

FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS & EARLY LITERACY

A Family Guide to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) — Grade 1

Welcome to First Grade!

First grade is a milestone year where children shift from absolute dependency into becoming independent, self-directed readers, writers, and problem solvers. Fully aligned with the **New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS)**, this guide details the fundamental benchmarks your child is expected to achieve by June. Our district drives student success using the state-adopted **Savvas myView Literacy** framework and the **McGraw Hill Reveal Mathematics** program. To monitor individual growth and tailor support or acceleration frameworks, our district relies on a continuous screening network featuring **DIBELS 8th Edition** and the adaptive **i-Ready Diagnostic Assessment**, administered in the Fall, Winter, and Spring.

The Crucial Role of Parents and Caregivers

First grade is an intensive foundational year. Consistent reinforcement at home transforms basic mechanical rules into active, lifelong academic skills. Your daily interactions build the stamina and confidence your child needs.

Deepening Literacy at Home

- **Engage in Daily Read-Alouds:** Read with your child for at least 20 minutes a day. Ask open-ended questions like, “What do you think will happen next?” or “Why did the character make that choice?”
- **Track Phonics and Blending:** Encourage your child to use their finger to track under words and blend unknown sounds together, rather than guessing based purely on illustrations.
- **Encourage Early Narrative Writing:** Provide journals, writing prompts, or letter layouts to help your child practice writing sentences using phonetic spelling and early punctuation.

Strengthening Math & Computational Discourse

- **Lock In Math Combinations:** Play simple card or dice games to practice addition and subtraction facts within 10 and 20 to build fact recall speed.
- **Ask “How Did You Solve It?”:** When your child answers a math problem, ask them to show their model or tell you their strategy. This lines up with the talk-driven style of *Ready Math*.
- **Review Diagnostic Highlights:** Work closely with your child's teacher to review target performance feedback from each testing window to help reinforce specific operational skill gaps at home.

ELA Language Arts & The Savvas myView Program

First-grade literacy is centered around cracking the phonetic code and constructing meaningful text interactions. Powered by **Savvas myView Literacy**, our instructional framework links explicit phonics tracks, systematic phonemic awareness, and text-based writing workshops together.

1. Phonemic Awareness & Foundational Phonics (NJSLS RF.1.1 – RF.1.3)

Students learn the rules of print, recognizing features of a sentence like capitalizations and ending periods. Phonemic awareness focuses on isolating, producing, and manipulating individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken single-syllable words, blending sounds into spoken words, and segmenting spoken words into individual sounds.

Phonics benchmarks require students to decode words with common spelling patterns, regular vowel teams, and silent *e* structures:

- Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
- Decode regularly spelled one-syllable words, including words with consonant blends (e.g., *bl, fr, st*) and digraphs (e.g., *ch, sh, th, wh*).
- Isolate and produce long and short vowel sounds in spoken single-syllable words, utilizing final *-e* and common vowel teams (e.g., *ea, oa, ai, ay*).
- Decode two-syllable words by breaking them down into clear syllable types (e.g., closed syllables, open syllables, r-controlled vowels).
- Read high-frequency sight words automatically within grade-level text pathways.

2. Fluency & Text-Driven Comprehension (NJSLS RF.1.4, RL.1.1 – RI.1.10)

Fluency targets ensure that students read grade-level prose and poetry with accuracy, an appropriate pace, and proper expression (prosody) to support total reading comprehension.

- **Literature:** Students ask and answer questions about key details in a text. They retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson. They describe characters, settings, and major events in a story using key details.
- **Informational Text:** Students ask and answer questions about key details in non-fiction texts. They identify the main topic and retell key details of a text, using text features (e.g., headings, tables of contents, glossaries) to locate key facts or information efficiently. They describe connections between two individuals, events, or pieces of information in a text.

3. Structural Composition & Language Conventions (NJSLS W.1.1 – W.1.3 & L.1.1 – L.1.2)

Using the *myView* Writing Workshop, first graders move past single labels to write structured compositions across three major text genres:

- **Opinion Writing:** Introducing a topic or name of a book they are writing about, stating an opinion, supplying a reason for the opinion, and providing a sense of closure.
- **Informative & Explanatory Writing:** Naming a topic, supplying facts about the topic, and providing a sense of closure.
- **Narrative Composition:** Recounting two or more appropriately sequenced events, including details regarding what happened, using temporal transition words (e.g., *first, then, next*) to signal event order, and providing a sense of closure.

Grammar & Conventions: Print all upper- and lowercase letters legibly. Use common, proper, and possessive nouns, singular and plural nouns with matching verbs, and personal, possessive, and indefinite pronouns. They use verbs to convey a sense of past, present, and future time. Students capitalize dates and the pronoun *I*, use end punctuation for sentences, and apply conventional spelling rules for words with common spelling patterns and high-frequency words.

MATH Mathematics & The McGraw Hill Reveal Math Program

First Grade math builds on foundational number sense to expand addition and subtraction strategies within 20, deepen place value understanding up to 120, measure objects, tell time, and partition geometric shapes. Supported by **McGraw Hill Reveal Math**, students explore concepts through structural learning phases:

- **Launch:** Engaging problem contexts and rich math talks that spark curiosity, activate prior knowledge, and establish purpose.
- **Explore & Develop:** Active investigation of mathematical concepts using concrete manipulatives (base-ten blocks, ten-frames, connecting cubes), visual models, and collaborative peer discussions.
- **Reflect & Practice:** Connecting visual models to abstract mathematical symbols, solidifying procedural fluency, and applying problem-solving skills in new contexts.

