

Great Expectations

Partnering for your
child's future

1



2

3

4

5

6

7

8



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

Great Schools Start with Great Expectations

Learning standards describe the foundation of what students should know and be able to do in each grade. These standards ensure that all children are prepared to move forward to the next grade and, later, to succeed in college, earn a living, and become productive members of their communities. Children need to develop a love of learning that will serve them well in a world where crucial information changes and grows rapidly.

To find work in the competitive global economy and function in a quickly changing world, our children will need to know more than ever before. This is true for graduates who plan to enroll in four-year colleges; it is equally true for students who want to start careers right out of high school.

The New York State standards we use are designed to provide our students with rigorous curricula to ensure that they develop the creativity, critical thinking skills, and ability to problem solve that they will need to meet the challenges of the modern world. But standards are a starting point, not a destination. By meeting and building on a solid foundation of knowledge, our students will get the most from their education.

Here you will find examples of what first grade students should know and be able to do by the end of the school year in language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. You also will find ways you can support learning as a family, including things you can do at home, in your neighborhood, and around our great City.

This guide provides only a small sample of the standards for first grade. What about the other standards? What should your child have learned before starting first grade? What will he or she be learning in second grade and beyond? You can find answers to all these questions from your child's teacher or on our Web site at www.nyc.gov/schools/academics.

Good Study Habits

To help your child develop good study habits:

- ❑ Set up a comfortable location at home for doing homework.
- ❑ Help your child get organized.
- ❑ Set up a regular homework time.
- ❑ Make sure your child knows the teacher's homework policies.

For other ideas, visit www.nyc.gov/schools/academics.



Students with Disabilities

Unless otherwise stated on the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), students with disabilities will participate in the general education curriculum, which can be adapted for different instructional levels and different settings (such as Collaborative Team Teaching classes or self-contained special education classes). Adaptations may include using instructional aids such as calculators and visual aids, providing additional time to learn new skills, and reducing the length of assignments to help students with disabilities meet the standards.

Ask Your Child's Teacher



Learning standards provide a great opportunity for you to talk with teachers about what your child is learning in school and how you can support this learning at home. Here are some questions you may want to ask.

To learn more about a standard:

- Can you show me examples of student work that meets this standard?
- May I look at some of my child's work related to this standard?
- When will my child work on this standard during the school year?
- What activities and materials are you using in school to help my child meet and exceed this standard? What classwork and homework do you expect to assign?
- What are some exercises I can do with my child to help him or her with this standard?
- Besides the standards covered in this guide, what else is my child expected to learn this year?

To learn how your child is doing in school:

- In what subjects is my child working at grade level? Are there any areas that need improvement?
- Is my child reading at grade level? Can you show me some books that my child can read?
- How much time each day does my child spend working on each subject area?
- How do you assess my child on these subjects during the year?

To learn how to support your child:

- Besides report cards, what are the best ways to keep up to date on how my child is doing?
- If your child is not on grade level: What support is the school able to offer my child? What can I do at home to help my child do better in school?
- If your child is on grade level or above: What extra enrichment and support do you suggest for my child? How can I help at home?

1

Language Arts

By the end of the school year, all students should be able to:

- Use their knowledge of root words, compound words, prefixes, suffixes, and plurals to decode grade-level words.
- Read common word families (“sat,” “cat,” “mat,” etc.).
- Read grade-level texts with appropriate speed, accuracy, and expression.
- Study antonyms, synonyms, and homonyms, as well as categories of words (such as animals and place names) to learn new grade-level vocabulary.
- Write about what they have read in different ways: to describe the characters, setting, or events; to list a sequence of events in a story; to retell a story using words that they know; to identify a problem and solution in a simple story.
- Use punctuation marks, such as commas, question marks, and periods as clues to help express the meaning of sentences when reading. For example, know that a period means to stop and an exclamation point means to read with extra energy.
- Write or draw pictures to capture important understandings (share what they have learned about a topic, respond to an experience).
- Use comprehension strategies (such as predict/confirm, reread, self-correct, ask questions) to clarify the meaning of what they have read.
- Speak for different purposes, and vary language (formal or informal) according to the purpose of communication (to inform, to entertain, etc.).
- Identify and produce letter-sound correspondences, including consonants and short and long vowels, such as knowing the difference between the “a” in “mat” and the “a” in “mate.”
- Discuss stories and themes or topics in small or large group settings.



