

PRE
K

Great Expectations

Partnering for your
child's future



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**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 prekindergarten students should know and be able to do by the end of the school year in language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and the arts. 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 prekindergarten. What about the other standards? What will your child be learning in prekindergarten 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/EarlyChildhood.

Habits to Support Success in School

- ❑ Create a routine and have your child go to bed at the same time every night.
- ❑ Read! Read! Read! Twenty minutes every day in English or your native language. Make this a loving time when you and your child can cuddle together.
- ❑ Use counting in your daily activities.

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



Students with Disabilities

Identified students with mild to moderate disabilities participate in the Universal Prekindergarten Plus programs in public school settings. These children learn alongside their typically developing peers in these inclusion classes. To help children meet the standards, additional staff is provided to reduce the adult-child ratio so that more individual attention is provided. Children may receive additional support based on their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

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 samples of my child's work?
- Is my child's work appropriate?
- What activities and materials are you using in school to help my child improve in the different content areas?
- What is my child expected to learn this year?

To learn how your child is doing in school:

- Is my child adjusting to school?
- Does my child have friends?
- Does my child make friends easily?
- Does my child collaborate with the adults and the children?
- Is my child able to communicate with the teacher?
- Is my child able to communicate with the other children?
- Does my child ask questions?
- Have you observed anything about my child that is of concern?
- Is my child confident about being in school?

To learn how to support your child:

- How can I help my child at home?
- What are the best ways to keep up to date on how my child is doing?
- Where can I get additional support to help my child?

Prekindergarten is a wondrous and exciting time of growth and exploration for children and their families. It is not always easy to predict the milestones that a child will achieve at the end of the prekindergarten year as children develop at different stages and at different times. Growth can be uneven, but there are some milestones based on research, theory, and practice. It is our hope that this document will provide an insight to the kinds of gains that your child should make by the end of the prekindergarten year.

Language Arts

By the end of the school year, most students will be able to:

- Identify some of the letters of the alphabet.
- Make connections between the letters and their sounds.
- Know some high-frequency sight words.
- Share information about a particular topic.
- Use squiggles, sticks, wavy lines, and scribbles to communicate.
- Write the letters of their name.
- Respond orally to questions and/or directions.
- Discover new words.
- Engage in conversations with adults and peers on a variety of topics, experiences, and activities.
- Enjoy listening to several readings of favorite stories.

Here are a few books and Web sites with activities that you and your child can enjoy.

Alligators All Around by Maurice Sendak

Chicka, Chicka, Boom, Boom by Bill Martin, Jr. and John Archambault

Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats

Where the Sidewalk Ends by Shel Silverstein

www.colorincolorado.org

www.starfall.com

http://enchildrenslibrary.org

www.seussville.com



Learning at Home

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

Read with your child for 20 minutes every day. Spend time talking about the stories and predicting what will happen next. Let your child tell you about the pictures in the book. Let your child retell the story.

Tell your child a story about what it was like when you were their age.

Sing a silly song. For example, sing the song below to the tune of *This Old Man*:

This old man, he sings *H* songs
He sings *H* songs all day long
With a Hick, Hack, Haddy, Hack
Sing this silly song
He wants you to sing along.

(Use other letters for silly fun, like *R*, *P*, and *B*.)

Join the public library, where you and your child can enjoy selecting books in any language to be read. You can also borrow audio books for your child.



Mathematics

By the end of the school year, most students will be able to:

- Count from 1 to 10.
- Draw pictures or other symbols to represent numbers up to 10.
- Develop addition and subtraction readiness using manipulatives. For example, “1 cube plus 2 cubes equals how many cubes?”
- Understand and use math-related vocabulary, such as first, last, more, less, most, and same.
- Sort and match circles, triangles, squares, and rectangles of same and different sizes.
- Play with solid shapes (such as building blocks, cylinders, cubes, spheres, pyramids).
- Develop vocabulary related to math activities, such as bigger, longer, and taller, when talking about size, length, and height.
- Recognize specific times, such as day and night.
- Use physical objects to make graphs.
- Describe the attributes of objects. For example, how many sides does a triangle have?

Here are a few books and Web sites with activities that you and your child can enjoy.

Fish Eyes: A Book You Can Count On by Lois Ehlert

I Knew Two Who Said Moo by Judi Barrett and Daniel Moreton

Mitten Count by Wendy E. Auger

A Pair of Socks by Stuart J. Murphy

<http://home.disney.go.com/foryou/preschool/>

www.playhousedisney.com

Learning at Home

Engage in number finger plays, such as:

One, Two, Buckle My Shoe

One 1, two 2, buckle my shoe

Three 3, four 4, shut the door

Five 5, six 6, pick up sticks

Seven 7, eight 8, lay them straight

Nine 9, ten 10, let's do it again

Have your child identify different shapes all around your home.