1. Operations and Algebraic Thinking (NJSLS 1.OA.A.1 – 1.OA.D.8)

- **Word Problems & Problem-Solving:** Solve addition and subtraction word problems within 20 involving situations of adding to, taking from, putting together, taking apart, and comparing (using objects, drawings, and equations with unknown numbers).
- **Properties & Relationships:** Apply properties of operations as strategies to add and subtract (e.g., Commutative property: if $8 + 3 = 11$ is known, then $3 + 8 = 11$ is known). Understand subtraction as an unknown-addend problem (e.g., solve $10 - 8 = ?$ by finding $8 + ? = 10$).
- **Fluency & Strategies:** Add and subtract within 20 using strategies such as counting on, making 10, decomposing numbers, and using fact families. Demonstrate automaticity for addition and subtraction facts within 10.
- **Equation Structure:** Understand the meaning of the equal sign, and determine if equations involving addition and subtraction are true or false. Determine the unknown whole number in an addition or subtraction equation relating three whole numbers. (e.g., $8 + ? = 11$).

2. Number and Operations in Base Ten: Place Value (NJSLS 1.NBT.A.1 – 1.NBT.C.6)

- **Counting & Sequence:** Count to 120, starting at any number less than 120. Read and write numerals and represent a number of objects with a written numeral.
- **Place Value Understanding:** Understand that the two digits of a two-digit number represent amounts of tens and ones (e.g., 10 can be thought of as a bundle of ten ones; numbers 11 to 19 are composed of a ten and some ones).
- **Comparing Two-Digit Numbers:** Compare two two-digit numbers based on the meanings of the tens and ones digits, using symbols ($>$, $=$, $<$) to record the results.
- **Adding & Subtracting Tens:** Add within 100 (a two-digit number and a one-digit number, or a two-digit number and a multiple of 10) using concrete models or strategies based on place value. Mentally find 10 more or 10 less than a given two-digit number without counting.

3. Measurement, Data Literacy, and Geometric Reasonings (NJSLS 1.MD.A.1 – 1.G.A.3)

- **Length Measurement:** Order three objects by length; compare the lengths of two objects indirectly by using a third object. Express the length of an object as a whole number of non-standard or standard length units.
- **Time & Data:** Tell and write time in hours and half-hours using analog and digital clocks. Organize, represent, and interpret data with up to three categories (ask and answer questions about total counts and category comparisons).

- **Shape Attributes & Composition:** Distinguish between defining attributes (e.g., triangles are closed and three-sided) versus non-defining attributes (color, orientation, size). Compose 2D or 3D shapes to create new composite shapes.
- **Fractions & Fair Shares:** Partition circles and rectangles into two and four equal shares; describe the shares using the words halves, fourths, and quarters, understanding that decomposing into more equal shares creates smaller shares.

ASSESS **Assessment in Grade 1: Foundational Screening Network**

Assessments in first grade serve as critical indicators of early reading safety and core math skill development. Our district cross-references foundational data points by combining the precise phonics indicators of ****DIBELS 8th Edition**** with the comprehensive adaptive benchmarks of the ****i-Ready Diagnostic Assessment****.

The **i-Ready Diagnostic** is an online, computer-adaptive evaluation that adjusts its question challenge levels dynamically based on student inputs. This diagnostic data allows teachers to target instruction precisely to individual learning levels, mapping instructional intervention or enrichment paths that support overall grade-level benchmarks.

Assessment Metrics	DIBELS 8th Edition Indicators (Grade 1)	i-Ready Diagnostic Focus (Grade 1)
Phoneme Segmentation & Decoding	Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF): Measures fluid ability to split words into individual sound phonemes. Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF): Evaluates decoding letter-sound rules using nonsense structures (e.g., *vob, tust*).	Measures sound-letter matching rules, phonics generalizations, vowel team blending mechanics, and high-frequency word recognition banks.
Fluency & Reading Prose	Oral Reading Fluency (ORF): Tracks accurate oral words read per minute from short first-grade passages, checking flow and reading rate.	Tests sentence matching, listening comprehension logic, and informational/literary main idea tracking.
Operations & Place Value	<i>Not tracked via DIBELS.</i> Checked via school portfolio frameworks.	Evaluates word problems within 20, properties of operations, missing addends, and tens/ones place value groupings.
Measurement & Geometry	<i>Not tracked via DIBELS.</i> Checked via school portfolio frameworks.	Tests indirect unit length measurement, time to the hour/half-hour, data category line tracking, and shape sharing.

Family Resource Hub & Recommended Reading

Leverage these vetted book materials and state digital portals to support your first grader's academic milestones at home.

Highly Recommended Books to Read With Your First Grader

These targeted early readers and mathematical stories align directly with first-grade phonetic systems and base-ten models:

- **"Frog and Toad Together"** by *Arnold Lobel* – Exceptional for practicing controlled vowel decoding, sight word mastery, and early sentence retelling.
- **"Put Me in the Zoo"** by *Robert Lopshire* – Perfect for reinforcing regular consonant blends, short vowel rules, and rhymes.
- **"Measuring Penny"** by *Loreen Leedy* – Introduces early units of length, indirect comparison models, and data recording principles.

Vetted Curricular & State Web Portals

NJDOE Early Childhood Branch: Official state frameworks, timelines, and tools outlining first-grade core skill milestones.

NJDOE Early Childhood Portal

NJSLS Grade 1 ELA Standards: Full state repository detailing specific reading rules, print foundations, and language mechanics.

NJ Student Learning Standards for ELA

NJSLS Grade 1 Math Standards: State repository outlining math operational rules, counting frameworks, and base-ten targets.

NJ Student Learning Standards for Math

Curriculum Associates i-Ready Support Portal: Vetted tools to analyze diagnostic score sheets, investigate lesson scopes, and access home math worksheets.

Official i-Ready Family Center