

Characteristics of First Graders

Intellectual Development

First-graders are active learners and demonstrate considerable verbal skills. They love games and rules, developing concepts and problem-solving skills from these experiences. Hands-on activity and experimentation are important.

Social Characteristics

- Even when sitting, first-graders don't stay still.
- The "wiggly sixes" have a hard time finishing what they start.
- They find it difficult to copy from the chalk board, so teachers use many worksheets.
- Boys usually use their arms and legs better, while girls are better with small muscles such as eyes and hands.
- Stress in school is social as well as academic; time to interact is important.
- By the end of the year, students do not just love their teacher, but are passionately in love.

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What to expect in First Grade



Communication Arts

By the end of 1st grade students will be able to:

By the end of reading students will be able to:

- Demonstrate concepts of print/Braille, tell a story; print/visual readiness skills (including visual efficiency skills), Braille/tactile readiness skills, upper and lower case letters, first and last letters in words, spaces between words, letter and word order, and that punctuation has meaning.
- Demonstrate ability to hear and say separate sounds in words, separating and saying sounds in words, blending sounds to form words, replacing beginning and ending sounds to form new words.
- Develop and apply decoding strategies to "problem-solve" regularly spelled one- or two-syllable words when reading.
- Read grade-level instructional text by developing automaticity of an increasing core of high-frequency words with appropriate phrasing and expression.
- Develop vocabulary through text, using base words and classroom resource, including language experience activities.
- Develop and apply with assistance, pre-reading strategies to aid comprehension by accessing prior knowledge, previewing, predicting with evidence, and setting a purpose for reading, with assistance.
- During reading, develop and utilize with assistance strategies to self-question and correct, infer, predict and check using cueing systems: meaning, structure, and visual/tactile.
- Develop and apply post-reading skills to respond to text by questioning to clarify retelling, reflecting, analyzing, and drawing conclusions.

- Identify connections between text ideas—similarities and differences in various fiction and non-fiction works with assistance and text ideas and own experience.
- Locate and apply information in title, pictures (visual, tactile described, as appropriate) and names of author and illustrator.
- Read and respond to rhythm, rhyme and alliteration in poetry and prose.
- Use details from text to identify characters, problems solutions, and events in logical sequence.
- Identify and explain information in text, pictures, titles and charts.
- Use details from text to ask questions to clarify understanding, recognize important information in text; identify main ideas, and identify supporting details.
- Read and follow a simple direction to perform a task.



Writing

- Follow a writing process to brainstorm and record ideas in written form; generate a draft in written form; revise by adding details and delete unnecessary information, with assistance, edit and proofread for capitalization and punctuation in sentences, with assistance, and publishing writing with assistance.
- Print/Braille upper and lower case letters legibly, using left-to-right, top-to-bottom directionality and correct spacing between letters and words.

Communication Arts cont.

- In composing text, write simple sentences.
- Write narrative text that includes related sentences.
- Write expository text with related sentences.
- Identify different forms of written communication (e.g., thank-you notes, friendly letters, lists, poems, invitations), and audience and compose text, with assistance.

Listening and Speaking

- Listen for enjoyment, for information and for simple directions to follow.
- Demonstrate listening behaviors (e.g., preparing to listen, listen without interruptions, maintain eye contact/face speaker), with teacher assistance.
- Speak clearly when sharing ideas and asking questions in small and large groups.
- Give simple oral directions.



Information Literacy

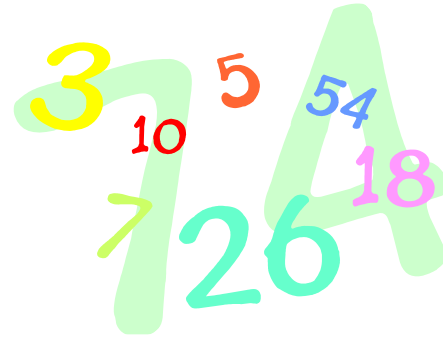
- Find resources on topics of interest, with assistance.
- Give credit, through discussion, for others' ideas, images and information, with assistance.
- Identify, with assistance, simple messages conveyed through oral and visual media.
- Develop fluency with basic number relationships for addition and subtraction for sums up to 20.