Learning at Home

The following strategies can be done in the families’ native languages as well as in English.

Be a friendly audience as your child acts out stories from books or television shows. Talk about how different characters feel or what they might do next.

Read aloud with your child. Children also can hear and read books online in English, French, or Spanish at the New York Public Library’s site, “On-Lion” for Kids. Go to kids.nysl.org and click on “TumbleBooks.”

Collect new words from books you read together. When you find a new word, ask your child to write it on a small card or sheet of paper and put it in a place where you both can see it. See how many times you can use the word.

Ask family members to send letters to your child and encourage your child to write back.

Take your child to your local library every week.

Mathematics



By the end of the school year, all students should be able to:

- Count to 100 by ones (1, 2, 3, ...) and by tens (10, 20, 30, ...). Also count to 50 by fives (5, 10, 15, ...) and to 20 by twos (2, 4, 6, ...).
- Count backward from 20 by ones (20, 19, 18, ...).
- Develop an initial understanding of the base-ten system.
 - 10 ones = 1 ten
 - 10 tens = 1 hundred
- Write numbers up to 100.
- Add numbers with sums up to 10.
- Use drawings or pictures to explain a math problem or problem-solving process. For example, show that three balloons plus four balloons plus one balloon equals eight balloons.
- Subtract one-digit numbers. For example, $7 - 4 = 3$.
- Recognize geometric shapes and structures in the environment. For example, recognize a triangle in a Yield street sign.
- Use objects such as paper clips or the length of your child's foot to determine the length of a space or object. For example, count the number of paces from one side of a room to the other.
- Identify and discuss patterns in arithmetic (what comes next in a repeating pattern, using numbers or objects). Collect and record data for a question, such as, "What is today's temperature?"

Learning at Home

Point out how your family uses math every day. For example, when you are serving pizza or a cake, talk about how the pieces are fractions of a whole. Encourage your child to notice other examples.

Use a thermometer to determine the temperature outside your home at the same time each day or find the daily high and low temperatures on the Web or in a newspaper. Record and discuss the results.

Play board games.

Together, explore the relationships among art, color, shape, and math at the Children's Museum of the Arts. Go to cmany.org for information and directions.

Science

Science in first grade explores animal diversity, the properties of matter, and changes in weather and the seasons.

By the end of the school year, all students should be able to:

- Recognize that water evaporates when it is left in an open container. Understand that water as a liquid changes into a gas as it moves into the air.
- Recognize that the material or materials that make up an object determine its properties, such as whether it will sink or float.
- Observe and describe the weather conditions that occur in each season. For example, observe that it snows usually only in winter, but it can rain in any season.
- Compare temperatures in different locations, for example, in the house and outside, in the sun and in the shade.
- Describe how the sun appears to move during the day.
- Know that there is a cycle of day and night every 24 hours.
- Recognize that the sun's energy warms the air.
- Describe how an animal's physical traits, like a giraffe's long neck, a turtle's shell, or a polar bear's heavy fur, help the animal survive.
- Recognize that some traits of living things have been inherited, for example, the number of limbs an animal has.
- Communicate what they have observed by speaking and writing.

Learning at Home

Play "Will It Float?" with your child. Gather small waterproof objects, such as a tennis ball, building block, pencil, and marble. Ask your child to examine each item and predict whether it will sink or float. Test the predictions in a bowl or sink filled with water.

Collect photos of a new baby or pet in your family. From time to time, look at the pictures together and ask your child to talk about any changes.

Visit the Tisch Children's Zoo at the Central Park Zoo or find pictures of New York City zoos on the Web, nyzoosandaquarium.com. Talk about how zoos make sure that animals from other environments have what they need to survive in this climate.

