Academic Growth Charts Seventh 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/

Seventh Grade Overview

* **Your 7th grader is reading from an ever broader range of sources, which he/she is learning to analyze and interpret in more sophisticated ways.**
* **He/she is honing his/her ability to gauge which sources can be trusted and is learning to argue persuasively and effectively—skills you may notice being put to use at home!**
* **In math, the focus continues to be on working with equations and building on the concepts learned in earlier grades.**

English/Language Arts

* In 7th grade, students read and understand increasingly challenging stories, plays, and poems from across cultures and time periods.
* They also read and understand literary nonfiction, and informational texts from a variety of subject areas including history/social studies and science.
* 7th grade students write for a range of reasons: to argue a position, demonstrate understanding of a topic, and share stories and experiences.
* They also apply their skills to making presentations, giving clear information about an argument or research finding.

Reading

* Rich & Challenging Texts
  * Read closely from rich and challenging 7th-grade-level texts, with guidance when text is particularly demanding.
* Evidence & Making Inferences
  * Explain what a story, play, poem, or informational text says, and make inferences ("read between the lines"), citing several pieces of evidence (such as facts, figures, quotes, or other information) from the text.
* Identifying the Theme
  * Identify the theme or main idea in both literary and informational text, and analyze how the theme unfolds.
  * Summarize the text objectively.

Reading

* Tracing an Argument
  * Trace an argument and specific claims in a text, and evaluate whether the reasoning is sound and whether there is enough relevant or meaningful evidence to support the claims.
* Understanding Vocabulary
  * Read and understand 7th grade vocabulary, and determine how an author's word choices affect the meaning and tone of a text; analyze the effect of rhymes and other repeated sounds (such as alliteration) in a poem, story, or play.
* Learning New Words & Phrases
  * Use different strategies to understand new words and phrases; for example, use context as a clue; use common Greek and Latin roots as a clue; consult a dictionary online or in print.
    * Examples of common Greek roots: *biblio* (book) as in bibliography; *therm* (heat) as in thermometer.
    * Examples of common Latin roots: *aqua* (water), as in aquarium; *cent* (hundred), as in century

Writing

* Making Supported Arguments
  * Write arguments that state a claim, acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and support the claim with reasons and evidence from accurate and credible sources.
* Informative Papers
  * Write informative or explanatory papers that examine a topic and express ideas by carefully selecting and analyzing information.
  * Use facts, details, and other information to develop the topic.
* Creating Narratives
  * Write stories or narratives about real or imaginary experiences.
  * Establish a context and point of view, and develop story elements such as characters, a well-sequenced plot, and descriptive details.

Writing

* Citing Research
  * Include evidence from text to support thinking and research.
* Producing & Publishing
  * Use technology to produce and publish written work, to work on writing with others, and to link to and cite sources.
* Using Basic Grammar Rules
  * Use basic rules of English grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling in written work. (Incorrect: *Walking to school, the bus went by a group of kids.* Correct: *Walking to school, a group of kids saw the bus go by.*)

Listening & Speaking

* Class Discussions
  * Participate in class discussions about complex 7th grade topics, texts, and issues.
  * Be prepared to refer to evidence in a text when discussing ideas, and be open to revising a viewpoint in response to new ideas.
* Evaluating Others' Arguments
  * Listen to another speaker's arguments and evaluate whether the claims are based on sound reasoning, and whether there is enough relevant or meaningful evidence to support the claims.
* Giving a Presentation
  * Give a clear, well-organized presentation to construct an argument or explain a research finding.
  * Support ideas with facts, details, and descriptions.

Research & Inquiry

* Research Projects
  * Conduct short research projects to answer a research question, gathering relevant information from print and online sources and generating additional questions for further research.
* Locating Information
  * Locate information efficiently; use effective search terms online.
* Evaluating Sources
  * Evaluate whether sources are accurate and can be trusted.
  * Quote or paraphrase material correctly, without plagiarizing or copying it, and cite sources properly.

Tips & Advice

* ***Foster Conversation at Home***
  * Encourage discussion as much as possible. Ask your child for his/her opinion about political and social issues, or about books, movies, and TV shows. Listen carefully and prompt him/her to express her ideas thoughtfully, backing up his/her claims with evidence. Having dinner together as a family may be harder to do as your child gets older and there are more demands on his/her time, but this is one of the best ways to stimulate these kinds of conversations.
* ***Use Texting***
  * Several times each week, have your child text you a full sentence summarizing a theme of something he/she is currently reading. Ask that he/she do this in a full sentence and not with texting shorthand.

