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# PARENT CURRICULUM GUIDE



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# GRADE

# 1



*“WE KNOW THAT EVERY SINGLE PARENT CARES DEEPLY ABOUT THEIR CHILD’S ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT. THAT’S WHY WE ARE WORKING MORE CLOSELY WITH FAMILIES, BECAUSE WE KNOW THEIR INVOLVEMENT IS CRITICAL TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR CHILDREN, AND OUR SCHOOLS.”*  
- CHANCELLOR KAYA HENDERSON

## How to Use the Parent Curriculum Guide:

This guide gives you the tools you need to support your child at home. In this booklet, you’ll find strategies based on the DCPS curriculum to help your child meet his or her learning goals. You’ll have a better understanding of what your child is learning in school and how you can further learning at home.

In addition, this guide provides specific strategies to implement at home for our Cornerstone assignments. Cornerstone assignments are high-quality, in-depth activities offered across the district that all DC Public Schools students will participate in during each unit of study. We have provided you with four sample Cornerstone assignments that your child may experience along with tips and suggestions on ways to support them at home.

For more information on Cornerstones visit [bit.ly/DCPSCornerstonesVid](https://bit.ly/DCPSCornerstonesVid).

## What You Can Do:

You play a very important role in your child’s academic performance. Here are some things you can do to support learning at home:

- ▶ Let your child know that education is the foundation for success.
- ▶ Know what your child is expected to learn in the 1st grade.
- ▶ Help your child set high short-term and long-term academic goals.
- ▶ Provide a designated time and location to complete homework.
- ▶ Talk to your child about what is happening in school and constantly monitor progress.
- ▶ Advocate for your child.
- ▶ Share your child’s strengths with your child’s teacher.

## Questions to Ask Your Child’s Teacher:

When speaking with your child’s teacher about academic progress, here are a few questions you may want to consider asking:

- ▶ What are the learning goals? Can you show me examples of student work that meets the learning goals?
- ▶ May I see an example of my child’s work? How does it or doesn’t it meet these learning goals?
- ▶ Is my child at or above grade level, what extra support is available? What can I do at home?
- ▶ What classroom routines do you have that should also be used at home?
- ▶ What kinds of questions could I ask my child on a daily basis about your class?



























## Talking to Your Child:

Good conversations help our children see that we are interested in their lives. Here are a few conversation starters you may want to consider asking:

- ▶ Tell me about the best part of your day.
- ▶ What was the hardest thing you had to do today?
- ▶ Can you show me something you learned today?
- ▶ What’s the biggest difference between this year and last year?
- ▶ What rules are different at school than our rules at home? Do you think they’re fair?

# WHAT MY FIRST GRADER IS LEARNING



	ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 	MATH 	SCIENCE & SOCIAL STUDIES  	
<b>AUGUST–OCTOBER</b> 	<p>Students will learn to re-read texts to identify story details while reading about characters who set goals and show perseverance to achieve their goal. </p>	<p>Students will represent and solve word problems involving addition and subtraction up to 20. </p>	<p>Students will learn about how plants and animals use their external parts to help them grow and survive, and how parent behaviors help offspring survive. </p>	<p>Students will learn how to use maps and globes to interpret and demonstrate information about places and the environment. </p>
<b>OCTOBER–DECEMBER</b> 	<p>Students will write about a journey they would take if they could fly. Students will revise their writing to focus on the addition of conjunctions and adjectives. </p>	<p>Students will add and subtract within 20 and understand place value. </p>	<p>Students will learn about how parents and their offspring are alike, yet different. </p>	
<b>DECEMBER–FEBRUARY</b> 	<p>Students will learn that animals adapt in different ways to survive when their environment changes. Students will write an informative piece about the importance of a specific animal adaptation. </p>	<p>Students will count to 120, starting at any number less than 120. Students will read and write numerals and represent a number of objects with a written numeral. </p>	<p>Students will learn to observe, describe, and predict some patterns of movement in the sky. </p>	<p>Students will learn about early civilizations of the Americas and compare and contrast the daily lives of Mayans, Incas and Aztecs. </p>
<b>FEBRUARY–APRIL</b> 	<p>Students will learn the consequences of earning, saving, spending, and donating money through both literary and informational texts. Students will learn the difference between a want and a need. </p>	<p>Students will compare two two-digit numbers based on the meanings of the tens and ones digits. </p>	<p>Students will learn about the relationship between sound and vibration and the availability of light and the ability to see. </p>	
<b>APRIL–JUNE</b> 	<p>Students will learn to name the main idea and key details in a text while reading about common U.S. Symbols and Americans who have made significant contributions to U.S. society. </p>	<p>Students will tell and write time in hours and half-hours using analog and digital clocks. Students will recognize and identify coins, their names, and their value. </p>	<p>Students will learn about symbols, icons, songs, and traditions of the United States. </p>	



## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS CORNERSTONE

In this Cornerstone, students create cartoon stories and learn how cartoonists show the most important parts of a story. Students write a narrative story about perseverance, identify beginning, middle, and end, and create a comic strip depicting these key parts of the story.

