



Grade 4

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 Grade 4 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 Mathematics 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 fifth 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 Grade 4

- Describing the basic elements of stories – such as theme, characters, events and settings – by drawing on specific details in the text
- Paying close attention to key features in informational books and articles (e.g., understanding main and supporting ideas; comparing and contrasting information; explaining how the author uses facts, details, graphics, and evidence to support particular points)
- Comparing themes, characters, events, and settings in stories and folklore from various cultures
- Writing narratives to develop real or imaginary experiences or events using effective organization and details
- Writing summaries or opinions about topics supported with a set of well-organized facts, details and examples
- Independently conducting short research projects on different aspects of a topic using evidence from books and digital sources
- Paraphrasing and responding to information presented in discussions, such as comparing and contrasting ideas and analyzing evidence that speakers use to support particular points
- Reporting orally on a topic or telling a story with enough facts and details
- Writing complete sentences with correct capitalization and spelling
- Retelling words that are common in reading to words with similar meanings (synonyms) and to their opposites (antonyms)

**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 Grade 4, these include:

- Reading and comprehending a range of grade-level books, stories, poems, and informational texts in various content areas
- Building understanding of relationships between words and nuances in word meanings – synonyms, antonyms, idioms - and using this knowledge to convey ideas precisely
- Writing stories and poems, opinions, and informative text with a focused topic, supportive facts and details, figurative language when appropriate, and closure

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?

Mathematics

A Sample of What Your Child Will Work On in Grade 4

- Using whole-number arithmetic to solve word problems, including problems with remainders and problems with measurements
- 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 $3,412 \times 4$, or 55×13 and dividing 3,241 by 3)
- Understanding and applying equivalent fractions (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
- Understanding simple decimals in terms of fractions (e.g., rewriting 0.62 as $\frac{62}{100}$)
- Measuring angles and finding unknown angles in a diagram
- Understanding concepts of angle and measure angles
- Classifying shapes by properties of their lines and angles

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When you talk to the teacher, do not worry about covering everything. Instead, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In Grade 4, these include:

- Using understanding of place value to add and subtract
- Solving more challenging addition and subtraction word problems
- Measuring lengths, and solving word problems involving addition and subtraction of lengths

Science

A Sample of What Your Child Will Work On in Grade 4

- Observing and interpreting patterns related to the transfer of matter and energy on Earth
- Learning and demonstrating energy in motion, transfer of energy and conversion of energy in different physical contexts.
- Observing and interpreting patterns of change over time as related to erosion, deposition in landscape formation
- Studying today's landscapes to provide evidence for past processes
- Learning that animals' internal and external structures support life, growth, behavior, and reproduction
- Using the engineering and design process to develop solutions by building, testing, and redesigning prototypes to fit a specific purpose

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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 Grade 4, these include:

- Understanding how energy works, transfers, and converts from one context to another
- Understanding that landforms change over time due to Earth's processes
- Building, testing and redesigning prototypes to fit a specific purpose

Social Studies

A Sample of What Your Child Will Work On in Grade 4

- Using map and globe skills to determine absolute locations (latitude and longitude) of places studied
- Interpreting a map using information from its title, compass rose, scale, and legend
- Locating North America on a map of the world
- Locating the United States, Canada, Mexico, Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, major rivers, mountain ranges and other physical characteristics on a map of North America
- Describing the climate, major physical characteristics, and major natural resources of Canada
- Describing the climate, major physical characteristics, and major natural resources of Mexico
- Locating the different regions of the United States on a map of North America
- Identifying the states, state capitals, and major cities in each region
- Describing the climate, major physical features and major natural resources in each region
- Observing and describing national historic sites and describing their significance
- Providing examples of the major rights that immigrants have acquired as citizens of the United States (e.g., right to vote; freedom of religion, speech, assembly and petition)
- Identifying major immigrant groups who have come to America, locating their countries of origin and where they tended to settle in large numbers
- Giving examples of how the interactions of buyers and sellers influence the process of goods and services in markets

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When you talk to the teacher, do not worry about covering everything. Instead, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In Grade 4, these include:

- Participating in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about Fourth Grade topics and texts
- Reading and demonstrating understanding of grade-level informational text
- Determining the main idea of a text and explaining how it is supported by key details; summarizing a text
- Interpreting information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g. charts, graphs, maps, diagrams)
- Integrating information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably
- Determining the meaning of domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area
- Writing informative texts and opinions with focused topics and organizational structures including key details and evidence, graphics, quotations, and conclusion

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