

## Culture Matters

Teachers must be able to *CONNECT* with their learners before they can share core content. Teachers teach learners, not subjects. To truly engage learners, we must reach out to them in ways that are culturally & linguistically responsive and appropriate, and we must examine the cultural assumptions and stereotypes we bring into the classroom that may hinder interconnectedness.



# Parents' Guide to Support Learner Success

## EMPOWERING PARENTS TO SUPPORT THE COMMON CORE CHALLENGE AT HOME

2<sup>ND</sup> GRADE

As practitioners in education and facilitators of cultural competency training, we know that in order for learners to be successful in today's schools, parents need to be knowledgeable of the most effective ways to support learning at home. Educators can work collaboratively to assist their learners to be more successful, by tapping into support from home. This guide, which provides an overview of what your child will learn by the end of each grade level in English language arts/literacy and mathematics, prepares your child to be ready to succeed in the next grade level. This guide is based on the new Common Core State Standards, which have been adopted by 44 states (*at time of publication*). The Common Core State Standards are much more rigorous than the previously held standards amongst the states. In order to compete globally, our nation needs to increase critical thinking skills in our children.

This guide is designed to offer parents with creative ways to become involved in supporting their child's education as well as ways to communicate the expectations of the Common Core State Standards. If your child is meeting the expectations outlined in these standards, he or she will be prepared for the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

## WHY ARE ACADEMIC STANDARDS IMPORTANT?

The academic standards are important because they help ensure that all learners, no matter where they live, are prepared for success in college and in their chosen careers. Rigorous standards provide an important first step – a clear roadmap and process for learning – to be utilized by a collaborative team of facilitators of learning, parents, and learners. Having clearly defined goals helps families and facilitators of learning work together to ensure that learners succeed. They also will help your child develop critical thinking skills that will prepare him or her for college and career.



## A Snapshot of What Your Child Will Be Concentrating on in 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade

### English Language Arts & Literacy

In 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, learners will continue to build important reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. They will think, talk, and write about what they read in a variety of texts, such as stories, books, articles, and other sources of information including the Internet. Through the writing process, learners will learn how to develop a topic and strengthen their skills by editing and revising. Activities in these areas will embrace:

- Reading stories, including fables and folktales from different cultures, and identifying the lesson or moral of the story
- Reading texts about history, social studies, or science and identifying the main idea
- Paying close attention to details, including illustrations and graphics, in stories and books to answer *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how* questions
- Describing the reasons that an author gives to support a point
- Learning and using new words
- Determining the meaning of the new word formed when a known prefix or suffix is added to a known word (happy/unhappy; mind/mindful/mindless)
- Locating key facts or information efficiently using text features (i.e., captions, bold print, indexes)
- Learning the rules of spoken and written English
- Participating in class discussions by listening and building on what others are saying
- Describing in their own words information learned from articles, poems, or books read aloud
- Producing, expanding, and rearranging sentences (i.e., “The girl jumped the fence”; “The little girl jumped the fence”)
- Working together to gather facts and information on a topic
- Taking part in conversations by linking his or her comments to the remarks of others and asking and answering questions to gather additional information or deepen understanding of the topic
- Writing about a short series of events and describing actions, thoughts, and feelings
- Writing about opinions on books using important details and examples to support a position
- Writing stories that include a short sequence of events and include a clear beginning, middle, and end



## Partner with your child's teacher to have a focused conversation about learning

When you talk with your child's teacher keep in mind that you and your child's teacher are partners; a part of a team which includes your child. You are an important part of your child's education. Time may be limited and you can't cover everything. Therefore, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In 2<sup>nd</sup> grade for literacy, these include:

- Reading grade-level books and stories with understanding and fluency
- Building a foundation of knowledge through reading and listening to books in history/social studies, science, and other subjects
- Be prepared to ask the teacher questions like:
  - Is my child at the level where he/she should be at this point of the school year?
  - How is my child doing in writing?
  - In what areas is my child excelling?
  - What do you suppose is giving my child the most trouble? How can I help my child improve in this area?
  - What can I do to help my child with upcoming work?
  - If my child needs extra support or wants to learn more about a subject, are there resources to help his or her learning outside of the classroom?

