



MY CHILD'S LEARNING:

a Parent's Guide to the Iowa Core

This guide provides an overview of what your child will learn by the end of 2nd grade as directed by the Iowa Core, our statewide academic standards. The guide focuses on key concepts and skills in mathematics, literacy, science, social studies and 21st Century skills. In addition, the Iowa Core builds a strong foundation for success in other subjects he or she studies throughout the school year. If your child meets the expectations outlined in the Iowa Core, he or she will be well prepared for 3rd grade.

Why are Academic Standards Important?

Academic standards are important because they help ensure that all students, no matter where they live or what school they attend, are prepared for success in college and the workforce. They help set clear and consistent expectations for what students should know and be able to do from kindergarten through 12th grade. Standards are a set of goals, not a curriculum, so decisions about teaching remain with local schools.

High standards help teachers and parents work together to ensure students succeed. They guide parents and teachers to know when students need extra assistance or when they need more of a challenge in the classroom. They also help your child develop critical-thinking skills that will prepare him or her for college and career.



Some content adapted from the National PTA's *Parent's Guide to Student Success*.



How are the standards organized?

Some of the Iowa Core standards are arranged grade-by-grade, while others are grouped into a span of grade levels. In all cases, the standards set appropriate expectations for what students need to learn, but not how to teach.

- Literacy and mathematics: These standards are arranged grade-by-grade for kindergarten through 8th grade. For high school, literacy standards are arranged by grade span (9-10 and 11-12) and math standards are arranged by subject, such as algebra and geometry.
- Science, social studies, and 21st century skills: These standards are arranged in grade spans of K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12.



Mathematics

One of the most important outcomes for the year is to add and subtract two-digit numbers efficiently and accurately (e.g., $77 - 28$). Another important goal is to understand what the digits mean in a three-digit number such as 463 (namely, 463 is four hundreds, six tens and three ones). Your child will continue to build expertise in, and master, solving addition and subtraction word problems. This is important for the next year, when the study of multiplication, division and fractions begins.

Examples of Your Child's Work at School:

- Solve challenging addition and subtraction word problems with one or two steps that involve adding to, taking from, putting together, taking apart and comparing by using drawings and equations. (e.g., a “one-step” problem: “Lucy has 23 fewer apples than Julie. Julie has 47 apples. How many apples does Lucy have?”)
- Efficiently add with a sum of 20 or less (e.g., $11 + 8$); efficiently subtract from 20 or less (e.g., $16 - 9$); and memorize and recall all sums of one-digit numbers by the end of the year.
- Understand what the digits mean in three-digit numbers (place value).
- Show understanding of place value to add and subtract three-digit numbers (e.g., $811 - 367$); quickly add and subtract two-digit numbers (e.g., $77 - 28$).
- Measure and estimate length in standard units.
- Recognize, draw and analyze 2-D and 3-D shapes to develop foundations for area, volume and geometry in later grades.

How to Help Your Child at Home:

- When saving for a purchase, compare the cost of the item to the amount of money you have; then ask your child to determine how much more money he or she needs to buy the item.
- When measuring your child's height, ask how many inches he or she has grown since the very first measurement.
- Play “draw the shape.” For example, ask your child to draw a square and ask him or her to shade in a quarter of the square.

English Language Arts & Literacy

Students will gain more skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening. They continue to learn and practice rules for matching sounds to letters that make up words, and they learn new concepts, such as words that share the same root (e.g., add and additional) to help them figure out the meanings of new words. Your child will use writing as a way to demonstrate newly learned words and phrases to express ideas. As students write and speak, they will be more attentive to the formal and informal uses of English and will spell most words correctly in their writing.

Examples of Your Child's Work at School:

- Pay close attention to details, including illustrations and graphics, in stories and books to answer who, what, where, when, why and how questions.
- Determine the lesson or moral of stories, fables and folktales.
- Write an opinion about a book he or she has read by using important details from the materials to support that opinion.
- Write stories that include a short sequence of events and a clear beginning, middle and ending.
- Participate in research projects (e.g., read books about a single topic to produce a report).
- Take part in conversations by connecting his or her comments to the remarks of others, and asking and answering questions to gather additional information or to deepen understanding of the topic.