Tips & Advice

* ***Help With Time Management***
  * As your child's workload and extracurricular interests increase, the way he/she manages his/her time will become increasingly important to his/her academic success. Most kids aren't naturally good at time management and have to be taught effective strategies. Help him/her plan ahead and make a schedule of when assignments are due, so that he/she isn't always racing to complete things at the last minute.
* ***Help With Study Strategies***
  * Do your best to figure out how your child learns. Has he/she always been very visual, relying since early childhood on images to help retain concepts? Or does he/she seem to do a better job processing information he/she has heard? As his/her schoolwork becomes more difficult, helping him/her figure out the study techniques that work best for him/her will be key to his/her future academic success. These could include preparing flashcards or reading texts aloud to him/herself.

Tips & Advice

* ***Encourage Note-Taking***
  * There is strong evidence that, despite the popularity of highlighters, highlighting or underlining text as we read is not the most effective way of learning information. Encourage your child to take notes of key ideas, perhaps on Post-its or colored index cards, as he/she reads. When he/she has finished a reading assignment, he/she can compile all these notes and he/she'll have a personalized study guide.
* ***Help Develop a Homework Routine***
  * Help your child develop a consistent homework routine. Make sure that he/she not only reviews that was covered in school that day, but also help him/her learn how to keep track of long-term assignments and plan ahead.

Tips & Advice

* ***Plan a Movie Night***
  * With so many popular children's books having been made into films, there are plenty of opportunities for movie nights that allow your child to practice some of the reading skills he/she's learning in school. Plan an evening around watching the film of a book he/she has read and ask him/her about the differences between the film and the book. Were key details of the plot changed? Did the characters remain true to the way they were described in the book? Why does he/she think these changes were made?
* ***Have Conversations about Historical Events***
  * Pay attention to upcoming historical anniversaries and try to view several media pieces related to the event. For example, there are many documentaries about the Kennedy assassination and the 9/11 attacks. As you watch these, have a family discussion about the event as well as the various interpretations of its exact sequence, contributing causes, and lasting significance. These conversations will help develop analytical literary skills.

Tips & Advice

* ***Encourage Accurate Descriptions***
  * Word precision becomes more important as teens move through middle and high school. Encourage your child to regularly describe items, locations, and events to you. Identify words that you find vague in these descriptions and ask him/her to think of better, more descriptive, or more accurate words to express what he/she is thinking.
* ***Promote Reliable Online Information***
  * Help your child become a more discerning consumer of online information. Teach him/her to identify reliable websites by examining where their information comes from, who sponsors them, and how current their content is. Discuss why some sites are more informative and more reliable than others. Take a look together at some sites, such as Snopes or TheStraightDope, that examine online rumors, urban legends, and other stories to see examples of how inaccurate information can become widely accepted.

Mathematics

* **In 7th grade, students focus on using their understanding of ratios and rates to solve real-world problems involving proportional relationships, solving problems involving positive and negative rational numbers, and working with mathematical expressions and linear equations.**

Ratios, Rates, & Relationships

* Real-World Problems
  * Solve real-world rate, ratio, proportion and percent problems involving discounts, markups, markdowns, interest, taxes, tips, commissions, percent increase or decrease.
* Unit Rate of Change
  * Understand variables as symbols for numbers, or values, not yet known – for example, *x* and *y* are the variables in $y = 2x + 6$.
  * Using equations, tables, graphs, and descriptions, identify the unit rate of change – a ratio comparing the change in one quantity to a 1-unit change in another quantity.
* Calculating Unit Rates
  * Calculate unit rates associated with ratios of fractions including ratios of lengths and areas and quantities measured in different units.

Operations

* Multi-Step Real-World Problems
  * Add, subtract, multiply, and divide with positive and negative rational numbers in any form – including whole numbers, fractions, or decimals.
  * Understand that numbers cannot be divided by 0.
  * Use these skills to solve multi-step real-world problems.
* Long Division
  * Convert rational numbers to decimals using long division.

