

English Language Arts & Literacy

In 1st grade, your child will become a more independent reader and writer. Your child will continue to learn and practice rules for recognizing the sounds that make up words and will be able to sound out more complex words. Such foundational skills are necessary and important components of developing proficient readers with the capacity to comprehend a wide range of materials. Students will learn to think about what they read and talk about the main ideas of simple stories. As they write and speak, 1st graders will learn to use language appropriately; this includes using complete sentences and spelling words with increasing accuracy.

A Sample of What Your Child Will Be Working on in 1st Grade

- Using phonics (matching letters and sounds) and word analysis skills to figure out unfamiliar words when reading and writing
- Describing characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details
- Getting facts and information from different writings
- Writing about a topic, supplying some facts, and providing some sense of opening and closing
- Participating in shared research and writing projects (e.g., exploring a number of “how-to” books and using them to write a sequence of instructions)
- Taking part in conversations about topics and texts being studied by responding to the comments of others and asking questions to clear up any confusion
- Describing people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly and with complete sentences
- Producing and expanding complete simple and compound statements, questions, commands, and exclamations
- Identifying the correct meaning for a word with multiple meanings, based on the sentence or paragraph in which the word is used (e.g., deciding whether the word *bat* means a flying mammal or a club used in baseball)
- Learning to think about finer distinctions in the meanings of near-synonyms (e.g., *marching*, *prancing*, *strutting*, *strolling*, *walking*)

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 1st grade, these include:

- Reading grade-level text with understanding and fluency
- Learning from, enjoying, and getting facts from books he or she reads and listens to

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?