



PARENTS' GUIDE TO Student Success

2ND GRADE

This guide provides an overview of what your child will learn by the end of 2nd grade in mathematics and English language arts/literacy. It focuses on the key skills your child will learn in these subjects, which will build a strong foundation for success in the other subjects he or she studies throughout the school year. This guide is based on the new Common Core State Standards, which have been adopted by more than 40 states. These K–12 standards are informed by the highest state standards from across the country. If your child is meeting the expectations outlined in these standards, he or she will be well prepared for 3rd grade.

WHY ARE ACADEMIC STANDARDS IMPORTANT?

Academic standards are important because they help ensure that all students, no matter where they live, are prepared for success in college and the workforce. They help set clear and consistent expectations for students, parents, and teachers; build your child's knowledge and skills; and help set high goals for all students.

Of course, high standards are not the only thing needed for our children's success. But standards provide an important first step — a clear roadmap for learning for teachers, parents, and students. Having clearly defined goals helps families and teachers work together to ensure that students succeed. Standards help parents and teachers know when students need extra assistance or when they need to be challenged even more. They also will help your child develop critical thinking skills that will prepare him or her for college and career.

HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD?

You should use this guide to help build a relationship with your child's teacher. You can do this by talking to his or her teacher regularly about how your child is doing — beyond parent-teacher conferences.

At home, you can play an important role in setting high expectations and supporting your child in meeting them. If your child needs a little extra help or wants to learn more about a subject, work with his or her teacher to identify opportunities for tutoring, to get involved in clubs after school, or to find other resources.

THIS GUIDE INCLUDES

- An overview of some of the key things your child will learn in English/literacy and math in 2nd grade
- Ideas for activities to help your child learn at home
- Topics of discussion for talking to your child's teacher about his or her academic progress

English Language Arts & Literacy

Students in 2nd grade will gain more skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. They continue to learn and practice rules for matching sounds to letters that make up words, and they learn new concepts — such as words that share the same root (e.g., *add* and *additional*) — that help them figure out the meanings of new words. Writing will become an exciting way for your child to use newly learned words and phrases to express ideas. As they write and speak, 2nd graders will be more attentive to the formal and informal uses of English and will spell most words correctly in their writing.

A Sample of What Your Child Will Be Working on in 2nd Grade

- Paying close attention to details, including illustrations and graphics, in stories and books to answer *who, what, where, when, why, and how* questions
- Determining the lesson or moral of stories, fables, and folktales
- Using text features (e.g., captions, bold print, indexes) to locate key facts or information efficiently
- Writing an opinion about a book he or she has read, using important details from the materials to support that opinion
- Writing stories that include a short sequence of events and include a clear beginning, middle, and end
- Participating in shared research projects (e.g., read books on a single topic to produce a report)
- Taking part in conversations by linking his or her comments to the remarks of others and asking and answering questions to gather additional information or deepen understanding of the topic
- Retelling key information or ideas from media or books read aloud
- Producing, expanding, and rearranging sentences (e.g., “The boy watched the movie”; “The little boy watched the movie”; “The action movie was watched by the little boy”)
- Determining the meaning of the new word formed when a known prefix or suffix is added to a known word (happy/unhappy; pain/painful/painless)

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 2nd grade, these include:

- Reading grade-level books and stories with understanding and fluency
- Building a foundation of knowledge through reading and listening to books in history/social studies, science, and other subjects

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?

Mathematics

In 2nd grade, your child will build on last year's work and gain important new skills. One of the most important outcomes for the year is to add and subtract two-digit numbers quickly and accurately (e.g., $77 - 28$). Another important goal in 2nd grade is to understand what the digits mean in a three-digit number such as 463 (namely, 463 is four hundreds, six tens, and three ones). Your child also will build expertise with solving addition and subtraction word problems. Mastering addition and subtraction at the 2nd grade level is important so that your child will not have to review and repeat this material in 3rd grade, when the study of multiplication, division, and fractions will start.

