

# Academic Growth Charts First Grade

Adult & Child

Therapeutic Foster Care Licensing Program

# Academic Benchmarks

- \* **States across the country are implementing new standards for student achievement, designed to better prepare young people for careers and college.**
- \* **These academic benchmarks are meant to help parents understand the course material for each grade.**
- \* **They are based on the standards in most of the country and are intended as a general resource for parents, not as a comprehensive breakdown of the contents of your child's curriculum.**
- \* <http://www.parenttoolkit.com/>

# First Grade Overview

- \* **Your 1st grader will start mastering the fundamentals of literacy and mathematics.**
- \* **These include the building blocks of reading and writing, as well as more complicated addition and subtraction skills than what was covered in kindergarten.**

# English/Language Arts

- \* In 1st grade, children learn to “blend” the sounds of single letters and pairs of letters into words that they can read and write.
- \* First-graders learn to read and understand simple illustrated books and stories, articles, and other sources of information.
- \* They learn to write short words, and combine them into sentences, to describe an event, give information, or share an opinion.
- \* First graders will learn to think carefully about what they have read and to express their thinking in writing and in discussions.

# Reading

- \* Vocabulary
  - \* Understand and use many new words when reading, writing, listening and speaking.
- \* Sight Words
  - \* Quickly read words that appear frequently in texts “by sight”.
- \* Phonemic Awareness
  - \* Use phonics (matching letters and sounds) and other reading skills to read unfamiliar words.
- \* Purpose & Understanding
  - \* Read 1st-grade level text with purpose and understanding.

# Reading

- \* Asking & Answering Questions
  - \* Ask and answer questions about the main characters, major events, and the setting of a story, using key details from the text and illustrations.
- \* Retelling a Story
  - \* Retell a story, including key details, and explain its central message or lesson.
- \* Identifying Main Topic & Key Details
  - \* Identify the main topic and key details of informational texts (articles, books about science or social studies topics, etc.).

# Writing

- \* Conventions & Usage
  - \* Use basic rules of English capitalization and punctuation.
- \* Printing & Spelling
  - \* Print letters of the alphabet, upper case (capital letters) and lower case.
  - \* Spell unfamiliar words phonetically (by sound).
- \* Writing a Story
  - \* Write a real or imagined story putting events in order, including details and some sense of closure.

# Writing

- \* Writing Informational Pieces
  - \* Write a short informational piece on a topic, stating a main idea, including some facts and a closing.
- \* Writing to Share an Opinion
  - \* Write to share an opinion about a topic or text, clearly stating the opinion and a reason for it.
- \* Conducting Research
  - \* Work with others to gather facts and information on a topic.



# Listening & Speaking

- \* Clear Expression
  - \* Practice expressing thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly and in complete sentences, using basic rules of spoken English.
- \* Participating in Conversations
  - \* Participate in conversations about topics and texts being studied, following agreed upon rules (listening to others, speaking one at a time), responding to the comments of others and asking questions to clear up any confusion.
- \* Reading Aloud & Shared Reading
  - \* Actively engage with rich and challenging texts through read-alouds and shared reading.

# Tips & Advice

- \* ***Share Reading with Your Child***

- \* It's one of the most basic pieces of parenting advice and still one of the most important, even when your child is in 1st grade: read to and with him/her. Now that he/she is in the early stages of becoming a proficient reader himself/herself, this can become more of a shared activity. For example, take turns reading pages of a book, which gives him/her a chance to show off his/her skills and allows you to help him/her sound out difficult words.

- \* ***Keep Reading Material Handy***

- \* Fill your house with a variety of reading materials and make sure that your child sees you and other adults reading regularly, so that he/she views it as a fun and positive activity.

- \* ***Allow Easy Access to Writing Supplies***

- \* Make sure that your child has easy access to the tools and supplies he/she will need to practice the writing skills he/she is learning. Have a range of supplies on hand to make writing fun, such as different-colored pens, crayons, colored paper, and dry-erase boards.

# Tips & Advice

- \* **Encourage Writing Through Lists**

- \* Encourage your child to practice writing by making lists. Make sure that writing is not something that is viewed as just a school activity or homework. Give him/her reasons to write, for example by making lists. Encourage him/her to help with the grocery shopping by writing a list. For holidays or birthdays, ask him/her to write a list of presents he/she would like, or have him/her compile a list of the chores he/she is responsible for.

