

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

5TH 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 6th 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 5th Grade

English Language Arts & Literacy

In 5th grade, learners will continue to build important reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. They will read more challenging literature, articles, poems, and other sources of information and continue to extend their vocabulary. The expectation will be for them to understand and clearly summarize what they have learned from readings and classroom discussions, referring to specific evidence and details from the text. The opportunity to write must be on a regular basis. Learners will continue to gather, organize, interpret, and present information. Activities in these areas will embrace:

- Determining the theme of a story, play, or poem, including how characters respond to challenges
- Comparing and contrasting stories that deal with similar themes or topics
- Explaining how authors use reasons and evidence to support their points or ideas
- Identifying and judging evidence that supports particular ideas in an author's argument to change a reader's point of view
- Drawing on information from multiple books, articles, or online sources to locate an answer or to solve a problem quickly
- Learning the rules of spoken and written English
- Reporting on a topic or presenting an opinion with his or her own words, a logical sequence of ideas, sufficient facts and details, and formal English when appropriate
- Learning and using new words, including words related to specific subjects (such as science)
- Building knowledge of academic words with an emphasis on those that signal a contrast in ideas or logical relationships
- Using figurative language (For example, "*She eats like a bird.*")
- Coming to classroom discussions prepared, then engaging fully and thoughtfully with others (i.e., contributing accurate and relevant information; elaborating on the remarks of others; synthesizing ideas)
- Giving a class presentation on a topic or telling a story, introducing relevant facts and details in a clear, logical order, using formal English when appropriate
- Expanding, combining, and reducing sentences to improve meaning, interest, and style of writing
- Writing opinions that offer reasoned arguments and provide facts and examples that are logically grouped to support the writer's point of view
- Writing stories, real or imaginary, that unfold naturally and developing the plot with dialogue, description, and effective pacing of the action
- Producing writing on the computer
- Writing research or opinion papers over extended periods of time



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 5th grade for literacy, these include:

- Reading closely and drawing evidence from grade-level fiction and nonfiction materials, including the ability to quote accurately from them when answering questions
- Adjusting communications to accomplish a particular purpose (i.e., providing more background information for audiences who do not know the topic well)
- 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 5th grade, learners will build their understanding of the place value system by working with decimals up to the hundredths place. Learners will also add, subtract, and multiply fractions, including fractions with unlike denominators. They will continue to expand their geometry and measurement skills, learning the concept of volume and measuring the volume of a solid figure. Activities in these areas will embrace:

- Quickly and accurately multiplying multi-digit whole numbers
- Dividing numbers with up to four digits by two digit numbers
- Using exponents to express powers of 10 (in 10^2 , 2 is the exponent)
- Reading, writing, and comparing decimals to the thousandths place
- Adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing decimals to the hundredths place
- Writing and interpreting mathematical expressions using symbols such as parentheses. For example, "add 5 and 3, then multiply by 2" can be written as $2 \times (5+3)$.
- Adding and subtracting fractions with unlike denominators (bottom numbers – i.e., $2 \frac{1}{4} - 1 \frac{1}{3}$) by converting them to fractions with matching denominators and solving word problems of this kind

Continued...

- Multiplying fractions; dividing fractions in simple cases; and solving word related problems (i.e., finding the area of a rectangle with fractional side lengths; determining how many $\frac{1}{3}$ -cup servings are in 2 cups of oatmeal; determining the size of a share if 8 people share a 40 lb. sack of rice equally or if 3 people share $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of chocolate equally)
- Generalizing the place-value system to include decimals, and calculating with decimals to the hundredths place (two places after the decimal)
- Multiplying whole numbers quickly and accurately, such as, 1968×863 , and dividing whole numbers in simple cases, such as dividing 4,704 by 56
- Analyzing and determining relationships between numerical patterns
- Graphing points in the coordinate plane (two dimensions) to solve problems)
- Measuring volume and solving word problems using multiplication and addition

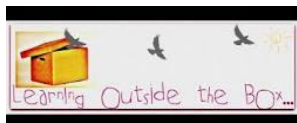
Staying



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 5th grade for mathematics, these include:

- Multiplying and dividing fractions, and solving related word problems
- Decimals (concepts and arithmetic)
- Volume (concepts and problem-solving)
- 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 he or she learned from reading and how that knowledge can be used in real life. Have him or her read the most interesting or useful sections aloud.
- Model reading at home. It is helpful when your child sees other people reading at home. You can share what you have read.
- 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.
- Assist your child in using references such as the Internet or a dictionary to look up unfamiliar words.
- Keep track of the time that your child spends reading every day. Note what kind of reading materials he or she likes (books, magazines, newspaper articles, the Internet, etc.). Then look for additional materials that would encourage your child to read more.
- Talk about the news together. Select one story in the news, read it together, and discuss with your child what it means.
- 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

- Use everyday objects to allow your child to explore the concept of fractions. An example being, have your child divide a healthy snack between three people. Ask, “How much does each person receive?” (Each person would receive $\frac{1}{3}$). Suppose there are three healthy snacks that you plan to share with two friends. Have your child describe the amount each person will receive.
- Look for “word problems” in real life. Some 5th grade examples might include:
 - Doing arithmetic with decimals, for example when balancing a checkbook.
 - Multiplying with fractions – such as, if you use $\frac{2}{3}$ cup of a $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of flour, then how much flour did you use? About how much is left?
- Have your child explain how to write fractions in different ways. For example, what are some different ways to write $\frac{4}{3}$? Answers could include $4 \div 3$, $1 \frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{2}{3} + \frac{2}{3}$, $2 \times \frac{2}{3}$, $\frac{8}{6}$, $4 \times \frac{1}{3}$, etc.
- Ask your child to give you a fraction equal to a decimal. For example, what are two fractions that can be used to represent 0.5? Answers could include $\frac{5}{10}$, $\frac{50}{100}$, $\frac{10}{20}$, or $\frac{1}{2}$.
- Ask your child to help you compare fractional amounts – for example, if one recipe calls for $\frac{2}{3}$ cup of milk, but another recipe calls for $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of milk, which recipe calls for more milk? (In the 5th grade, your child will learn ways to determine just how much more milk.)
- Using the length, width, and depth of a garden plot to determine how many bags of garden soil to buy.
- 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
the official online home of the Common Core State Standards