### How You Can Help Your Child:

- ▶ Read *Mama Played Baseball* by David Adler. As you read with your child, ask questions like “How are you like Amy’s mom? How are you different?”
- ▶ Take turns reading *Mama Played Baseball* out loud, and be patient with your beginning reader. Offer help only when needed.
- ▶ Make stories come alive by using gestures, facial expressions and different voices when reading together.
- ▶ Discuss what you read together. Ask your children what they liked or didn’t like about the book.



## SCIENCE CORNERSTONE

In this Cornerstone, students learn to think like bioengineers as they design a model membrane to mimic the properties of real membranes in live organisms. Students read the story book *Juan Daniel’s Futbol Frog* (by the Boston Museum of Science), about a boy who engineers a membrane to keep a frog alive. Students learn how membranes function and use their knowledge of the basic needs of living organisms to design a frog habitat with a model membrane that delivers just the right amount of water.

### How You Can Help Your Child:

- ▶ Take your child on a visit to the Amazonia Exhibit at the Smithsonian National Zoo, where they will learn about the many animals of the Amazon River Basin, including piranhas, catfish, and even poison arrow frogs!

### Year Long Learning Tips:

- ▶ When your child asks for help, provide guidance, not answers. Too much help teaches your child that someone will do the work for him or her. When helping your child, ask guiding questions, such as “Where do you begin?”, “What do you need to find out?”, or “Can you show me in a drawing how you got the answer?”
- ▶ Ask questions that can’t be answered with a simple “yes,” “no” or “OK.” Say, “Tell me more about...” or “What do you think about...?”
- ▶ While it’s important for students to improve areas of weakness, your child’s future lies in his or her strengths. Help identify and develop your child’s talents and strengths.
- ▶ Try having your child teach you what they are learning in school. The teacher always learns more than the student.
- ▶ Regularly visit the library with your child and allow them to check out books that interest them.

In this Cornerstone, students use math to design bracelets. Students use subtraction skills to find the mystery number of beads missing from bracelet kits, and use number-bonds notation to explain the mathematical secrets behind the bracelet design.

## How You Can Help Your Child:

- ▶ Play games with your child that allows them to determine an unknown amount when a portion and the total are known. (For example, tell your student you have a total of 10 beans, and hide some of them behind your back. By showing your student some of the beans in one hand, they should be able to determine how many are hidden behind your back. You can vary the total number of beans from 2-9 to continue to develop your student’s fluency with sums and differences within 10.



## Year Long Learning Tips:

- ▶ Encourage your child to use words to let others know how he or she is feeling. A few suggested feeling words are: anxious, content, embarrassed, curious, confident, responsible and disappointed.
- ▶ Children whose parents expect more from them achieve more. Encourage your children to do their best every day.






























## SUGGESTED READING

- Voices in the Park*, by Anthony Browne  
Four different voices tell their own versions of the same walk in the park. The radically different perspectives give a fascinating depth to this simple story which explores many of the author’s key themes, such as alienation, friendship and the bizarre amid the mundane.
- Dinosaurs in Your Backyard: The Coolest, Scariest Creatures Ever Found in the USA!* by Hugh Brewster  
Did you know that the first dinosaur fossil ever found in the United States was discovered in New Jersey? Or that the Great Plains used to be swarming with swimming sea monsters? Readers can imagine what was in their own backyards seventy million years ago as they read this one-of-a-kind dino adventure.
- John Henry*, by Julius Lester  
John Henry is stronger than ten men, and can dig through a mountain faster than a steam drill. Julius Lester’s folksy retelling of a popular African-American folk ballad has warmth, tall tale humor, and boundless energy. Jerry Pinkney illustrates the story with “rich colors borrowed from the rocks and the earth, so beautiful that they summon their own share of smiles and tears.
- A Kiss for Little Bear*, by Else Holmelund Minarik  
Little Bear sends Grandmother a picture, and she likes it so much she asks Hen to take him a thank-you kiss. But Hen passes the kiss to Frog, who passes it to Cat, and on and on—will Little Bear ever get his kiss?
- Junie B Jones: Boss of Lunch*, by Barbara Park  
Meet the World’s Funniest First Grader—Junie B. Jones! Something very wonderful is happening to Junie B. And it’s called—hurray, hurray!—she’s getting to be a professional lunch lady! And that means hanging out with Mrs. Gutzman in the cafeteria. And standing behind the counter. And even wearing a real actual hair net! Who knows? Pretty soon she could be the boss of the whole entire lunch operation!