- \* **Show How Writing is Practical**

- \* Show him/her the practical use of writing by helping him/her compose short reminder notes at home or letters to other family members. When he/she sees that writing serves a useful purpose, he/she will be more likely to try it and to initiate writing on his/her own.

- \* **Value Your Child's Writing**

- \* Encourage your 1st grader to draw a picture and write a story that goes along with it, using any scribbling, characters, or spelling that makes sense to him/her. Display the result, as you do his/her artwork, by posting it on the fridge or framing it and putting it on your desk. This helps him/her see that you value his/her writing and think it is important.

# Tips & Advice

- \* ***Don't Correct All Spelling Mistakes***

- \* Don't go overboard in correcting your child's early efforts at writing. In the same way that, when he/she was learning to talk, you didn't correct every pronunciation error or grammatical mistake, now that he/she's learning to write, you don't want to inhibit him/her by focusing too much on what he/she's doing wrong. If you correct every error, beginning writers will start to close up, so by allowing them more latitude encourages them to view writing as a fun activity and not work.

- \* ***Make a Summer Scrapbook***

- \* At the start of the school year, make a scrapbook of your 1st grader's summer vacation, including photos and items related to activities he/she took part in. Ask him/her to tell you about the places the items came from, including why he/she was there and what he/she enjoyed about that day. Jot down his/her stories and memories, capturing his/her exact words as much as possible.

# Tips & Advice

- \* ***Always Carry Reading Materials***

- \* Never leave home without reading materials, for both you and your 1st grader. Always having a book or a magazine on hand for moments like a wait at a doctor's office, a long car ride, or just waiting in the car to pick up a sibling helps your child understand that reading is an enjoyable activity that he/she can do at any time.

- \* ***Play Simple Word Games***

- \* Play simple word games with your 1st grader. For example, when you're on the road, have him/her spot words on signs that begin with a certain letter.

# Mathematics

- \* In 1st grade, children focus most on solving more difficult addition and subtraction problems and extend their understanding of place value (ones and tens).**

# Numbers

- \* Reading & Writing Larger Numbers
  - \* Read and write numbers from 20 through 120.
- \* Counting Forward
  - \* Count forward between 1 and 120, starting at any number.

# Addition & Subtraction

- \* Counting & Addition Together
  - \* Understand addition as “putting together” and “adding to.”
  - \* Understand subtraction as “taking apart” and “taking away from.”
  - \* Understand comparing situations.
  - \* Solve all of these situations with any of the three quantities as the unknown number.
- \* Multiples of 10
  - \* Quickly and accurately add numbers that total 10 or less, and subtract from numbers up to 10.



# Addition & Subtraction

- \* The Relationship
  - \* Understand the relationship of addition and subtraction.
- \* Ways of Adding or Subtracting
  - \* Using objects and drawings, solve numeral and word problems that involve adding or subtracting numbers through 20.
- \* Understand the Equal Sign
  - \* Understand the equal sign ( $=$ ) means “is the same as.”
  - \* Determine if addition and subtraction statements are true or false.
- \* Working with Equations
  - \* Work with addition and subtraction equations – math sentences that use numbers and symbols – to solve problems such as  $8 + ? = 11$  or  $5 = ? - 3$ .

# Place Value

- \* Understanding Place Value
  - \* Understand place value in one- and two-digit numbers.
  - \* Understand that in two-digit numbers such as 79, the digit on the left is 7 tens and the digit on the right is 9 ones.
- \* Understanding Category of Tens
  - \* Understand 10 as ten ones ( $1+1+1+1+1+1+1+1+1+1$ ) or one ten.
  - \* Understand 20 as twenty ones, or two tens, 30 as thirty ones, or *three* tens, etc.
  - \* Understand numbers 11 to 19 as a ten and some ones.

# Place Value

- \* Comparing Two-Digit Numbers
  - \* Compare two-digit numbers using the symbols  $>$  (greater than, or more than),  $=$  (equal to), and  $<$  (less or less than).
- \* Single Digits & Multiples of 10
  - \* Mentally add 10 and subtract 10 from any two-digit number and explain the thinking used.
  - \* Add a one-digit number (1 through 9) to any two-digit number, and add any two-digit number to any other two-digit number, within 100.
  - \* Add 10 and subtract 10 from any two-digit number up to 100.
  - \* Use concrete models or drawings to show the place values and explain the thinking involved.

