

# A Parent's Guide To First Grade English Language Arts

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**First Grade English Language Arts** (ELA) is more than just reading and writing. It includes skills like speaking, listening, and viewing as well. ELA offers us a way to communicate. Through ELA, your child can apply what s/he learns to solve real problems at home, at school and in the community.

### **Glossary Terms**

Words that have asterisks (\*) are defined in the Glossary located in the back of this booklet.

*By the end of First Grade, your child should know and be able to do the following .....*

## **Reading**

### **Word Recognition & Word Study**



#### **Phonemic Awareness (\*)**

- Change the sounds of words by changing letters that can make new words. Example: "hat" becomes "\_at".
- Recognize that words are made of sounds blended together and that words have meaning.

#### **Phonics (\*)**

- Use letter-sound clues to recognize a few one-syllable words, blends and consonant digraphs (\*) such as letter-sounds, word chunks, word families and digraphs th, ch, sh.

### ***Word Recognition***

- Easily recognize familiar first grade words they see in print.
- Automatically recognize a growing number of basic sight vocabulary words. (Obtain a list from your child's teacher.)
- Be able to use prefixes, suffixes (\*) and context clues (\*) to read and understand unknown words. (**untie, replay, careless, playful**)

### ***Vocabulary***

- Know the meaning of words they hear and see often. (Ask the teacher for a grade-level vocabulary list.)
- Use strategies to make sure the words used in texts sound right and make sense.
- Use strategies to help figure out the meaning of words that describe objects, actions, etc, when they appear in a story.

### ***Fluency (\*)***

- Automatically read words first graders see often, whether they appear alone or in a sentence.
- Read aloud using expression reacting to the periods and question marks.
- Independently read aloud new text with 95% accuracy in books matched to their ability.

### ***Narrative Text (Fiction)***

- Recognize how various cultures are represented in high-quality literature.
- Identify and describe a variety of genre including realistic fiction, fantasy and folktales.
- Identify a story's problem/solution, order of events, and beginning/middle/end.
- Identify how authors/artists use:
  - o Pictures to support ideas
  - o Words like before, after, now, etc., to show the order of events
- Show through their conversations, drawings, or writing that they know how two or more stories are connected.

## Informational Text (Non-fiction)

- Name and describe different types of informational text, such as how-to books, science and social studies magazines.
- Discuss patterns such as the order in which things happen or ways they are described.
- Explain how authors and illustrators use features like headings, titles, captions and pictures to help readers understand ideas.
- Show through drawings, writing or conversations how two or more informational texts are connected.



## Comprehension

- Use their own experiences to help understand new ideas and connect to ideas in texts.
- Retell up to three events, in order, from a familiar story.
- Connect and compare a story to their lives as well as compare a story other stories.
- Compare and contrast relationships among characters, events and key ideas.
- Use drawings to show key ideas and details in stories.
- Ask questions as they read.
- Remember and use what has been read from other subject areas.

### Metacognition (\*)

- Know when to ask questions when reading familiar text.
- Know when they do or do not understand the texts.
- Use simple strategies to increase their understanding of texts.  
Example: Reread the story.
- Use book covers and/or pictures to predict what might happen next.
- Talk about the author's purpose.
- Begin to sort and put information in order with the help of the teacher.
- Discuss with teacher which comprehension strategies worked.



### Critical Standards (\*)

- Decide and discuss what qualities make stories good.
- With help from the teacher, begin to know how to measure the quality of their own work and the work of others.

### Reading Attitude

- Be excited about reading and learning how to read.
- Choose to read and write on their own during free time in school and at home.

### Ways to Praise Your Child

*I'm so proud of you.*

*I knew you could do it!*

*That's exactly right!*

*You're doing much better today.*



## Writing



### Writing Genre (\*)

- Write a brief personal story using pictures, words, and/or sentences.
- Write a short informational piece that can include headings, titles, or pictures to help readers understand their ideas.
- Help with a class research project by adding key information gathered from materials supplied by the teacher.