A Sample of What Your Child Will Be Working on in 2nd Grade

- Solving challenging addition and subtraction word problems with one or two steps (e.g., a "one-step" problem would be: "Lucy has 23 fewer apples than Julie. Julie has 47 apples. How many apples does Lucy have?")
- Quickly and accurately adding with a sum of 20 or less (e.g., $11 + 8$); quickly and accurately subtracting from a number 20 or less (e.g., $16 - 9$); and knowing all sums of one-digit numbers from memory by the end of the year
- Understanding what the digits mean in three-digit numbers (*place value*)
- Using understanding of place value to add and subtract three-digit numbers (e.g., $811 - 367$); adding and subtracting two-digit numbers quickly and accurately (e.g., $77 - 28$)
- Measuring and estimating length in standard units
- Solving addition and subtraction word problems involving length (e.g., "The pen is 2 cm longer than the pencil. If the pencil is 7 cm long, how long is the pen?")
- Building, drawing, and analyzing 2-D and 3-D shapes to develop foundations for area, volume, and geometry in later grades

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 2nd grade, these include:

- Using understanding of place value to add and subtract
- Solving more challenging addition and subtraction word problems
- Measuring lengths, and solving word problems involving addition and subtraction of lengths

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 at home every day and assist your child by reading every other paragraph. Encourage your child to read to younger siblings, cousins, or other children you know. To find recommendations of books for your child to read, visit www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf.
- Have your child write a thank you note or letter to family members or friends.
- Ask your librarian to suggest books about people or places that are important to your child or family that you can read together. Encourage your child to explain what he or she has just read.

Mathematics

Look for “word problems” in real life. Some 2nd grade examples might include:

- When saving for a purchase, compare the cost of the item to the amount of money you have; then ask your child to determine how much more money he or she needs to buy the item.
- When measuring your child’s height, ask how many inches he or she has grown since the very first measurement.
- Play “draw the shape.” For example, ask your child to draw a hexagon with one side longer than the others, or ask him or her to shade in a quarter of a rectangle.

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

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parent ROADMAP

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD IN GRADE TWO

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 two English language arts and literacy




In grade two, students will continue to build important reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. They will think, talk, and write about what they read in variety of texts, such as stories, books, articles, and other sources of information including the Internet. In their writing, students will learn how to develop a topic and strengthen their skills by editing and revising. Activities in these areas will include:

- Reading stories, including fables and folktales from different cultures, and identifying the lesson or moral of the story
- Reading texts about history, social studies, or science and identifying the main idea
- Answering *who, what, where, when, why,* and *how* questions about stories and books
- Describing the reasons that an author gives to support a point
- Learning and using new words
- Learning the rules of spoken and written English
- Participating in class discussions by listening and building on what others are saying
- Describing in their own words information learned from articles or books read aloud
- Working together to gather facts and information on a topic
- Writing about a short series of events and describing actions, thoughts, and feelings
- Writing about opinions on books using important details and examples to support a position

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 two, 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

Grade One Reading

- 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.

Grade Two Reading

- 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.

Grade Three Reading

- Students recount stories and determine the central message, lesson, or moral, explaining how it is developed in the text.
- Students distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.

READING FOR INFORMATION

Grade One Reading

- Students ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- Students use the illustrations and details in a text to describe key ideas.

Grade Two Reading

- Students ask and answer such questions as *who, what, where, when, why, and how* 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.

Grade Three Reading

- Students ask and answer questions about what they read by referring directly to parts of the text.
- Students use information gained from images or illustrations.



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

Writing tasks in grade two 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.

Grade One Writing

- Students name a topic and supply some facts about the topic.
- Students provide some sense of closure.

Grade Two Writing

- Students introduce a topic and use facts and definitions to develop points.
- Students provide a concluding statement or section.