How to Help Your Child at Home:

- Read at home every day and assist your child by reading every other paragraph. Encourage your child to read to younger siblings, cousins, or other children you know.
- Have your child write a thank-you note or letter to family members or friends.
- Ask your librarian to suggest books about people or places that are important to your child or family that you can read together. Encourage your child to explain what he or she has just read.



Science (K-2)

Your child has a natural interest in almost everything around him or her and often pushes, pulls and transforms objects to see what will happen. These inquiries allow children to guess and better understand how things work and behave in their world and to see the results of their actions.

Examples of Your Child's Work at School:

- Construct ideas and engage in activities that allow the student to understand how science works.
- Manipulate common objects and other materials to learn how they work.
- Study the life cycle and habitat of living things to build an understanding of biological concepts.
- Observe various changes that include cyclic changes (moon phases and the change of the seasons); predictable trends (growth and decay); and less consistent changes such as the weather.

How to Help Your Child at Home:

- Have your child sort objects into two or more categories. Introduce new objects and have the child explain which category it fits into and why. Set out a new object and have the child explain how he or she fit the object into the categories.
- Help your child notice and name plants and animals in his or her environment.
- Go on walks and encourage questions and close observations of nature. Talk about what organisms need to survive.
- Utilize programs offered by your county nature center. Visit parks and hiking, biking, and cross-country trails.
- Go to the following website: <http://www.myamericanfarm.org>.

Social Studies (K-2)

Your child will learn what a community is through the ideals of responsible citizenship and his or her place in a community. Children will become detectives of history by comparing life in communities from long ago to today. Your child will discover how his or her individual traits may be the same or different from others.

Examples of Your Child's Work at School:

- Construct class rules that embody fairness, leadership and responsibility while learning how to apply the ideals of citizenship.
- Compare and contrast life today to life in the past by using primary sources (artifacts, photographs and documents) and place them on a timeline.
- Use maps, globes and photos to analyze the geography of a community.
- Recognize that people have individual traits and can be alike and different in many ways.
- Evaluate the difference between needs and wants and make connections to the concept of goods and services.

How to Help Your Child at Home:

- Read with your child every day. Seek out social studies-related books, both fiction and non-fiction. Check your local library or the National Council for the Social Studies Notable Trade Book List at <http://www.socialstudies.org/notable>.
- Look at family photos and discuss the history of your family.
- Establish and discuss family rules to promote responsibility and leadership at home.
- Point out and discuss notable landmarks in your community such as the library, hospital, grocery store, police station, museums, parks, etc.
- Visit local museums and cultural institutions and compare life today to life in the past.



21st Century Skills (K-2)

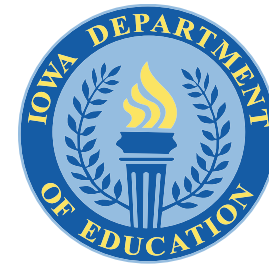
Your child will participate in activities that teach how good hygiene, healthy food choices and adequate rest help him or her feel good and be ready to learn. Students will learn how to use technology in all curricular areas to communicate and appropriately work with others. They will practice work habits and social skills that will help them become successful students. Students will receive real-world experiences through visits from community members and parents who represent various professions, and then participate in age-appropriate activities that are related to the visits.

Examples of Your Child's Work at School:

- Compare positive and negative health and safety practices.
- Give examples of personal rights and responsibilities as members in a classroom.
- Use technology to illustrate and communicate ideas related to class projects.
- Follow steps or processes to complete increasingly complex tasks.
- Understand the concepts of spending and saving money and why both are important.

How to Help Your Child at Home:

- Visit <http://KidsHealthline.com> for videos, games and activities.
- Read with your child from books with 21st Century skills content.
Examples: *Jobs People Do* series by DK publishing; *The Marvels of Money for Kids* series by Paul Nourigat.
- Help your child select physical activities to keep moving and have fun.
- Show your child how to appropriately use technology to find games, activities and information.



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