



Kindergarten

Parents' Guide to Student Success

THIS GUIDE INCLUDES:

- An overview of some of the key things your child will learn in English/Literacy, Math, Social Studies and Science in elementary school
- Ideas for activities to help your child learn more at home
- Topics of discussion for talking to your child's teacher about his or her academic progress

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The Parent Guide provides an overview of what your child will learn by the end of Kindergarten in Mathematics, English Language Arts/Literacy, Social Studies and Science. This guide is based on the MA Curriculum Framework for ELA and Literacy, the MA Mathematical Framework, the MA History and Social Science Framework, and the MA Science and Technology/ Engineering Curriculum Framework. If your child is meeting the expectations outlined in the standards, he or she will be well prepared for the first grade.

Why Are Academic Standards Important?

Academic standards are important because they help ensure that all students, no matter where they live, are prepared for success in college and the workforce. Standards provide an important first step – a clear roadmap for learning for teachers, parents, and students. Having clearly defined goals helps families and teachers work together to ensure that students succeed. Clearly defined goals also help your child develop critical thinking skills that will prepare him or her for college and career.

English Language Arts & Literacy

A Sample of What Your Child Will Work On in Kindergarten

- Naming upper and lower case letters, matching those letters with their sounds, and printing them
- Comparing the adventures of character experiences 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 compose beginning opinion pieces, informative texts, and narratives
- Stating an opinion or preference about a topic or book in writing (e.g., My favorite book is...)
- Taking part in classroom conversations and following rules for discussions (e.g., learning to listen to others and taking turns when speaking)
- Speaking clearly to express thoughts, feelings, and ideas, including descriptions of familiar people, places, things, and events
- Asking and answering questions about key details in stories or other information read aloud
- Understanding and using question words (e.g., who, what, where, when, why, and how) in discussions
- Learning to recognize, spell, and properly use those little grammatical words that hold the language together (e.g., a, the, to, of, from, I, is, are)

Keeping the Conversation Focused

When you talk to the teacher, do not worry about covering everything. Instead, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In Kindergarten, these include:

- Using knowledge of letters and letter-sound correspondences to spell words as they sound for writing
- Reading and understanding a story designed for early readers
- Speaking audibly and expressing thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly
- Actively engaging in group reading activities

Ask to see a sample of your child's work. Ask the teacher questions such as: *What does this show about my child as a learner? Does my child need extra support or want to learn more about a subject; are there resources to help his or her learning outside the classroom?*

Talking to
Your Child's
Teacher

Mathematics

A Sample of What Your Child Will Work On in Kindergarten

- 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
- Adding and subtracting very small numbers quickly and accurately (e.g., 3+1)
- Correctly naming shapes regardless of orientation or size (e.g., a square oriented as a “diamond” is still a square)

Talking to Your Child's Teacher

Keeping the Conversation Focused

When you talk to the teacher, do not worry about covering everything. Instead, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In Kindergarten, these include:

- Counting to tell the number of objects (this will not be written work; ask the teacher for his or her observations of your child's progress in this area)
- Solving addition and subtraction word problems

Science

A Sample of What Your Child Will Work On in Kindergarten

- Asking questions and answering questions about what happens when an object is pushed or pulled in different ways
- Expressing an opinion about what causes an object to change
- Identifying where animals live and why they live there
- Recording and predicting weather patterns and daily temperature
- Comparing weather patterns to previously recorded temperatures and weather patterns
- Describing and speaking clearly about seasons of the year and seasonal changes
- Understanding that systems are a group of things that rely on each other
- Comparing how changes in a system may cause a variety of other changes within the same or dependent systems

Talking to Your Child's Teacher

Keeping the Conversation Focused

When you talk to the teacher, do not worry about covering everything. Instead, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In Kindergarten, these include:

- Understanding applied math skills such as thermometer changes, habitat observations and science journaling; ask teacher for his or her observations in that area
- Reading about scientific and engineering practices; ask about books or resources that are appropriate to the kindergarten grade level
- Learning about local or regional events within the scientific community that support the child's understanding of kindergarten science and engineering concepts

Social Studies

A Sample of What Your Child Will Work On in Kindergarten

- Identifying sequential actions, such as *first, next, last*, in stories and personal experiences
- Using correctly words and phrases related to chronology and time (e.g., *now, long ago, before, after*)
- Using correctly words and phrases that indicate location and direction (e.g., *up, down, near, far, left, right, straight, back, behind, around, in front of*)
- Describing the function of a map and globe
- Using words relating to work, such as jobs, money, buying and selling
- Describing events and people celebrated during United States national holidays
- Learning about American symbols such as the American flag, the national anthem, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the current president
- Identifying and describing family and community members who promote the safety and welfare of children and adults
- Retelling stories that illustrate honesty, courage, friendship, respect, responsibility, and leadership

**Talking to
Your Child's
Teacher**

Keeping the Conversation Focused

When you talk to the teacher, do not worry about covering everything. Instead, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In Kindergarten, these include:

- Participating in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts
- Demonstrating understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally by asking and answering questions about key details
- Using a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to tell about events in the order in which they occurred
- Using a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts

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