
- ✓ Play the "I'm thinking of a number" game. For example, "I'm thinking of a number that makes 11 when added to 8. What is my number?"

Sample Grade 1 Tasks in ELA:

- Using phonics (matching letters and sounds) and word analysis skills to figure out unfamiliar words when reading and writing
- Describing characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details
- Participating in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of "how-to" books and using them to write a sequence of instructions)
- Taking part in conversations about topics and texts being studied by responding to the comments of others and asking questions to clear up any confusion

Sample Grade 1 Tasks in Math:

- Solving addition and subtraction word problems in situations of adding to, taking from, putting together, taking apart, and comparing
- Adding with a sum of 20 or less, and subtracting from a number 20 or less, for example by using strategies based around the number 10 (e.g., to solve $13 - 4$, one can start with 13, subtract 3 to reach 10, and then subtract 1 more to reach 9)
- Quickly and accurately adding with a sum of 10 or less, and quickly and accurately subtracting from a number 10 or less (e.g., $2 + 5$, $7 - 5$)



Grade 2

English Language Arts

Students in second grade will gain more skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. They continue to learn and practice rules for matching sounds to letters that make up words, and they learn new concepts — such as words that share the same root (e.g., *add* and *additional*) — that help them figure out the meanings of new words.

Writing will become an exciting way for your child to use newly-learned words and phrases to express ideas. As they write and speak, second graders will be more attentive to the formal and informal uses of English and will spell most words correctly in their writing.

How Can I Help?

- ✓ Read at home every day and assist your child by reading every other paragraph. Encourage your child to read to younger siblings, cousins, or other children you know.
- ✓ Have your child write a thank you note or letter to family members or friends.

Mathematics

In second grade, your child will build on last year's work and gain important new skills. One of the most important outcomes for the year is to add and subtract two-digit numbers quickly and accurately (e.g., $77 - 28$). Another important goal in second grade is to understand what the digits mean in a three-digit number such as 463 (namely, 463 is four hundreds, six tens, and three ones). Your child also will build expertise with solving addition and subtraction word problems.

Mastering addition and subtraction at the second grade level is important so that your child will not have to review and repeat this material in third grade, when the study of multiplication, division, and fractions will start.

How Can I Help?

- ✓ When saving for a purchase, compare the cost of the item to the amount of money you have; then ask your child to determine how much more money he or she needs to buy the item.
- ✓ When measuring your child's height, ask how many inches he or she has grown since the very first measurement.

Sample Grade 2 Tasks in ELA:

- Paying close attention to details, including illustrations and graphics, in stories and books to answer *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how* questions
- Determining the lesson or moral of stories, fables, and folktales
- Using text features (e.g., captions, bold print, indexes) to locate key facts or information efficiently
- Writing an opinion about a book he or she has read, using important details from the materials to support that opinion
- Writing stories that include a short sequence of events and include a clear beginning, middle, and end

Sample Grade 2 Tasks in Math:

- Quickly and accurately adding with a sum of 20 or less (e.g., $11 + 8$); quickly and accurately subtracting from a number 20 or less (e.g., $16 - 9$); and knowing all sums of one-digit numbers from memory by the end of the year
- Using understanding of place value to add and subtract three-digit numbers (e.g., $811 - 367$); adding and subtracting two-digit numbers quickly and accurately (e.g., $77 - 28$)



Grade 3

English Language Arts

Third grade is a pivotal year for your child. Learning to read with fluency and confidence will set the foundation for meeting the reading demands in later grades. By the end of the year, your child will reliably be able to make sense of multi-syllable words in books. He or she will also come to understand words and phrases that have meanings that are not literal (e.g., *a piece of cake*), and words that have relationships to other words (e.g., *company* and *companion*).

Recognizing and understanding words will help your child read increasingly challenging stories and books and build knowledge about the world around him or her. By the end of the year, your child also will be writing clear sentences and paragraphs on a range of topics, drawing on an expanding vocabulary.

How Can I Help?

- ✓ Encourage your child to find a picture from a newspaper or magazine, cut it out, paste it on paper, and write a story about it.
- ✓ Start a family vocabulary box or jar. Have everyone write down new words they discover, add them to the box, and use the words in conversation.

