

Parents' Guide to Student Success

Panama-Buena
Vista Union
School District



Seventh Grade

This guide provides an overview of what your child will learn by the end of 7th grade in mathematics and English language arts/literacy. If your child is meeting the expectations outlined in these standards, he or she will be well prepared for 8th grade.

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

Educational standards describe what students should know and be able to do in each subject in each grade. In California, the State Board of Education decides on the standards for all students, from kindergarten through high school.

Since 2010, 45 states have adopted the same standards for English and math. These standards are called the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Having the same standards helps all students get the same high quality education, even if they change schools or move to a different state. Teachers, parents, and education experts designed the standards to prepare students for success in college and the workplace.

(Taken from <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>)

English Language Arts & Literacy

Overview

In 7th grade, your child will analyze, define, compare, and evaluate ideas when reading, writing, speaking, and listening. He or she will continue to analyze how themes in fiction and nonfiction develop over the course of a book or article. Readings will include classic and contemporary pieces that represent diverse perspectives. In particular, 7th grade students will cite specific evidence when answering higher order thinking questions. They will also use relevant evidence when supporting their own points in writing and speaking, making their reasoning clear to readers or listeners or constructively evaluating others' use of evidence. This ability will help your child in every facet of his or her studies (taken from [PTA.org](http://www.pta.org)).

A sample of what your child will be working on in 7th grade:

- Citing several sources of specific evidence from a piece of work when offering an oral or written analysis of a book, essay, article, or play
- Analyzing works of fiction to see how events advance the plot and how setting shapes the characters
- Determining an author's point of view or purpose in a nonfiction work and analyzing how the author takes a position different from other authors
- Organizing and focusing his or her own writing, including supporting statements and conclusions with evidence and showing that the evidence is accurate and reliable
- Conducting research in response to a specific question by drawing on evidence from several credible literary or informational sources to support an analysis or reflection
- Avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citations (e.g., footnotes, bibliography)
- Evaluating a speaker's key points and reasoning, asking questions, and stating his or her own well supported ideas in discussions
- Presenting claims and findings to others emphasizing main points, making eye contact, speaking loudly enough, pronouncing words clearly, and using formal English when the situation calls for it
- Using common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to defining the meaning of a word (e.g., *semi-*, *semiannual*, *semicircle*)

Talking to Your Child's Teacher

When you talk to the teacher, do not worry about covering everything. Instead, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In 7th grade, these include:

- Reading closely and citing several sources of evidence from grade level fiction and nonfiction works to support an analysis of what the material says
- Developing a rich vocabulary of complex and sophisticated words and using them to speak and write more precisely and coherently

Mathematics

Overview

The CCSS for mathematics include two types of standards: one for mathematical practice (how students are able to apply and extend math principles) and one for mathematical content (what students know about math). The two are linked together while students are learning. *(taken from www.readingrocket.org/article/54153)*

In 7th grade, your child will grow in skill and understanding as he or she continues the previous grade's work in proportional relationships, equations, and positive and negative numbers. These topics will remain a major emphasis throughout the middle school years and into high school. A good command of rates and proportional relationships, including percentages, is also an important life skill (taken from PTA.org).

A sample of what your child will be working on in 7th grade:

- Analyzing proportional relationships (e.g., by graphing in the coordinate plane), and distinguishing proportional relationships from other kinds of mathematical relationships (e.g., buying 10 times as many items will cost you 10 times as much, but taking 10 times as many aspirin will not lower your fever 10 times as much)
- Solving percent problems (e.g., tax, tips, and markups and markdowns)
- Adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing positive and negative numbers, and solving related word problems
- Solving word problems that have a combination of whole numbers, fractions, and decimals (e.g., a woman making \$25 per hour receives a 10% raise; she will make an additional 1/10 of her salary an hour, or \$2.50, for new salary of \$27.50)
- Solving equations such as $\frac{1}{2}(x - 3) = \frac{3}{4}$ quickly and accurately, and writing equations of this kind to solve word problems (e.g., "I knocked over a carton of milk, and 3 cups were spilled before I set the carton upright again. When I poured out the remaining milk equally into two measuring cups, there was $\frac{3}{4}$ of a cup of milk in each one. How much milk was originally in the carton?")
- Solving problems involving scale drawings
- Using statistics to draw inferences and make comparisons (e.g., deciding which candidate is likely to win an election based on a survey)

How to Help Your Child at Home

Learning does not end in the classroom. Children need help and support at home to succeed in their studies. Try to create a quiet place for your child to study, and carve out time every day when your child can concentrate on reading, writing, and math uninterrupted by friends, brothers or sisters, or other distractions.

You should also try and sit down with your child at least once a week for 15 to 30 minutes while he or she works on homework. This will keep you informed about what your child is working on, and it will help you be the first to know if your child needs help with specific topics. By taking these small steps, you will be helping your child become successful both in and outside the classroom.

English Language Arts and Literacy

- Visit a local art museum together. Take time to closely observe the details of the paintings or other art objects and talk about what you see there.
- Have your child help plan a family outing, using the Internet or library to research a place he or she is interested in.
- Ask your child who his or her favorite authors are. Why does your child like his/her books? What ideas does the author write about? Who are his/her favorite characters? Why?

Mathematics

- Look for "word problems" in real life. Some 7th grade examples might include:
- Figuring the amount of a 15% tip or determining what percentage of weekly income goes to pay taxes.
- Using a scale diagram in a manual or a newspaper article to determine lengths, areas, distances, or other measures.
- For a long-term project, help your child choose a stock and follow its value on the stock market using the newspaper or the Internet. Have your child calculate the stock's percent increase or decrease each month.

Helpful Websites:

<http://www.corestandards.org/>

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>

<http://www.pta.org/index.cfm>

Visit the District's website for additional information helpful to parents @ <http://www.pbvUSD.k12.ca.us/Page/7094>