Grade Three Writing

- Students introduce a topic and use facts, definitions, and details to develop points.
- Students provide a concluding statement or section.
- Students group related information together.
- Students use linking words and phrases to connect ideas, such as *also*, *another*, and *but*.



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>.



parent ROADMAP

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD IN GRADE TWO
MATHEMATICS





*America's schools
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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 mathematics, this means three major changes. Teachers will concentrate on teaching a more focused set of major math concepts and skills. This will allow students time to master key math concepts and skills in a more organized way throughout the year and from one grade to the next. It will also call for teachers to use rich and challenging math content and to engage students in solving real-world problems in order to inspire greater interest in mathematics.

What your child will be learning in grade two mathematics



In grade two, students will extend their understanding of place value to the hundreds place. They will use this place value understanding to solve word problems, including those involving length and other units of measure. Students will continue to work on their addition and subtraction skills, quickly and accurately adding and subtracting numbers up through 20 and also working with numbers up through 100. They will also build a foundation for understanding fractions by working with shapes and geometry. Activities in these areas will include:

- Quickly and accurately adding numbers together that total up to 20 or less or subtracting from numbers up through 20
- Solving one- or two-step word problems by adding or subtracting numbers up through 100
- Understanding what the different digits mean in a three-digit number
- Adding and subtracting three digit numbers
- Measuring lengths of objects in standard units such as inches and centimeters
- Solving addition and subtraction word problems involving length
- Solving problems involving money
- Breaking up a rectangle into same-size squares
- Dividing circles and rectangles into halves, thirds, or fourths
- Solving addition, subtraction, and comparison word problems using information presented in a bar graph
- Writing equations to represent addition of equal numbers



An equation is a mathematical statement that uses numbers and symbols, such as $3 + 3 = 6$.

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 at the level where he/she should be at this point of the school year?
- Where is my child excelling?
- What do you think is giving my child the most trouble? How can I help my child improve in this area?
- What can I do to help my child with upcoming work?

Here are just a few examples of the skills and strategies students will develop as they solve word problems in grade two.

Grade One Mathematics

Solve word problems by adding or subtracting numbers up through 20

Grade Two Mathematics

Solve one- and two-step word problems by adding or subtracting numbers up through 100

Grade Three Mathematics

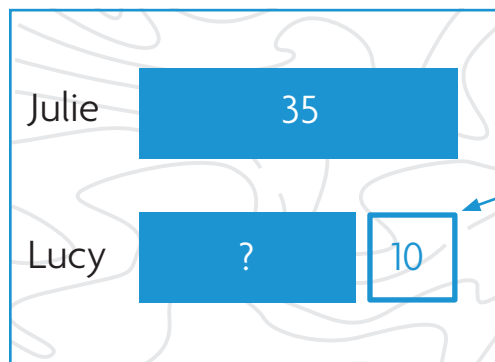
Solve two-step word problems by adding, subtracting, multiplying, or dividing numbers up through 100

Students in grade two will use diagrams such as this one to think through and solve one- and two-step word problems.

Julie has 35 books. Julie has 10 more books than Lucy. How many books does Lucy have? How many books do they have together?

Step 1: If Lucy has 10 less books than Julie, students first need to figure out what 10 less than 35 is.

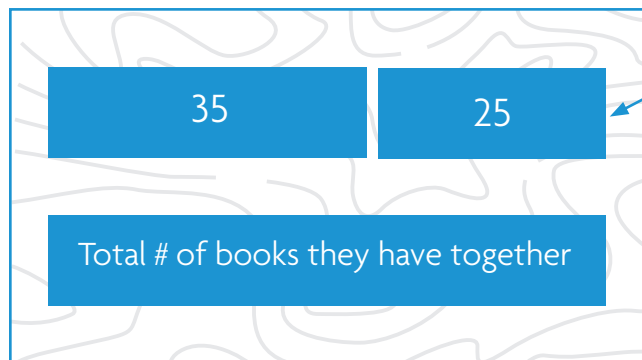
$$35 \text{ books} - 10 \text{ books} = 25 \text{ books}$$



$$\begin{aligned} 25 + 10 &= 35 \\ 35 - 10 &= 25 \end{aligned}$$

Step 2: Students then have to add the number of books Julie has to the number of books Lucy has.

$$35 \text{ books} + 25 \text{ books} = 60 \text{ books}$$



$$35 + 25 = 60$$

Here are just a few examples of how students will develop and use their understanding of place value in grade two.