Mathematics

In third grade, your child will learn important new ideas and gain important new skills. One of the most important topics this year is multiplication and division. Another is fractions. Multiplication, division, and fractions are the building blocks for many life skills that students will learn in later grades, such as percentages. Students also need to master these topics to be ready for algebra and advanced math, so it is essential to get a good start with these topics in third grade.

How Can I Help?

- ✓ Notice those everyday occasions when you find yourself using your times tables — such as to determine how many days there are in four weeks. Ask your child for the answer.
- ✓ Involve your child when you notice yourself using division to “work backward” in the times tables — such as determining how many candies each child will get if 36 candies are shared equally among nine children at a party.

Sample Grade 3 Tasks in ELA:

- Describing the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in stories (e.g., first, second, third; cause and effect)
- Comparing the most important points and key details presented in two books on the same topic
- Writing stories that establish a situation and include details and clear sequences of events that describe the actions, thoughts, and feelings of characters
- Distinguishing the literal and non-literal meanings of words, such as *something’s fishy* and *cold shoulder*

Sample Grade 3 Tasks in Math:

- Multiplying and dividing up to 10×10 quickly and accurately, including knowing the times tables from memory
- Solving word problems using addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division
- Beginning to multiply numbers with more than one digit (e.g., multiplying 9×80)
- Understanding fractions and relating them to the familiar system of whole numbers (e.g., recognizing that $\frac{3}{1}$ and 3 are the same number)



Grade 4

English Language Arts

An important goal for fourth grade is building the stamina and skills to read challenging fiction, nonfiction, and other materials. Your child will continue to learn about the world as well as build vocabulary skills by reading more complicated stories and poems from different cultures and a range of books on history, science, art, and music.

Fourth grade students will also make important strides in their ability to explain plainly and in detail what a book says — both explicitly and what is implied from its details. Furthermore, your child will be writing effective summaries, book reports, and descriptions of characters or events that use correct grammar and punctuation.

How Can I Help?

- ✓ Urge your child to use logical arguments to defend his or her opinion. If your child wants a raise in allowance, ask him or her to research commonsense allowance systems and, based on that research, explain reasons why, supported by facts and details.
- ✓ Talk about the news together. Pick one story in the news, read it together, and discuss with your child what it means.

Mathematics

One of the main areas studied in fourth grade is arithmetic and applying it to solve problems. This is an important life skill, and your child should make significant strides in this area during the year. Your child will also build knowledge and skills with fractions to prepare for mastering this topic in fifth and sixth grades. These skills will help ensure your child is ready for algebra and advanced math.

How Can I Help?

- ✓ Ask your child to compare numbers using phrases like “times as much.” For example, if the family cat weighs 8 lbs. and the family dog weighs 56 lbs., how many times as much does the dog weigh?
- ✓ Ask your child to help you compare fractional amounts — for example, if one recipe calls for $\frac{2}{3}$ of a cup of oil, but another recipe calls for $\frac{3}{4}$ of a cup of oil, which recipe calls for more oil?

Sample Grade 4 Tasks in ELA:

- Paying close attention to key features of informational books and articles: understanding the main and supporting ideas; being able to compare and contrast information; and explaining how the author uses facts, details, and evidence to support particular points
- Writing summaries or opinions about topics supported with a set of well-organized facts, details, and examples
- Relating words that are common in reading to words with similar meanings (*synonyms*) and to their opposites (*antonyms*)

Sample Grade 4 Tasks in Math:

- Adding and subtracting whole numbers quickly and accurately (numbers up to 1 million)
- Multiplying and dividing multi-digit numbers in simple cases (e.g., multiplying $1,638 \times 7$ or 24×17 , and dividing 6,966 by 6)
- Understanding and applying equivalent fractions (e.g., recognizing that $\frac{1}{4}$ is less than $\frac{3}{8}$ because $\frac{2}{8}$ is less than $\frac{3}{8}$)
- Adding, subtracting, and multiplying fractions in simple cases (such as $2\frac{3}{4} - 1\frac{1}{4}$ or $3 \times \frac{5}{8}$), and solving related word problems



Grade 5

English Language Arts

In fifth grade, your child will read widely and deeply from a range of increasingly challenging fiction and nonfiction from diverse cultures and time periods. He or she will also build knowledge about subjects through research projects and responding analytically to literary and informational sources. In addition, your child will be expected to write stories or essays that are several paragraphs long.