Expressions & Equations

* Generating Simple Equations
  * Use letters to represent numbers in real-world math problems and generate simple equations to solve them.
  * Graph the solution set when there are multiple answers.
* Solving for X
  * Determine the value of the variable in an equation and a multi-step equation.
* Writing Equivalent Expressions
  * Using diagrams as tools, understand and generate equivalent mathematical expressions.

Geometry

* Understanding Scale
  * Use understanding of ratio and proportion to understand scale: the ratio of the length in a drawing (or model) of an object to the length of the actual object.
  * Change scale and compute actual lengths and areas of geometric figures.

Statistics & Probability

* Samples
  * Understand the concept of random sampling and representative sample size.
  * Use random sampling to draw conclusions or inferences about a population from a representable sample.
* Understanding Probability
  * Understand probability as a mathematical representation of the likelihood that something, like an event or a result, will happen. Larger numbers represent greater likelihood.
* Calculating Probability
  * Calculate probability by dividing the number of chances that the event or result will happen by the number of possible outcomes – for example, if there are 10 oranges, 5 peaches, and 15 apples in a bag, the probability of randomly selecting a peach is 5 out of 30 (5/30 or 1/6).
  * Calculate probabilities of simple and compound events.

Tips & Advice

* ***Think Through New Material Together***
  * As his/her assignments become more complicated, you might start to feel that your child's math homework is outpacing your comfort level. Continue to review math materials with him/her before class and to supervise his/her homework, regardless of your confidence in your own skills. Instead of trying to explain new concepts, have him/her explain them to you. If you are both confused, read the material and do your best to think it through and discuss it together. Go online to sites like Khan Academy, IXL, or XtraMath for extra assistance.
* ***Highlight Career Options That Require Math***
  * Mastering the math he/she's studying now will mean more options in the future for college major and career choices, so encourage your child to enjoy the challenge of math. Help him/her become aware of the range of career paths and disciplines that incorporate math, such as engineering or economics or weather forecasting. One way to do this is by watching movies that highlight math and help your child understand how math can be put to use in the real world, such as *Apollo 13* or *Jurassic Park*.

Tips & Advice

* ***Encourage Persistence***
  * Success in math has a lot to do with taking the time to understand a problem, thinking about different ways of solving it, and persevering if initial attempts to solve it fail. Encourage your child to stick it out with math that he/she finds challenging and to seek help if he/she needs it.
* ***Foster Effective Study Strategies***
  * Help your child learn how to study effectively for math tests. This means working through problems, not just reading through them or skimming the review sheet. The more problems your child practices, the more he/she'll internalize the various components. This increases speed and understanding so he/she can be better prepared to adjust the steps when required.

Tips & Advice

* ***Encourage Savvy Spending***
  * Shopping continues to be one of the best opportunities for your child to practice the math concepts he/she is learning. He/She can practice percentages and subtraction by calculating the exact amount you'll save when something goes on sale and the final cost of discounted items. Have him/her help you calculate the tip when you eat in a restaurant. If he/she has a cell phone, familiarize him/her with the details of the cell phone bill and how much the charge is per text or per minute of usage, so that he/she can learn to keep track of how much he/she is spending.
* ***Discuss The News***
  * As you watch the news together, keep track of how often statistics are cited. Discuss the details of any polls that are mentioned. Talk about how these concepts are being used and the points they are being used to support or refute.

Tips & Advice

* ***Calculate The Odds***
  * If your school is holding a raffle, discuss the details with your child. Have him/her find out how many tickets will be sold and how many prizes will be awarded. Then have him/her determine your probability of winning if you buy a ticket -- or 10 or 20.
* ***Do Home Improvement Projects Together***
  * Involve your child in big projects at home. He/She's building math skills that can be put to practical use, and by having him/her help out, you reinforce what he/she's learning. If you're wallpapering or carpeting, for example, have him/her calculate wall or floor areas and figure out the total cost of various materials.

Tips & Advice

* ***Encourage Math Appreciation Through Sports***
  * Sports provide an engaging way of exploring a host of mathematical concepts. Any hard-core baseball fan knows that the game can't truly be appreciated without an understanding of some essential statistics, like a player's batting average and runs batted in. Football is also full of statistics, such as the percentage of passes a quarterback completed. If your child is passionate about a sport, encourage him/her to explore it through math.
* ***Play Games***
  * Play family games that help foster math skills. These include card games like Go Fish, which requires counting and sorting cards into sets, or board games like Monopoly.