A Parent’s Guide to Student Learning

Examples of what your child will be learning at each grade level

KINDERGARTEN

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.
EXAMPLES OF WHAT YOUR CHILD WILL BE LEARNING IN KINDERGARTEN

Language Arts

*Matching letters to sounds, expressing ideas clearly*
- Name and write uppercase and lowercase letters.
- Match letters to sounds and using other methods to figure out unfamiliar words when reading and writing.
- Learn and use new words.
- Identify words that rhyme.
- Read common words such as the, of, you, she and my.
- Ask and answer questions about a story the teacher reads out loud.
- Identify characters, settings and major events in a story.
- Participate in discussions by listening and taking turns speaking.
- Take part in shared reading, writing and research projects.
- Express thoughts, feelings and ideas clearly.
- Use a combination of drawing, speaking and writing to describe an event, give information about a topic or share an opinion.
- Recognize the person, place, thing or idea that an illustration shows.
- Compare the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories, such as fairy tales and folktales.
- State an opinion or preference about a book or topic (such as My favorite book is ...).
- Understand and use question words (such as who, what, where, when, why, how) in discussions.

Mathematics

*Counting to 100 by ones and tens, beginning to add and subtract*
- Count objects to tell how many there are in a group.
- Compare two groups of objects to tell which group, if either, has more.
- Acting out addition and subtraction word problems and drawing diagrams to represent them.
- Add and subtract very small numbers using objects, fingers, drawings or words to show strategies and solutions.
- Add and subtract very small numbers quickly and accurately (such as 1+3=4).
- Understand addition as putting together and adding to, and subtraction as taking apart and taking away from.
- Comparing two written numbers to tell which is greater (such as “I know 10 is greater than 6”).
- Count a set of objects to 20 and write numbers 1-20.
- Count to 100 by ones and by tens.
- Breaking up numbers less than or equal to 10 in more than one way (such as 9=6+3 or 9=5+4).
- Work with numbers 11-19 to gain understanding of place value with objects or drawings.
- Name and understand shapes (such as understanding a diamond is still a square).
EXAMPLES OF WHAT YOUR CHILD WILL BE LEARNING IN KINDERGARTEN

Science

Learning about the sun, heat and light; why objects move
- Describe the seasons.
- Know that the sun provides heat and light to Earth.
- Understand the difference in temperature between day, when the sun shines on our area, and night, when the sun does not shine.
- Learn about what happens when the sun’s light is blocked.
- Understand how heat and light affect the growth of plants.
- Learn that objects can move in a variety of ways that can be described by speed and direction.
- Discuss what can change how fast or slow an object travels.
- Understand that people must push harder to move their bikes, skateboards or scooters as they go faster or as they go up a hill.
- Understand that objects can be sorted by physical properties, which can be observed and measured.
- Learn to sort objects by properties such as size, shape, color, weight and texture.
- Know the difference between living and non-living things
- Understand that organisms – living things including plants and animals – can also be described and sorted by their physical characteristics.

Social Studies

Basic identifiers such as school and city; good citizenship
- Identify home address, school and city.
- Identify common places such as home, school, cafeteria and gymnasium.
- Describe surroundings and what people do in their surroundings.
- Know the difference between a map and globe and that they are tools for finding different places around the world.
- Discuss ways food, clothing and shelter change in different environments.
- Use words related to location, direction and distance such as up, behind and far.
- Sequence a set of activities or event words such as past, present, future, days, weeks, months, years, first, next, last.
- Discuss differences and similarities in families and communities.
- Talk about concepts of fairness, justice, responsibility and rules.
- Explain and practice good citizenship and good manners.
- Recognize state and national symbols and holidays.
- Discuss the different jobs people do and why people earn a living.
- Ask questions, share ideas and discuss ideas about the past.
- Explain change using words such as past, present, before, now and later.
- Recognize that people own things (such as backpacks, shoes, toys).
- Understand the purpose of money and recognize coins or currency as money.
You Play A Key Role

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

- Read to your child and have your child read to you every day for at least 15 minutes. Pick out words that might be new to your child or words that have multiple or complex meanings. Discuss those words and how they add to what the writer is saying.
- Encourage your child to tell you about his or her day at school. Have your child describe the day to you.
- Ask your child to retell a story in his or her own words by telling what happened first, second, third, etc.
- Ask your child to think about what the message of a story may be or what he or she learned from a book or article.
- Look for opportunities in everyday places to build your child’s vocabulary.
- Be sure your child has a library card. Your child should select books in which they are interested to develop a passion for reading.
  Many libraries have book clubs and family activities that make reading fun for the entire family.

Math

- Use everyday objects to allow your child to count and group a collection of objects.
- Encourage your child to construct numbers in multiple ways. For example, what are some ways you can make 10? Answers might include 5+5, 6+4, 8+2, etc. Have your child explain his or her thinking.
- Have your child create story problems to represent addition and subtraction of small numbers. For example: “Ann had eight balloons. Then she gave three away so she only had five left.”
- Encourage your child to stick with it whenever a problem seems difficult. This will help your child see that everyone can learn math.
- Praise your child when he or she makes an effort and share in the excitement when he or she solves a problem or understands something for the first time.

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.