By devoting significant time and effort to producing numerous written pieces over short and extended timeframes throughout the year, he or she also will gain control over many conventions of grammar, usage, and punctuation, as well as learn ways to make himself or herself understood.

How Can I Help?

- ✓ Invite your child to read his or her writing out loud to other family members. Ask questions about your child's word choices and ideas.
- ✓ Discuss your family stories and history. Encourage your child to ask relatives questions about their lives. Put the information together in an album or brainstorm different ways to tell family tales, such as poems or short stories.

Mathematics

Fifth grade is a milestone and a pivot point for students. The classroom focus on arithmetic during the elementary grades will develop into a more formal study of algebra in middle school. To be ready for algebra, students must have an understanding of fractional arithmetic, in part because even simple equations cannot be solved without fractions. Because of this, whole-number arithmetic comes mostly to a close in fifth grade, while multiplying and dividing fractions becomes a major focus.

How Can I Help?

Expose your child to real-life math applications, such as:

- ✓ Doing arithmetic with decimals, for example when balancing a checkbook.
- ✓ Multiplying with fractions — for example, if you used about $\frac{2}{3}$ of a $\frac{3}{4}$ -cup measure of vegetable stock, then how much stock did you use? About how much is left?

Sample Grade 5 Tasks in ELA:

- Summarizing the key details of stories, dramas, poems, and nonfiction materials, including their themes or main ideas
- Identifying and judging evidence that supports particular ideas in an author's argument to change a reader's point of view
- Integrating information from several print and digital sources to answer questions and solve problems
- Writing opinions that offer reasoned arguments and provide facts and examples that are logically grouped to support the writer's point of view

Sample Grade 5 Tasks in Math:

- Adding and subtracting fractions with unlike denominators (e.g., $\frac{2}{4} - \frac{1}{3}$), and solving word problems of this kind
- Multiplying fractions; dividing fractions in simple cases; and solving related word problems (e.g., finding the area of a rectangle with fractional side lengths; determining how many $\frac{1}{3}$ -cup servings are in 2 cups of raisins)
- Understanding the concept of volume, and solving word problems that involve volume



Grade 6

English Language Arts

In sixth grade, students apply skills they learned in earlier grades to make sense of longer, more challenging books and articles. This includes learning about how authors try to influence readers and finding reasons to support their ideas. By focusing on these skills, sixth grade students will sharpen their ability to write and speak with more clarity and coherence.

Students also will expand their vocabularies and use new words in their stories, reports, and essays. To meet these literacy goals, students must devote significant attention to precise details in their reading and when writing.

How Can I Help?

- ✓ Listen with your child to a television reporter, politician, or other speaker. Ask your child to tell you the speaker's main points. Was the speaker trying to convince the audience of something? How?
- ✓ Invite your child to participate in an adult gathering, such as a meal with friends, to practice listening skills and making conversation.

Mathematics

The skills and understanding that your child will gain during sixth grade are among the most important foundations for college and career readiness. These include working with ratios and rates and working with variables and variable expressions — the building blocks of algebra. Many of this year's topics will remain a major emphasis throughout the middle school years and into high school.

How Can I Help?

Expose your child to real-life math applications, such as:

- ✓ Determining the average speed of a family trip, based on the distance traveled and the time taken; or estimating the time that a trip will take, given the distance and an estimate of the average speed.
- ✓ Finding the surface area of the walls and ceiling in a room to determine the cost of painting the room.

Sample Grade 6 Tasks in ELA:

- Determining the correct meaning of a word based on the context in which it is used (e.g., the rest of the sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence)
- Evaluating the argument and specific claims in written materials or a speech, and distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not
- Reviewing and paraphrasing key ideas and multiple perspectives of a speaker
- Writing arguments that provide clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources

Sample Grade 6 Tasks in Math:

- Understanding ratios and rates, and solving problems involving proportional relationships (e.g., if it took 7 hours to mow 4 lawns, then at that rate, how many lawns could be mowed in 35 hours? At what rate were lawns being mowed?)
- Dividing fractions and solving related word problems (e.g., how wide is a rectangular strip of land with length $\frac{3}{4}$ mile and area $\frac{1}{2}$ square mile?)
- Using positive and negative numbers together to describe quantities; understanding the ordering and absolute values of positive and negative numbers



Grade 7

English Language Arts

In seventh grade, your child will analyze, define, compare, and evaluate ideas when reading, writing, speaking, and listening. He or she will continue to analyze how themes in fiction and nonfiction develop over the course of a book or article. Readings will include classic and contemporary pieces that represent diverse perspectives.