Make play dough together, measuring the following ingredients in the recipe:

- Two cups of flour
- One cup of water
- Half a cup of salt
- A few drops of food coloring

Mix all ingredients well.

Your child can roll, pound, shape, and mold the play dough.

You can also use **number play in your native language.**

Science and Social Studies

By the end of the school year, most students will be able to:

- Use their senses to learn about the world around them.
- Use simple tools, such as scales, magnifying glasses, and microscopes.
- Observe and describe plants and animals.
- Observe and describe collections from nature, such as leaves, rocks, acorns, sand, and soil.
- Chart the weather over time and observe changes in the seasons.
- Engage in personal care (such as washing hands, dental care, and overall cleanliness).
- Know that each person is unique and important.
- Understand that each person has likes and dislikes.
- Listen to stories that teach about different people around the world.
- Identify common areas in the home, classroom, and school environment.
- Create drawings and/or produce block buildings to represent their home, classroom, school, and neighborhood.
- Understand the role of community workers by visiting community locations and listening to community workers.

Learning at Home

Will it sink or float? Fill a small plastic container with water. Identify a few items and have your child predict and discover which items will sink or float.

When baking, let your child help you measure the ingredients. Introduce the concepts of temperature and time.

Categorize different objects, such as cereal boxes, canned foods, buttons, and books, according to size, shape, and color.

On the train or bus, look at the map with your child to identify your location.

Share family pictures so that your child can learn about their family history.

Talk about the people in the neighborhood and the jobs that they do.

Allow your child to care for the family pet.



Here are a few books and Web sites with activities that you and your child can enjoy.

It Looked Like Spilt Milk
by Charles G. Shaw

My Five Senses by Aliki

Rain by Manya Stojic

Shapes, Shapes, Shapes by Tana Hoban

www.howstuffworks.com

www.SteveSpanglerScience.com

Bright Eyes, Brown Skin by Cheryl Willis Hudson and Bernette G. Ford

Sidewalk Chalk: Poems of the City
by Carole Boston Weatherford
and Dimitrea Tokunbo

Tikki Tikki Tembo by Arlene Mosel

Time to Say Please by Mo Willems

<http://pbskids.org/>

www.neopets.com

Learning at Home

Talk about your child's learning in the arts in dance, music, theater, and visual arts and ask them to describe and teach you what they have learned.

Teach your child social and folk dances that your family knows; play music and sing songs as a family; and tell and share stories of your family history and culture.

Display your child's art work in a prominent place in the family home and talk about the visual art work in your home, such as family photographs, paintings, and posters.

Attend free performances, art making, and museum events in your own neighborhood and around the city.

Arts

By the end of the school year in dance, music, theater, and visual arts, most students will be able to:

- Participate in group dancing with an understanding of dance class routines.
- Identify and use various body parts in place and traveling.
- Understand space, levels, and formations.
- Move in response to imagery and music.
- Imitate and approximate musical pitch and rhythm.
- Maintain a steady beat with various parts of the body (such as alternating clapping and foot stomping).
- Recognize and use rhythm instruments such as drums, triangle, and shakers.
- Use basic music vocabulary to describe pitch and volume.
- Identify and imitate emotions.
- Engage in creative play with costume and props to create characters and place.
- Create and play with a variety of puppets.
- Draw circular lines and lines suggesting human and animal forms.
- Control a broad brush and thick crayons on a flat surface.
- Shape clay by kneading and poking.



Here are a few books and Web sites with activities that you and your child can enjoy.

Giraffes Can't Dance by Giles Andreae

Music Play by Wendy H. Valerio and others

25 Just-Right Plays for Emergent Readers
by Carol Pugliano-Martin

The Art Lesson by Tomie dePaola

www.creativedance.org/index.cfm

www.childrens-music.org/childrens-music/early_child.htm

<http://pbskids.org/zoom/activities/playhouse/>

www.metmuseum.org/explore/Learn_About_Color/index.html

www.metmuseum.org/explore/van_gogh/menu.html

More Essential Knowledge and Skills

Our prekindergarten students are learning much more than to read; write; do math; and understand key concepts in science, social studies, and the arts.

- **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 begin to become familiar with libraries and develop an understanding of their world through stories and ideas in books. For more details, visit www.nyc.gov/schools/academics/libraryservices.
- **Technology:** Prekindergarten children begin to use computers to access appropriate resources identified by their teacher to support their classroom learning and express creativity. For more details, visit <http://schools.nyc.gov/learnathome>.

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 prekindergarten through grade 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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Photos courtesy of Nancy Pike, Retired Early Childhood Instructional Specialist.