# Measurement

- \* Measuring Object Length
  - \* Measure the lengths of objects using a shorter object as a unit of measurement.
- \* Ordering Objects by Length
  - \* Put objects in order by length, longest to shortest, and shortest to longest.
  - \* Use correct terms to compare length: short, shorter, shortest; long, longer, longest.
- \* Organizing Objects Into Categories
  - \* Organize objects into as many as three categories (by shape, color, size, etc.).
  - \* Ask and answer questions about the number of objects in different categories.
  - \* Represent the quantities of objects in as many as three categories, using drawings or charts.

# Shapes

- \* Describing Shapes
  - \* Describe what defines shapes (number of sides; corners, or angles) and what does not (color, size).
  - \* Build and draw shapes based on descriptions of their characteristics (properties).
- \* Dividing Circles & Rectangles
  - \* Divide circles and rectangles into two equal pieces (called halves) and four equal pieces (called quarters).

# Tips & Advice

- \* ***Learn Math from Everyday Objects***

- \* Your child can build an understanding of addition, subtraction, and the other math concepts he/she is learning in 1st grade by playing with everyday objects. Use items that he/she enjoys playing with, such as Legos, and place them into two groups of unequal number. Place the larger grouping on the left to develop the habit your child will need later for subtracting from left to right. Next, ask your child to add objects to the smaller group from the larger group until he/she counts the same number in both groups. As with all math activities, don't push it if your child resists, since math development varies greatly from child to child and he/she may just not be ready for certain concepts.

- \* ***Count with Items***

- \* Count using items like blocks, pennies, and candy. Have some items handy for counting by ones and by tens. You can use interlocking blocks that allow students to connect 2 blocks to 3 blocks to represent  $2 + 3$ . Use regular household items like pennies for counting by ones, and dimes for counting by tens.

# Tips & Advice

- \* ***Develop Estimation Skills***

- \* When things are stored or poured into varying size containers you have an opportunity to build your child's concept of estimation and quantity. At breakfast, ask him/her which bowl has more and which has less cereal. Ask him/her to compare the different amounts of the same liquid in three clear glasses by lining them up from least to most full. To build your child's vocabulary of comparisons, after successful practice, use measuring cups with numbers. Ask him/her what he/she notices about the number each liquid reaches in the measuring cup when they are lined up in sequence from least to most and then from most to least full.

- \* ***Read Math Problems Aloud***

- \* Help your child by reading math problems aloud slowly and carefully, so he/she can hear the problem and think about what is being asked. If he/she can read, have him/her read them.

# Tips & Advice

- \* **Use Real Money**

- \* Children become so accustomed to seeing their parents pay with credit and debit cards that counting actual money can be an unfamiliar practice. Engage your child in the transaction of buying things at the store, allowing him/her to pay with cash and to count the change. This will help not only with his/her math skills but will foster an understanding of the concepts of saving and spending.

- \* **Reward Effort for Math**

- \* Speak positively about math and reward effort, rather than grades or ability. Think about how important reading is and how we are told to model this behavior for our children. We need to place math in the same category. Don't discount the importance of math by saying, "I'm not a math person, I was never good at math." Help your child read books that incorporate math, such as *Millions of Cats*, by Wanda Gag or *On Beyond a Million*, by David Schwartz.



# Tips & Advice

- \* ***Use Analog Clocks***

- \* Go pre-digital with time. Reading time on a digital clock is vastly different than on a clock with a face. First grade standards focus on telling time to the hour and half hour, so have some old-fashioned analog clocks around your house as your child is learning to tell time. Consider giving him/her a wristwatch with a face, rather than a digital display.

- \* ***Keep a Calendar at Home***

- \* Keep a calendar displayed in your home. Review the days of the week with your child and encourage him/her to count down the number of days until an event he/she is anticipating.

- \* ***Play Games with Simple Math***

- \* Play a game in the car using simple addition or subtraction. For example: I'm thinking of a number that equals 7 when it is added to 3. What number is that? Look for opportunities to play simple addition and subtraction games, for example, while he/she is eating, with the number of items on his/her plate.

# Tips & Advice

- \* ***Play Games with Math Vocabulary***

- \* Play a mind-reader game. Think of a number for your child to guess. After each guess respond with the words "higher" or "lower." At different times use the words "more" or "less" so he/she learns different arithmetic vocabulary. This game helps him/her correlate the number words and counting sequence with actual amounts or sizes.

- \* ***Play Family Math Games***

- \* Plenty of family games incorporate math. Tic Tac Toe, Connect Four, and dominoes are just some of the many games that help build math skills.