

Learning Guide for Families

A summary of what children should know and be able to do and ways for families to increase learning at home.



*“We believe families are our partners.
They are the first and most powerful
educators of children. Together we will
ensure success for all students.”*

—Superintendent Emmanuel Caulk,
Portland Public Schools

About these learning guides:

This learning guide represents some of the most essential things your child should know and be able to do by the END of the school year in English language arts (ELA) and Math. Learning goals help families and teachers know when students may need extra support and when they need to be challenged even more.

What can families do?

There is a lot you can do to support your child's learning and help prepare them for their future. Here are a few things that will help students learn:

1. Let your child know that education is important to you. Tell them education matters, that it's the foundation for success.
2. Make school a priority, get your child to school on time every day.
3. Work cooperatively with the school and demonstrate respect for teachers and staff.
4. Encourage independence, allow your children to make mistakes and accept responsibility for their choices.
5. Talk to your child about what is happening in school.
6. Talk to your child's teacher to make sure your child is making progress throughout the year.
7. Attend parent-teacher conferences and other school events whenever possible.
8. You have a right to know how your child is doing, don't hesitate to contact their teacher if you have questions.

Talking with your Child's Teacher

It's important to talk with your child's teacher and school regularly about your student's progress toward learning goals. Here are some questions or topics you may want to discuss:

- Review this learning guide and ask where your student is strong and where they need improvement.
- In addition to the learning goals in this guide, are there other goals your child is expected to master?
- Ask to see examples of your student's work and how they meet or do not meet learning goals.
- Ask how your child's progress is measured throughout the year.
- Ask if your child is on track to meet grade-level learning goals. If not, what supports will the school offer? What can you do at home?
- Ask if your child is at or above learning expectations. If so, what else does the school offer? What can I do at home?

Talking with your Child

“How was school today?”

“Fine.”

“What did you do?”

“Nothing”

Does this sound familiar? That’s okay, keep asking! Students whose parents talk with them about school do better in school. Here are some ways you can engage with your child and support their success:

- Make time to talk with your child about school every day.
- Ask your child to tell you one thing they learned today. What does your child think is most interesting? What seems hard?
- Review papers and projects your child brings home from school. Ask your child to tell you what learning it demonstrates.
- Praise your child for hard work and effort, not just “right answers”.
- Ask questions about what your child is thinking: How do you know that? What do you think? What do you notice? Why did you do it that way? Is there another way to find that answer?

Supporting Learning Away from School

Learning doesn’t have to stop when students leave school. Students spend more time out of school than in school. Here are some ways you can support learning outside of school:

- Read to your child, read with your child, and encourage family reading time—in the language you are most comfortable.
- Set up a quiet and comfortable place for your student to do homework or other learning activities.
- Try to establish a regular schedule for doing homework or other learning activities.
- Use this guide to focus on a few learning goals, try some of the suggestions for learning at home.

What your student should know and be able to do in English Language Arts (ELA):

Language

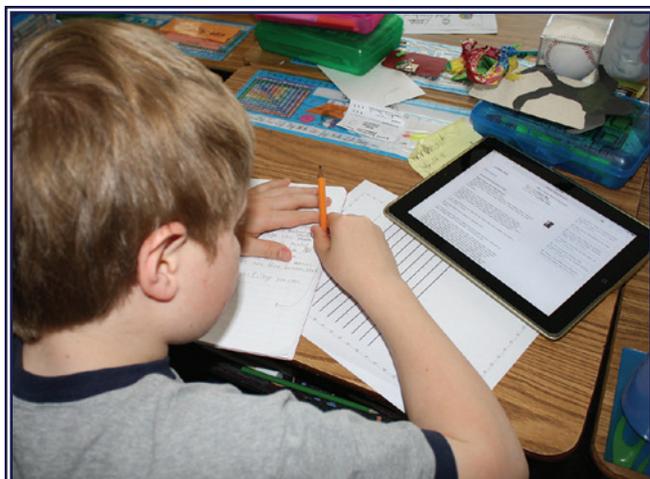
- Use interviews to gather information for a research project, such as a family history.
- Understand figurative language (descriptive language using words outside their original meaning). *For example: "The sun sparkled like diamonds on the surface of the water."*
- Understand subtle differences of meaning in related words, such as cool/cold/icy/frigid.

Reading and Literature

- Identify and analyze main ideas, text features, and supporting details in a nonfiction book or article.
- Identify and analyze how the author uses dialogue and description in a fiction book or story.
- Identify and analyze how the author uses the elements of setting, characterization, and plot in fiction stories and books.

Writing

- Analyze literature and articles and write a piece that includes details from the text to support his/her ideas. *For example: write a letter to an author or to a company.*
- Write research reports with his/her own words, a clear focus, and supporting detail.
- Write original stories that contain the basic elements of fiction: plot, characters, and setting.



What your student should know and be able to do in Math:

- Solve problems in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, working with large numbers and with multi-step problems.
- Understand the relationship among fractions, decimals, and percentages.
- Solve and represent problems with decimals and fractions.
- Represent and interpret the relationships between two variables, such as time and height. *For example: make a line graph of how a person has grown between the ages of 2 and 10 years and analyze when growth occurred at a faster or slower rate.*
- Identify, describe, and compare types of triangles (isosceles, equilateral, and right).
- Understand that some quadrilaterals can be classified in more than one way.
- Identify, describe, and compare three-dimensional shapes, such as rectangular prisms and pyramids.
- Determine and compare the perimeter and area of rectangles.
- Find the volume and surface area of rectangular prisms.
- Collect, represent, and analyze sets of data.
- Use mean and median to help draw conclusions about the data.





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