

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.



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

- Gather information from group discussions and interviews to use in reports. Decide what information is important and use it to support points made in the report.
- Use information gathered from group discussion or interviews in reports.
For example – as part of a unit on immigration to this country, students generate questions to ask neighbors or family members and use this information in a report.

Reading and Literature

- Recognize ways that writing is organized and arguments are used to express opinions for and against an issue.
- Identify and analyze elements of setting, characterization, plot, and conflict in novels.

Writing

- Organize information about a topic into a coherent paragraph. The paragraph should include a topic sentence, enough supporting details, and a concluding sentence.
- Use writing techniques that do not follow strict chronological order – use flashbacks to put scenes from the past into the story.
- Revise writing to improve organization and word choice.



Ways to Encourage ELA Learning at Home

- Ask your child to read a selection from a favorite book or author. Ask questions that encourage thinking and learning such as, “Why is this your favorite author?” “What other books by this author have you read?” “What was the author’s message?”
- Share and discuss a young adult novel with your child. Ask open-ended questions such as “How do you feel about ____?” “What was your thought about ____?” “When did you figure out what might happen to _____?”
- Encourage your child to use reading to gather information to plan a family trip or activity or to learn more about a subject that he/she is interested in. Talk about what your child has learned and how it will be useful.
- Visit a local museum such as the Portland Museum of Art (portlandartmuseum.org), Museum of African Art & Culture (museumafricanculture.org), or Portland Public Library’s Lewis Gallery (portlandlibrary.com).

Notes:

Please also connect with your child’s teacher and ask about home learning resources associated with your school’s specific reading and writing programs.

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

- ❑ Make comparisons using ratios, fractions, decimals, rates, unit rates, and percents.
For example – explore how different recipes using water and juice concentrate make more flavorful or less flavorful juice.
- ❑ Add, subtract, multiply, and divide integers. *For example –*
 $5 + (-3) = 2$ and $5 \times (-3) = -15$
- ❑ Understand linear relationships – the constant rate of change between two variables.
For example – the height of a stack of paper increases steadily with each additional piece of paper added to the stack.
- ❑ Recognize linear relationships in a verbal problem, a table, a graph, or an equation.
- ❑ Solve and write linear equations.
- ❑ Use the properties of similar figures, which have the same shape but not the same size, to explore reduction and enlargement.
- ❑ Develop strategies for measuring surface area and volume of three-dimensional figures. *For example – explore the materials needed to wrap a box and the space to fill the box.*
- ❑ Find probabilities by conducting experiments and collecting data.



Math Learning at Home

- Have your child measure the lengths of the sides of a room in your home and then figure out the perimeter and area of the room.
- Look for opportunities in everyday life to use large numbers with your child.
For example – compare the costs of different models of cars advertised or compare the population of Portland with a city of a relative or friend.
- Look for fractions and percents in sales at local stores. Have your child figure out how much you would save on a sale item.
- Add and subtract dollars and cents to use decimals in everyday life. Have your child first estimate the cost of three or more items and then find the total.

Notes:

Please also connect with your child's teacher and ask about home learning resources associated with your school's specific math program.



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This Learning Guide for Families was made possible by a generous grant from L.L. Bean.

This brochure was published by the Portland Public Schools. Content used and modified by permission of Boston Public Schools. Additional content based on the work of Dr. Anthony L. Moore.