# ACTIVITIES TO PRACTICE WITH MY FIRSTGRADER



Read together everyday for 20 minutes.

<p><b>AUGUST- OCTOBER</b></p> 	<p>Interview a family member about a time they never gave up. What did they accomplish? What kept them going?</p> 	<p>Collect small items (like pennies or hair pins) and practice sorting them into groups of 10. Then, practice counting the total number of piles by 10 plus the number of items left.</p> 	<p>Discuss how parents help children survive. How is this similar to how animals help their young survive? Draw a picture to help explain!</p> 	<p>Keep a reading journal to record how much time you spend reading each day! List titles and your favorite characters from each story. Include character traits that you admire.</p> 	<p>Sketch a map showing your route to school. Label a few significant landmarks between home and school like a friend's house or the park.</p> 
<p><b>OCTOBER - DECEMBER</b></p> 	<p>Practice using math in basic interactions. For example, if you have 12 cookies and eat 3, how many are left?</p> 	<p>Make a list of all the physical and personality similarities between your student and family members.</p> 	<p>Visit the National Zoo! Record observations (like color, shape, and size) for three of your favorite animals. Keep your observations as objective as possible. For example, "the lion is furry."</p> 	<p>Make a list of different types of transportation. Circle the different ways you have traveled on your list.</p> 	<p>Visit your local library to check-out three new books! Visit <a href="http://bit.ly/findmylibrary">bit.ly/findmylibrary</a> to find your local library branch.</p> 
<p><b>DECEMBER - FEBRUARY</b></p> 	<p>Take a trip to the National Air and Space Museum planetarium, or download the Google Sky Map application, to locate objects. Visit <a href="http://airandspace.si.edu">airandspace.si.edu</a> for more</p> 	<p>Draw a picture of what an ancient city may have looked like. Try to include structures that your student learned about in class. How is this different from your home today?</p> 	<p>Can you think of how your neighborhood would be different if people did not live there? Draw a picture of what it may have looked like before humans changed the environment to survive.</p> 	<p>Visit the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History's Butterfly Pavilion, free of charge on Tuesdays. Visit <a href="http://www.mnh.si.edu">www.mnh.si.edu</a> for more information.</p> 	<p>Play board games that involve counting. Simple games like Candy Land and Chutes and Ladders are great for helping kids recognize numbers on a dice and count moves.</p> 
<p><b>FEBRUARY - APRIL</b></p> 	<p>Visit the National Cherry Blossom Festival <a href="http://bit.ly/DCPSCCherry">bit.ly/DCPSCCherry</a>.</p> 	<p>Stand in a lit room and then turn off the light. What do you notice about your eyes adjusting to the darkness? How long does it take to see objects in the dark?</p> 	<p>Practice jumping rope in February, Heart Health Month! Track your pulse before and after to see how hard your heart is working. Visit <a href="http://bit.ly/DCPSPulse">bit.ly/DCPSPulse</a> to learn more.</p> 	<p>Use a ruler to measure different items at home. Write down your measurements and then determine, based upon your numbers, which items are bigger or smaller.</p> 	<p>Go on a scavenger hunt around your neighborhood to find as many American symbols as you can. Keep track of your findings by taking pictures, drawing, or making a list.</p> 
<p><b>APRIL - JUNE</b></p> 	<p>Write a funny poem titled, "Hey What's Up? I have a Million Bucks!" Write about what you would do with the money.</p> 	<p>Visit the Kennilworth Park and Aquatic Gardens. Look for frogs on a pond tour, offered every weekend at 10 a.m. Visit <a href="http://nps.gov/keaq">nps.gov/keaq</a> for more information.</p> 	<p>Visit <a href="http://bit.ly/DCPSTellTime">bit.ly/DCPSTellTime</a> to practice setting the small and large clock hands to the right time. Try all of the different skill levels as you progress.</p> 	<p>What are your summer plans? Brainstorm five activities you can do together to keep learning over the summer.</p> 	<p>Write a letter to your teacher sharing one of your favorite family traditions. What makes it special to you?</p> 