Denver Public Schools has embraced the Colorado Academic Standards to ensure students are equipped for success in the 21st Century. These parent guides provide an overview of what your child will be learning in language arts, math, science, and social studies, based on the academic standards, in each grade. They also describe ways you can help at home and include additional helpful resources.
Language Arts

Reading aloud fluently, following rules of punctuation and grammar

- Read a wide range of stories and describe how a story teaches a lesson.
- Describe characters in a story and how their actions contributed to events.
- Read texts about history, social studies or science and answer questions about what they learned.
- Refer to information from illustrations such as maps or pictures as well as the words in a text to support answers.
- Learning the rules of spoken and written English.
- Learn and use new words, including words related to specific subjects (such as science words).
- Participate in class discussions by listening, asking questions, sharing ideas and building on the ideas of others.
- Give a class presentation on a topic or tell a story using relevant facts and details, and speaking clearly.
- Write stories with dialogue and descriptions of characters’ actions, thoughts and feelings.
- Gather information from books, articles and online sources to build understanding of a topic.
- Write research or opinion papers over extended periods of time.

Mathematics

Working with multiplication, division, fractions, shapes, areas

- Understand and explain what it means to multiply or divide numbers.
- Multiply all one-digit numbers from memory (knowing their times table).
- Begin to multiply numbers with more than one digit (such as multiplying 9 x 80).
- Solve two-step “word problems” using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.
- Understand fractions as numbers (such as recognizing that 1/2 and 3 are the same number) and identify a fraction as a number on a number line.
- Compare the size of two fractions.
- Recognize the characteristics of shapes (such as squares, rectangles, pentagons and hexagons) and be able to name and classify them.
- Find the area of shapes and relate area to multiplication (for example, why is the number of square feet for a 9-foot by 7-foot room found by multiplying 9 x 7?)
- Measure and estimate weights and liquid volumes, and solve word problems involving these quantities.
- Tell time and measure time intervals in minutes.
EXAMPLES OF WHAT YOUR CHILD WILL BE LEARNING IN GRADE 3

Science

How living things develop, Earth as part of our solar system

Physical Science (Investigating electrical systems)
- Understand that energy comes in many forms such as light, heat, sound, magnetic, chemical and electrical.

Life Science (Investigating life cycles)
- Understand that living things – animals, plants – develop differently over time.
- Understand that living things have different needs at different points in their lifetimes, such as when they’re growing or reproducing.
- Compare fossils to each other or to living organisms to learn about prehistoric environments and differences with organisms today.

Earth Systems Science (Investigating objects in the sky)
- Learn that Earth is part of the solar system, which includes the sun, moon and other bodies that orbit the sun in predictable patterns.

Social Studies

Using factual historical sources, maps, functions of local government

- Compare factual historical sources with works of fiction about the same topic.
- Use a variety of historical sources including artifacts, pictures and documents to help define factual historical evidence.
- Learn how different groups of people have lived together and interacted in the past.
- Understand how people and events bring important changes to a community or region (such as how mining affects the mountains).
- Know how to use a map to find continents, oceans, mountains and states.
- Understand how regions in the world differ by geography and by the people who live in them.
- Describe the differences between producers and consumers in a community, and explain how goods and services are exchanged.
- Create a plan for a short-term financial goal (such as buying a book).
- Understand citizens have rights and responsibilities.
- Identify the elements of civil discourse, such as listening with respect for understanding and speaking in a respectful manner.
- Identify the origins, structure and functions of the local government.
You do not have to be an expert to help your child with homework. The Colorado Academic Standards are focused on critical thinking. So asking your child these three simple questions can help develop deeper understanding:

- Ask “How do you know that?” to prompt your child to think critically about reaching an answer.
- Ask “Can you prove it?” to encourage your child to defend a solution or explain an alternate route.
- Ask “Can you use this in a real-world situation?” to spark thinking about using what’s learned in everyday life.

Language arts
- Make reading for fun a part of your child’s daily routine. Provide time and space for them to read without distractions such as TV.
- Encourage your child to find a picture from a newspaper or magazine, cut it out and write a story about it.
- Start a family vocabulary box. Write down new words they discover, add them to the box and use the words in conversation.
- Start a family book club. Let different members of the family pick the book and experience the joy of reading together.
- Be sure your child has a library card. Most libraries have book clubs and activities that make reading fun for the entire family.
- Children should select books they are interested in to develop a passion for reading. Ask your child what topics, events or activities he or she likes, then help them find materials about these topics. Ask your child’s teacher or a librarian for suggestions.

Math
- Look for word problems in real life. Notice those times when you are using multiplication and involve your child. For example, when you need to figure out how many days are in four weeks, ask your child to help you find the answer.
- Similarly, ask your child to help when you are using division in everyday situations, such as determining how many candies each child will get if 36 candies are shared equally among nine children at a party.
- Play math games with your child. For example, “I’m thinking of two numbers whose product is between 20 and 30. How many pairs can you think of that would satisfy this problem?” Have your child explain the solutions.
- Encourage your child to write or describe numbers in different ways. For example, what are some different ways to make 1,450? 1,450 = 1 thousand, 4 hundreds, 5 tens and 0 ones; 1,000 + 450; 14 hundreds and 50 ones; 13 hundreds + 15 tens, etc.
- Use everyday objects to allow your child to explore the concept of fractions. For example, use measuring cups to have your child demonstrate how many ¼ cups are in a whole, how many ¼ cups you need to make 1¼ cups and how many times you have to refill a ½ cup measuring cup to make 1½ cups.

Want to learn more?

Resources: The DPS standards website provides additional information and parent resources on the academic standards and how you can help at home. Visit standards.dpsk12.org to find the following resources:

DPS guides:
- Parent guides for all grade levels.
- Standards and students with special needs.
- Technology expectations by grade level.

These guides were developed using the following outside resources (also available on the DPS standards site):
- Colorado Department of Education grade-level expectations for all 10 Colorado Academic Standards.
- National PTA parent success guides, by grade level, in language arts and math (English and Spanish).
- Council of Great City Schools parent roadmaps, by grade level, in language arts and math (English and Spanish).

Questions:
For questions, please email standards@dpsk12.org.