Encourage your child to talk to your family about scientific observations you make together. Help your child write down and organize information, make drawings or photos, and discuss his or her observations with your family.



Learning at Home

Start a family history box. Help your child collect photos, newspaper clippings, letters, maps, and other items. Include facts about your family, such as where other family members live now.

Check out Panwapa, www.panwapa.com, an interactive, online global community for children ages 4–7 created by the Sesame Workshop. The site features a new cast of Muppet characters who help children become citizens of their world and community.

Let your child help you find and prepare a simple, traditional recipe from another country, such as *picadillo* (ground beef and olives) from Cuba, *mofongos* (plantain balls) or *arroz con habichuelas* (rice and beans) from Puerto Rico, or *perogi* (dumplings) from Russia.

Visit one of the many historical societies, museums, and children's museums in New York City each month.



Social Studies

In first grade social studies, students explore the concepts of families, including the students' own families, now and long ago.

By the end of the school year, all students should be able to:

- Know that families have their own histories.
- Understand the function of money (and that people make decisions about money) and how it is used to meet our needs and wants.
- Know that laws can be made and changed by governments.
- Share information about a topic in social studies in writing or through discussion.
- Read and listen to fiction and nonfiction books related to history, geography, and famous people.
- Know about people and events that are important in their community's history.
- Make paintings or drawings that show different cultural traditions, such as a family holiday celebration.
- Explore and identify their own family's history. For example, know why and how a parent, grandparent, aunt, or uncle first came to New York.
- Create simple maps of familiar places or areas (bedrooms, classrooms, school, and neighborhood), showing where desks, bookshelves, and other items are located.
- Understand that the American flag is a symbol of the United States.
- Understand and follow rules for their classroom, school, and community.

More Essential Knowledge and Skills

Our first grade students are learning much more than to read, write, do math, and understand key concepts in science and social studies.

- **Arts:** First grade students participate in visual arts, dance, music, and theater. They learn to sing simple songs and explore rhythm using musical instruments; explore patterns and shapes with their bodies through creative movement; create visual art using a variety of tools and materials; and express themselves through dramatic play, stories, and puppets. For more details, visit www.nyc.gov/schools/artseducation.
- **Fitness and Health:** Students engage in a wide variety of opportunities to be physically active, learn how to make healthy decisions, develop a healthy lifestyle, and experience a wide variety of traditional and nontraditional fitness activities. For more details, visit www.nyc.gov/schools/academics/fitnessandhealth.
- **Library and Research:** Students continue to gain reading and research skills. By the end of the year, they will be able to share what they know about a topic; recognize facts; find facts to answer questions; figure out the main idea of a story; and enjoy reading fiction and nonfiction books. For more details, visit www.nyc.gov/schools/academics/libraryservices.
- **Technology:** First grade students experiment with editing, moving, and saving resources they created using a variety of tools, such as word processors. Students learn different media formats (such as text, clip art, and newsletters) and use them to communicate and share ideas with classmates. Teachers continue to model safe and acceptable use of Web resources. For more details, visit www.nyc.gov/schools/studentssupport/instructionaltechnology.

Learn More

This guide provides only an overview of the many standards your child will be learning this year. You can view and download copies of these guides for grades K–8 as well as the complete standards for all subjects and all grades on our Web site at www.nyc.gov/schools/academics.

The Division of Teaching and Learning and the Office for Family Engagement and Advocacy (OFEA) offer additional information about your child's education and ideas on how you can support it, both at home and at your child's school. For more information, visit both the Teaching and Learning Web site, www.nyc.gov/schools/offices/teachlearn, and the OFEA Web site, www.nyc.gov/schools/offices/OFEA. You also can contact your school's parent coordinator or OFEA at (212) 374-2323 or ofea@schools.nyc.gov. Plus, you can call 311 for additional cultural and historical institutions in the City to visit with your children.



Department of
Education

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