Grade One Mathematics

- Understand that 10 can be thought of as a bundle of ten ones—called a “ten”
- Understand that the two digits of a two-digit number represent amounts of tens and ones (place value)
- Add and subtract numbers through 100 using what students have learned about place value

Grade Two Mathematics

- Understand that 100 can be thought of as a bundle of ten tens—called a “hundred”
- Understand that the three digits of a three-digit number represent amounts of hundreds, tens, and ones (place value)
- Add and subtract numbers through 1000 using what students have learned about place value

Grade Three Mathematics

- Use place value understanding to round whole numbers to the nearest 10 or 100
- Quickly and accurately add and subtract numbers through 1000
- Use place value understanding to multiply and divide numbers up through 100
- Multiply one-digit whole numbers by multiples of 10 between 10 and 90. For example, 9×80 or 5×60

Students learn that
 $250 = 2$ hundreds
 and 5 tens, 25 tens,
 or 250 ones.

$$\boxed{250} = \boxed{2} + \boxed{5} + \boxed{0}$$

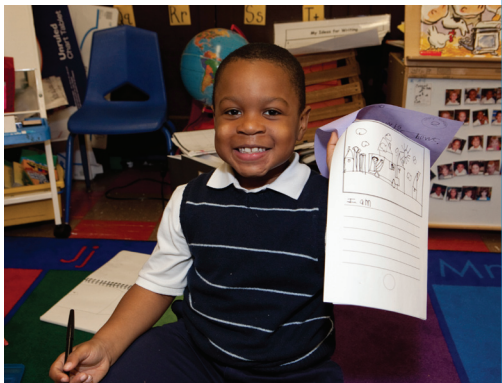
hundreds tens ones

Students apply their
 understanding that
 5 tens + 5 tens =
 10 tens, or 1 hundred,
 that can then be added
 to the hundreds place.

$$\boxed{2} \boxed{5} \boxed{0} + \boxed{2} \boxed{5} \boxed{3} = \boxed{5} \boxed{0} \boxed{3}$$

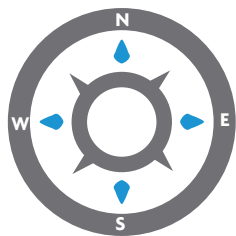
hundreds tens ones hundreds tens ones hundreds tens ones

Helping your child learn outside of school



1. Play math games with your child. For example, “I’m thinking of a number. It has 5 tens, 3 hundreds, and 4 ones. What is the number? 354.” Or, using a deck of cards, deal two cards and ask your child to add the two numbers. You can also identify a target number and ask your child to either add or subtract to obtain that target number (use a target of 20 or less).
2. Have your child explain the relationship between different numbers without counting. For example, 147 is 47 more than 100 and three less than 150.
3. Encourage your child to stick with it whenever a problem seems difficult. This will help your child see that **everyone** can learn math.
4. Praise your child when he or she makes an effort and share in the excitement when he or she solves a problem or understands something for the first time.

Additional Resources



For more information on the Common Core State Standards for mathematics, go to <http://www.corestandards.org/about-the-standards/key-points-in-mathematics> or <http://www.commoncoreworks.org>.

For more information on the standards in mathematics related to place value (Number and Operations in Base Ten), go to <http://commoncoretools.me/category/progressions/>.

For more information on helping your child learn mathematics (with activities from pre-school to grade five), go to <http://www2.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/math/index.html>.