## Mathematics

In 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, learners will extend their understanding of place value to the hundreds place. They will use this place value understanding to solve word problems, including those involving length and other units of measure. Learners will continue to work on their addition and subtraction skills, quickly and accurately adding and subtracting numbers up through 20 and also working with numbers up through 100. They will also build a foundation for understanding fractions by working with shapes and geometry. Activities in these areas will embrace:

- Quickly and accurately adding numbers together that total up to 20 or less (i.e., 6+9) or subtracting from numbers up through 20 (i.e., 18 – 9); and knowing all sums of one-digit numbers from memory by the end of the year
- Solving challenging one- or two-step word problems by adding or subtracting numbers up through 100 (i.e., a “one-step” problem would be: “Fatima has 45 apples fewer than Sarita. Sarita has 57 apples. How many apples does Fatima have?”)
- Understanding what the different digits mean in a three-digit number (place value)
- Adding (i.e., 711+ 280, 65+32 ) and subtracting two- and three-digit numbers (i.e., 942-322, 74-62)
- Measuring lengths of objects in standard units such as inches and centimeters

*Continued...*

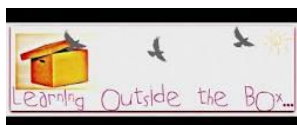
- Solving addition and subtraction word problems involving length (i.e., “The pen is 3 cm longer than the pencil. If the pencil is 8 cm, how long is the pen?”)
- Solving problems involving money
- Breaking up a rectangle into same-size squares
- Dividing circles and rectangles into halves, thirds, or fourths
- Solving addition, subtraction, and comparison word problems using information presented in a bar graph
- Writing equations to represent addition of equal numbers → *an equation is a mathematical statement that uses numbers and symbols, such as  $6+6=12$ .*
- Building, drawing, and analyzing 2-D and 3-D shapes to develop foundations for area, volume, and geometry in later grades



## Partner with your child’s teacher to have a focused conversation about learning

When you talk with your child’s teacher keep in mind that you and your child’s teacher are partners; a part of a team which includes your child. You are an important part of your child’s education. Time may be limited and you can’t cover everything. Therefore, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In 2<sup>nd</sup> grade for mathematics, these include:

- Counting to tell the number of objects (this will be an observation from your child’s teacher and not demonstrated in written work)
- Solving addition and subtraction word problems
- Be prepared to ask the teacher questions like:
  - Is my child at the level where he/she should be at this point of the school year?
  - In what areas is my child excelling?
  - What do you suppose is giving my child the most trouble? How can I help my child improve in this area?
  - What can I do to help my child with upcoming work?
  - If my child needs extra support or wants to learn more about a subject, are there resources to help his or her learning outside of the classroom?



All learning does not take place in the classroom, nor should it. Learning must continue at home, encouraging learners to “think outside the box.” Try to create a quiet place for your child to study, and set aside time *every day* when your child can concentrate. You should also set aside 15 to 30 minutes each week to sit down with your child, while he or she completes homework. This will help you to stay in tuned with what your child is working on, and it will help you to be the first to know if your child needs assistance with specific topics. Furthermore, here are some activities you can do with your child to support successful learning at home:

### English Language Arts & Literacy

- Provide time and space for your child to read independently. This reading time should be free from distractions such as television and gaming activities.
- Ask your child what topics, events, or activities he or she likes. With that information in mind, search for books, magazines, or other materials about those topics that would motivate your child to read.
- Model reading at home. It is helpful when your child sees other people reading at home. You can share what you have read.
- Have your child write a thank you note or letter to a neighbor, family members, or friends.
- Establish a family book club. Let different members of the family select the book. This is a good way to enjoy quality family time while experiencing the pleasure of reading together!
- Make sure your child has a library card. Take him or her to the library on a weekly basis. Children should select books in which they are interested to develop a love for reading. Many community libraries have book clubs and family activities that make reading fun for the entire family.
- Use technology to help strengthen your child’s interest in reading. Ask your child’s teacher for suggestions of websites where learners can read books or articles on line. The computer will help with words the learner cannot read independently. Libraries also have computers learners can use to access those sites.

### Mathematics

- Math can be so much fun if you make it a game. For example, “*I’m thinking of a number. It has 5 tens, 3 hundreds, and 4 ones. What is the number? 354.*” Or, using a deck of cards, deal two cards and ask your child to add the two numbers. You can also identify a target number and ask your child to either add or subtract to obtain that target number (be sure to use a target of 20 or less).
- Make it a practice to have your child explain the relationship between different numbers without counting. For example, 123 is 23 more than 100 and three less than 126.

- Look for “word problems” in everyday situations. Some 2<sup>nd</sup> grade examples might include:
  - 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.
  - Engage in “draw the shape.” For example, ask your child to draw a hexagon with one side longer than others, or ask him or her to shade in a quarter of a rectangle.
- Encourage your child to persevere, “sticking to it” whenever a problem seems difficult. This will help your child see that **everyone** can learn math.
- Praise for your child’s efforts in solving problems or understanding something for the first time.



For more information go to [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org)  
*the official online home of the Common Core State Standards*