

A Parent's Guide to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)



"Lifelong learning... filling the future with options."

Kindergarten



The CCSS set high expectations for all students. They are rigorous and internationally benchmarked; research- and evidence-based; and aligned with college and career expectations.

Frequently Asked Questions

Will my child have new grade level standards?

Yes, every student in grades K-12 will have new English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Standards.

Why is the emphasis placed on English Language Arts and Math?

The state is working on developing standards for Social Studies and Science; however, ELA and Math were developed first to provide the foundation for the other subject areas.

Will instruction look different in my child's classroom?

Yes, your child's teacher will be creating lessons with a greater focus on collaborative learning, critical thinking, presentation and research, utilizing more non-fiction resources while linking content to real world situations.

Will the CCSS change the way my child completes his or her work?

Yes, your child will be required to think things through and be able to articulate and write out the "why" behind their answer; including being able to cite evidence, make arguments and defending the answer.

Brought to you by the CCUSD Educational Services Department



English Language Arts & Literacy

Learning new language skills is a hallmark of kindergarten. Your child will learn about the alphabet and its role in reading. Your child will practice rhyming, matching words with beginning sounds, and blending sounds into words. Practice with these types of activities is a powerful step toward learning to read and spell correctly. The size of your child's vocabulary is another key factor in his or her ability to read and comprehend books and stories. Your child also will begin to experiment with writing and will be encouraged to use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing letters to share information, ideas, and feelings.

A Sample of What Your Child Will Be Working on in Kindergarten

- Naming upper- and lower-case letters, matching those letters with their sounds, and printing them
- Comparing the adventures and experiences of characters 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 describe an event, including his or her reaction to what happened
- 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, 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*)

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:

- Using knowledge of letters and letter-sound correspondences to figure out how to spell words as they sound
- Reading and understanding a story designed for early readers

Ask to see a sample of your child's work. Ask the teacher questions such as: Is this piece of work satisfactory? How could it be better? Is my child on track? How can I help my child improve or excel in this area? If my child needs extra support or wants to learn more about a subject, are there resources to help his or her learning outside the classroom?

Young children arrive in kindergarten with widely varying knowledge in math. By the end of the year, your child must have some important foundations in place. One of the most important skills your child should develop is the ability to add and subtract small numbers and use addition and subtraction to solve word problems. This will rely on gaining some fundamentals early in the year, such as counting objects to tell how many there are. Addition and subtraction will continue to be a very strong focus in math through 2nd grade.

A Sample of What Your Child Will Be Working on in Kindergarten

- Counting objects to tell how many there are
- Adding and subtracting very small numbers quickly and accurately (e.g., $3 + 1$)
- Comparing two groups of objects to tell which group, if either, has more; comparing two written numbers to tell which is greater
- Correctly naming shapes regardless of orientation or size (e.g., a square oriented as a “diamond” is still a square)
- 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

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

Ask to see a sample of your child’s work. Ask the teacher questions such as: Is this piece of work satisfactory? How could it be better? Is my child on track? How can I help my child improve or excel in this area? If my child needs extra support or wants to learn more about a subject, are there resources to help his or her learning outside the classroom?

**Talking to
Your Child’s
Teacher**

Help Your Child Learn at Home

Learning does not end in the classroom. Children need help and support at home to succeed in their studies. Try to create a quiet place for your child to study, and carve out time *every day* when your child can concentrate on reading, writing, and math uninterrupted by friends, brothers or sisters, or other distractions.

You should also try and sit down with your child at least once a week for 15 to 30 minutes while he or she works on homework. This will keep you informed about what your child is working on, and it will help you be the first to know if your child needs help with specific topics. By taking these small steps, you will be helping your child become successful both in and outside the classroom.

Additionally, here are some activities you can do with your child to support learning at home:

English Language Arts & Literacy

- Read with your child every day, books like *Are You My Mother* by P.D. Eastman or *Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr. Seuss. Ask your child to explain his or her favorite parts of the story. Share your own ideas. To find more books for your child to read, visit www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf.
- Encourage your child to tell you about his or her day at school. Keep paper, markers, or crayons around the house for your child to write letters or words or draw a picture about his or her day. Have your child describe the picture to you.
- Play word games like *I Spy*, sing songs like *Itsy Bitsy Spider*, and make silly rhymes together.

Mathematics

Look for “word problems” in real life. Some kindergarten examples might include:

- Play “Write the next number.” You write a number, and your child writes the next number.
- Ask your child questions that require counting as many as 20 things. For example, ask, “How many books do you have about wild animals?”
- Ask your child questions that require comparing numbers. “Who is wearing more bracelets, you or your sister?” (Your child might use matching or counting to find the answer.)

For more information, the full standards are available at www.corestandards.org.



National PTA
1250 N Pitt Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
Toll-Free: (800) 307-4PTA (4782)
PTA.org • info@pta.org