In particular, seventh grade students will be expected to demonstrate an enhanced ability to cite specific evidence when offering an interpretation of a text. They will use relevant evidence when supporting their own points in writing and speaking, making their reasoning clear to readers or listeners or constructively evaluating others' use of evidence.

How Can I Help?

- ✓ Visit a local art museum together. Take time to closely observe the details of the paintings or other art objects and talk about what you see there.
- ✓ Have your child help plan a family outing, using the Internet or library to research a place he or she is interested in.

Mathematics

In seventh grade, your child will grow in skill and understanding as he or she continues the previous grade's work in proportional relationships, equations, and positive and negative numbers. These topics will remain a major emphasis throughout the middle school years and into high school. A good command of rates and proportional relationships, including percentages, is also an important life skill.

How Can I Help?

- Expose your child to real-life math applications, such as:
- ✓ Figuring the amount of a 15% tip or determining what percentage of weekly income goes to pay taxes.
 - ✓ For a long-term project, help your child choose a stock and follow its value on the stock market using the newspaper or the Internet. Have your child calculate the stock's percent increase or decrease each month.

Sample Grade 7 Tasks in ELA:

- Citing several sources of specific evidence from a piece when offering an oral or written analysis of a book, essay, article, or play
- Determining an author's point of view or purpose in a nonfiction work and analyzing how the author takes a position different from other authors
- Avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citations (e.g., footnotes, bibliography)
- Using common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to defining the meaning of a word (e.g., *semi-*, *semiannual*, *semicircle*)

Sample Grade 7 Tasks in Math:

- Adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing positive and negative numbers, and solving related word problems
- Solving word problems that have a combination of whole numbers, fractions, and decimals (e.g., a woman making \$25 per hour receives a 10% raise; she will make an additional $\frac{1}{10}$ of her salary an hour, or \$2.50, for a new salary of \$27.50)
- Using statistics to draw inferences and make comparisons (e.g., deciding which candidate is likely to win an election based on a survey)



Grade 8

English Language Arts

To prepare for bigger challenges in high school, eighth grade students must grapple with major works of fiction and nonfiction that extend across cultures and centuries. As they work diligently to understand precisely what an author or speaker is saying, students also must learn to question an author's or speaker's assumptions and assess the accuracy of his or her claims. They also must be able to report findings from their own research and analysis of sources in a clear manner.

How Can I Help?

- ✓ Make time in everyone's busy schedule for family discussions about things going on around the world. Weekends can be a chance for everyone to catch up.
- ✓ Visit the campus of a local college with your teen. Begin talking about college early. What does he or she expect from college? What high school courses will your child need to pass to prepare for college?

Mathematics

In eighth grade, your child will continue to learn how to write and reason with algebraic expressions. Your child will also make a thorough study of linear equations with one and two variables. Building on previous work with relationships between quantities, your child will be introduced to the idea of a mathematical function. Furthermore, your child will prepare for high school geometry by understanding congruence (same shape and size) and similarity of geometric figures.

How Can I Help?

Expose your child to real-life math applications, such as:

- ✓ Solving interesting problems involving cylinders and spheres, such as figuring out how much water fits inside a garden hose, or how many earths would fit inside the sun.
- ✓ Analyzing data with a scatterplot, for example to decide whether exercise and obesity are related.

Sample Grade 8 Tasks in ELA:

- Citing the evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what is explicitly stated and/or implied from a book, article, poem, or play
- Analyzing where materials on the same topic disagree on matters of fact, interpretation, or point of view
- Using strong, active verbs to create a clear picture for the reader (e.g., *walk, skip, meander, lurch, limp*)
- Interpreting figures of speech (e.g., irony, puns) and developing a large vocabulary of general academic words and phrases

Sample Grade 8 Tasks in Math:

- Understanding slope, and relating linear equations in two variables to lines in the coordinate plane
- Solving linear equations (e.g., $-x + 5(x + 1/3) = 2x - 8$); solving pairs of linear equations (e.g., $x + 6y = -1$ and $2x - 2y = 12$); and writing equations to solve related word problems
- Working with positive and negative exponents, square root and cube root symbols, and scientific notation (e.g., evaluating $\sqrt{36 + 64}$)