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Great Expectations

Partnering for your child's future



**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 second 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 second grade. What about the other standards? What should your child have learned before starting second grade? What will he or she be learning in third 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?

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Language Arts

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

- Read unfamiliar informational texts (such as instructions) to collect and interpret data, facts, and ideas.
- Compare and contrast similarities and differences among characters and events across stories.
- With assistance, compare information on one topic from more than one text.
- Write interpretive essays and responsive essays that identify title, author, and illustrator. For example, describe story elements or express a personal response to literature.
- Create imaginative stories and personal narratives using the writing process (for example, organizing, drafting, revising, and editing), such as imagining life in space or telling about the day they got a new pet.
- Speak with expression, volume, pace, and facial or body gestures appropriate to the purpose of the communication, topic, and audience.
- Blend sounds using knowledge of letter-sound correspondences in order to make sense of unfamiliar, grade-level words with more than one syllable.
- Decode using knowledge of known words and word families to read new words.
- Use spelling resources, such as dictionaries, word walls, and/or computer software to spell words correctly.
- Write sentences in logical order and use paragraphs to organize topics.
- Use capitalization, punctuation, and spelling rules to produce final written products.



Learning at Home

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

Encourage your child to read to younger brothers and sisters, cousins, or other children you know.

Ask your child to find an interesting photograph and write a story about it. Talk about how details such as time of day or location might help your child create characters, setting, and plot.

Click on "Games" on the New York Public Library's "On-Lion" for Kids Web site, kids.nypl.org/arts/activities.cfm, for a huge collection of fun activities related to books and the arts.

Once a week, have a family book report time. Help your child find creative ways to talk about favorite books. For example, write and perform a poem or song about one of the characters.

Mathematics



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

- Understand the base-ten system:
 - 10 ones = 1 ten
 - 10 tens = 1 hundred
 - 10 hundreds = 1 thousand
- Identify connections between repeated addition and multiplication. For example, $2 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 = 10$ and $5 \times 2 = 10$.
- Understand that division is about separating objects into equal groups (fair shares). For example, four children share 12 cookies fairly. How many cookies would each child get?
- Estimate the number of objects in a group of up to 100 items. Count the objects to see how many actually are in the group.
- Put objects in groups according to their similarities. For example, put all the right triangles in a pile.
- Use the symbols $<$ (less than) and $>$ (greater than) to compare whole numbers up to 100. Do this with and without a number line.
- Display data in graphs, using pictures (pictographs) or bars (bar graphs).
- Use graphs to make conclusions or predictions.
- Use manipulatives, such as blocks, to show what is happening in a math problem. For example, show that if you have seven blocks and take away five, two will remain.
- Explain how a math problem is solved, telling what steps were taken and why.

Learning at Home

Help your child practice estimating using objects found in your home. How many books or cans are on a shelf? How many pairs of socks are in a drawer?

Play music your child enjoys and listen together for patterns—sounds, lines, words, and rhythms that vary and repeat. Discuss how patterns vary in different songs.

Visit the Web site of the U.S. Treasury Bureau of Engraving and Printing, www.moneyfactory.gov/newmoney/main.cfm/learning/fun, to find games about our nation's currency that your child can download or play online.

Play board games.

Science

Science in second grade explores forces and motion, earth materials, and plant diversity.

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

- Know and show that the force of gravity pulls objects toward the center of the earth.
- Observe and describe how the force of gravity can affect objects through air, liquids, and solids.
- Investigate the properties of different types of soil. For example, observe their different colors, textures, materials, and abilities to retain water.
- Observe and describe the physical properties of rocks (for example, their sizes, shapes, colors, and if any fossils are in the rocks).
- Know that processes such as freezing, thawing, and wearing down by weather change the earth's surface over time.
- Identify things that make plants alike and things that make them different.
- Recognize that plants closely resemble their parents and other plants of the same species.
- Recognize that plants reproduce from seeds.
- Recognize that plants need light, air, water, and nutrients to live and thrive.
- Recognize that plants respond to changes in their environment, such as temperature or rain.

Learning at Home

Encourage your child to start a rock collection. Start with rocks from your neighborhood and other parts of New York City. Add rocks from places you visit on family vacations, and ask family and friends who travel to bring back rocks from those places.

Plan a family visit to the rock and mineral collections at the American Museum of Natural History on the Upper West Side. Your child also can use the museum's online field guide to identify and compare rocks. Go to www.amnh.org/nationalcenter/online_field_journal. Click on "Field Journals" and choose "Rocks." Check out the material on rocks and fossils on the Museum's Web site for kids, Ology, at www.amnh.org/ology.

Take a walk through Central Park or another New York City park near your neighborhood. Look for exposed surfaces, such as riverbeds or hillsides that show the effects of water, wind, or other elements. Talk about how these places came to look the way they do.



Learning at Home

Find time for your family to talk about things that are important to your family and your community.

Walk through your neighborhood and ask your child to point out different things your city provides to make life better for people who live there. For example, schools, street signs, trash collection, police and fire protection, and other services.

Visit the New York City Police Museum, www.nycpolicemuseum.org, or the New York City Fire Museum, www.nycfiremuseum.org, to learn how these two important professions serve the New York City community.

Help your child make a personal online flag that represents your family's heritage and values. Go to www.wearemulticolored.org, a project of New York's Lower East Side Tenement Museum.



Social Studies

In second grade social studies, students explore the concepts of their own and other communities in the United States.

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

- Understand key ideas about their community and local region, such as how New York City is governed, that it has five boroughs, and that it is an important center of trade for the United States and the world.
- Understand how different communities help meet people's needs and wants. For example, a rural community grows food and an urban community is a place where people buy and sell goods.
- Explain how communities are influenced by geography.
- Talk about how citizens develop rules and laws to protect the community and its members.
- Develop an understanding of the people, traditions, practices, and ideas that make up different communities.
- Tell about and describe key places in their own community and in New York City.
- Understand and explain how and why New York City has changed over time.
- Use symbols to create maps that show features of their own and other New York City communities.
- Explore how communities use taxes to pay for services they provide, such as schools, parks, trash collection, and police and fire protection.
- Understand how symbols of citizenship, such as flags or city and state seals, communicate the values and traditions of the community.

More Essential Knowledge and Skills

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

- **Arts:** Second grade students participate in visual arts, dance, music, and theater. They engage in original art making using the materials, language, and concepts of each art form; attend exhibits and performances at museums, theaters, and other resources in their community; and become aware of careers in the arts. 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:** By the end of the year, second grade students can ask “I wonder” questions about a research topic; follow a process for researching topics in the library; write, draw, or verbalize the main idea and supporting details for their researched topics; present information in different ways; and show that they understand stories that they read or that are read to them by the librarian. For more details, visit www.nyc.gov/schools/academics/libraryservices.
- **Technology:** Second grade students are familiar with common uses of technology in daily life. Teachers and students begin to discuss safe and acceptable uses of Web resources. Second grade students can now select the appropriate technology tool to solve particular problems (such as a drawing program to make a picture or presentation software to communicate and illustrate an idea). Students present work using a variety of media (such as presentation software and newsletter templates) and use Web pages as resources for clip art, music, and information resources. For more details, visit www.nyc.gov/schools/studentsupport/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.



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