DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Council of the Great City Schools

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	Grade Two Reading	Grade Three 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.	• 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.	• 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	Grade Two Reading	Grade Three 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.	• 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.	• 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	Grade Two Writing	Grade Three Writing
• Students name a topic and supply some facts about the topic. • Students provide some sense of closure.	• Students introduce a topic and use facts and definitions to develop points. • Students provide a concluding statement or section.	• 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.

For more information about helping your child succeed at home and in District of Columbia Public Schools, go to http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/Parents+and+Community/Help+Your+Child+Succeed.