NYC Department of Education
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Council of the Great City Schools

parent ROADMAP

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD IN GRADE ONE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

America's schools are working to provide higher quality instruction than ever before.

The way we taught students in the past simply does not prepare them for the higher demands of college and careers today and in the future. Your school and schools throughout the country are working to improve teaching and learning to ensure that all children will graduate high school with the skills they need to be successful.

In English language arts and literacy, this means three major changes. Students will continue reading and writing. But in addition to stories and literature, they will read more texts that provide facts and background knowledge in areas including science and social studies. They will read more challenging texts and be asked more questions that will require them to refer back to what they have read. There will also be an increased emphasis on building a strong vocabulary so that students can read and understand challenging material.

What your child will be learning in grade one English language arts and literacy

In grade one, your child will build important reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. Students will continue to learn the letters and sounds that make up words. They will think, talk, and write about what they read in stories, articles, and other sources of information. In their writing, students will work on putting together clear sentences on a range of topics using a growing vocabulary. Activities in these areas will include:

- Reading stories and showing they understand the lesson or moral of the story
- Asking and answering questions about a story, including characters, settings, and major events
- Comparing and contrasting the experiences of different characters
- Identifying the reasons an author gives to support a point
- Explaining differences between texts that tell stories and texts that provide information
- Learning and using new words
- Participating in class discussions by listening, responding to what others are saying, and asking questions
- Describing people, places, things, and events, expressing feelings and ideas clearly
- Learning basic rules of spoken and written English
- Working with others to gather facts and information on a topic
- Writing to describe an event, provide information on a topic, or share an opinion

Partnering with your child's teacher

Don't be afraid to reach out to your child's teacher—you are an important part of your child's education. Ask to see a sample of your child's work or bring a sample with you. Ask the teacher questions like:

- Is my child reading on grade level?
- How is my child doing in writing?
- What are my child's strengths and weaknesses?
- What can I do at home to make sure that my child is successful?

In grade one, students will read stories and poems. Additionally, they will read to learn information about history, the world, science, and other areas. Here are just a few examples of how your child will develop important reading skills across grade levels.

READING LITERATURE

Kindergarten Reading	Grade One Reading	Grade Two Reading
• With help from the teacher, students retell stories, including key details. • With help from the teacher, students name the author and illustrator of a story and define the role of each in telling the story.	• Students retell stories, including key details, and show that they understand the lesson or moral of a story. • Students identify who is telling the story at various points in a text.	• Students retell stories and determine their central message, lesson, or moral. • Students acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud.

READING FOR INFORMATION

Kindergarten Reading	Grade One Reading	Grade Two Reading
• With help from the teacher, students ask and answer questions about key details in a text. • With help from the teacher, students identify what person, place, thing, or idea a picture shows.	• Students ask and answer questions about key details in a text. • Students use the illustrations and details in a text to describe key ideas.	• Students ask and answer such questions as , and to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text. • Students explain how specific images or illustrations (such as a diagram of how a machine works) are useful.

Students will read more challenging texts and materials as they progress through grade levels.

Writing tasks in grade one may include stories, essays, reports, and persuasive papers. Here are just a few examples of how your child will develop important writing skills across grade levels.

Kindergarten Writing	Grade One Writing	Grade Two Writing
• Using a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing, students name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.	• Students name a topic and supply some facts about the topic. • Students provide some sense of closure.	• Students introduce a topic and use facts and definitions to develop points. • Students provide a concluding statement or section.

Some writing guidelines may seem similar from year to year. However, with practice at each grade level, students continue to learn and apply the rules of standard written English and to strengthen and expand their vocabulary, use of language, and organization of ideas.

Helping your child learn outside of school

1. Provide time and space for your child to read independently. This reading time should be free from distractions such as television.
2. Ask your child what topics, events, or activities he or she likes. Then look for books, magazines, or other materials about those topics that would motivate your child to read.
3. It is also helpful when your child sees other people reading at home. You could share what you have read.
4. Start a family book club. Let different members of the family pick the book. This could be a good way to enjoy quality family time while experiencing the joy of reading together!
5. Be sure your child has a library card. Children should select books in which they are interested to develop a passion for reading. Many libraries have book clubs and family activities that make reading fun for the entire family.
6. Use technology to help build your child's interest in reading. There are several websites where students can read books or articles online. The computer will help with words the student cannot read independently. Libraries also have computers students can use to access those sites. Feel free to ask a librarian or teacher for suggestions.

Additional Resources

For more information on the Common Core State Standards for English language arts and literacy, go to http://www.corestandards.org/about-the-standards/key-points-in-english-language-arts or http://www.commoncoreworks.org.

For more information on helping your child become a reader, go to http://www2.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/reader/index.html.