### Writing Process

- With help from the teacher, think about how those who will read the paper will react as they plan to write.
- Write three or more connected sentences using first grade punctuation and spelling.
- Use word lists to try to correct their spelling
- Make changes to their own writing by reading it to a friend, and asking for ideas to improve it to make the meaning more clear.
- Use book language when writing stories. ("Once upon a time...")

### Personal Style

- Develop a personal style when speaking, writing or acting out messages. Example: they may express feelings, use details and show examples.

### Grammar and Usage

- Write with complete sentences beginning with a capitol letter and ending with a period, question mark or exclamation point.

## Spelling

- Correctly spell one-syllable words they see often from common word families.
- Use beginning and simple ending sounds, or words lists provided by the teacher to figure out how to spell more words.

## Handwriting

- Form upper and lower case letters neatly, so that people can read them.



## Writing Attitude

- Be eager to write and learn to write.

### Ways to Praise Your Child

*This looks wonderful!*

*That's a neat idea.*

*That's great!*

*You're learning fast.*



## Speaking

### Conventions (\*)

- Use singular and plural nouns (boy/boys, mouse/mice) and contractions. (isn't, can't, won't)
- Use singular possessive pronouns. (my, mine, hers, his)
- Use words to show relationships of events in sentences or stories (if, because and after).
- Use words endings while speaking ( -s, -es, -ed, -ing or -er).
- Use language to communicate with all kinds of people for all kinds of reasons. (express wants and needs, solve problems)
- Be able to speak out loud to the teacher:
  - stand straight and tall
  - make eye contact
  - use illustrations
- Make presentations using Standard English (\*) or their version of Standard English if they are in the process of learning English.
- Give examples of how language in story books is used differently than in real life.



### Spoken Discourse (\*)

- Stay on topic while responding to comments and questions from others during conversations.
- Briefly tell or retell familiar stories in an organized way that makes sense from the beginning to end.
- Be able to talk about the meanings of and the connections between two or more stories.
- Plan and deliver simple presentations or reports that are organized and include several facts and details.

## Listening and Viewing

### Conventions (\*)

- Give, restate and follow two-step directions.
- Ask good questions during a report or presentation.
- While in conversations, use eye contact and pay attention.
- While in large or small groups pay attention and listen carefully to others.
- Be able to tell who is giving a message and who is receiving the message.

### Response

- Choose, listen to or view and discuss a variety of good books, both classic and recently written.
- Listen to or view and discuss a variety of genres. (fairy tales, poetry, stories)
- Make connections between two or more stories as they think about them They can do this by discussing the stories, drawing pictures and/or writing.

### Ways to Praise Your Child

*You did a lot of work today.*

*Super job!*

*Good for you!*

*Terrific!*



# Glossary Terms



**consonant digraphs** - two consonants together that make one sound. Examples: ch, sh, th.

**context clues** - hints from the surrounding words, phrases or sentences about the unknown word.

**conventions** - the rules about how words and language works.

**critical standards** - the high level of quality students must be able to recognize, to determine if their work reaches that expectation.

**fluency** - the ability to recognize letters or read words with speed and accuracy.

**genre** - a category used to describe different kinds of texts, such as poems, fairy tales, fables, etc.

**metacognition** - the process of thinking about one's own thinking. Example: Being able to monitor when you know or don't understand a lesson.

**phonics** - the predictable relationship between the sounds of spoken language and the letters of the alphabet that represent those sounds in written language.

**phonemic awareness** - the ability to notice, think about and work with the individual sounds in spoken words.

**prefixes/suffixes** - word parts known as affixes. These parts are added to words. Prefixes are added to the beginning of words (untie) and suffixes are added to the end of words (cheerful).

## Glossary Terms continued...

**spoken discourse** - to participate in conversation or discussion.

**Standard English** - the form of English widely accepted as being clear and proper.

**syllable** - a word part that contains a vowel or vowel sound. Words can have 1 or more syllables. Example:

- 'hat' has 1 syllable      hat
- 'letter' has 2 syllables      let ter

**writing genre** - a category used to describe different kinds of writing, usually by form such as poetry, stories, fairy tales, etc.

## Questions to ask your child's teacher...



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