Mathematics

By the end of first grade students will be able to:

Number and Operations

- Recognize how many are in a set of objects.
- Compose or decompose numbers using known facts, doubles and close to doubles.
- Represent a given situation involving addition.
- Describe or represent the mental strategy used to compute an addition problem.



Algebraic Relationships

- Extend patterns of sound, shape, motion or a simple numeric pattern.
- Describe how simple repeating patterns are generated.
- Classify objects by size or number.
- Represent a mathematical situation as an expression or number sequence.
- Model situations that involve the addition of whole numbers using pictures, objects or symbols.

Health and PE

By the end of first grade, students will be able to:

- Learn muscles/bones/body parts.
- Learn locomotor and non-locomotor Skills.
- Learn body mechanics.
- Develop the skill of moving to the beat of music.
- Learn directional concepts.
- Develop aiming skills.
- Use manipulatives appropriately.
- Develop spatial awareness.
- Perform simple formations such as lines, circles, and squares when given verbal directions while using various equipment.



Elementary Art

- Work on projects using different tools and supplies.
- Work on projects using knowledge of directional cues and basic art terminology (examples: vertical, edge, horizontal, parallel, positive-negative).
- Identify and use basic two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional forms made from these shapes; understand how these shape our world.
- Create projects using textures.
- Create an art project that is inspired by the natural world.
- Create an art project inspired by an art or craft from another culture.



Music

By the end of first grade, students will be able to:

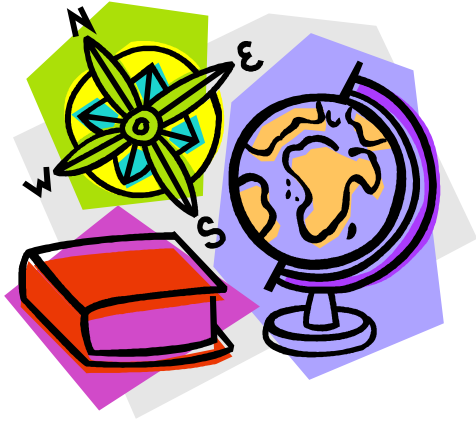
- Sing independently and in a group.
- Play instruments independently and in a group.
- Create and improvise—melodies, ostinatos, accompaniments, rhythm patterns.
- Identify music notation, symbols and terminology.

Social Studies cont.

By the end of first grade, students will be able to:

Economic Concepts and Principles

- Identify private goods and services.
- Describe the relationships among consumers, consumption, producers and production.



Elements of Geographical Study and Analysis

- Read maps and use a compass rose to identify cardinal directions.
- Locate a place by pointing it out on a map and by describing its relative location (description of a location by explaining where the place is in relation to one or more other places).
- Compare how people's needs have been met in different ways in different cultures at various times.
- Take part in a constructive process or method for resolving conflicts (such processes or methods include identifying the problem, listing alternatives, selecting criteria for judging the alternatives, evaluating the alternatives and making a decision).

Relationships of Individual and Groups to Institutions and Traditions

- Explain how people have common physical, social and emotional needs.

Ecosystems

- Identify ways man depends on plants and animals for food, clothing, and shelter.



Tools of Social Science Inquiry

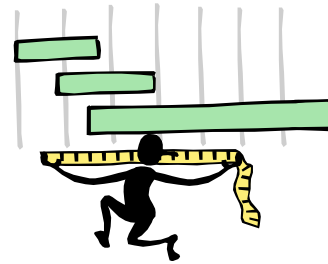
- Identify visual, graphic and auditory aids (globes, maps).
- Identify and use primary and secondary sources (diaries, letters, people, interviews, journals and photos).
- Identify library and media resources (videos, electronic resources, books and periodicals).
- Identify artifacts (building structures and materials, works of art representative of cultures, fossils, pottery, tools, clothing, musical instruments).
- Distinguish between plants and animals based on observable structures and behaviors.

Geometric and Spatial Relationships

- Recognize and name two- and three- dimensional shapes using physical models – circle, triangle, trapezoid, rectangle, rhombus, sphere, rectangular prism, cylinder and pyramid.
- Describe, name and interpret relative positions in space - left, right.
- Use manipulative to model slides and turns.
- Recognize geometric shapes and structures in the student's environment and specifying the shapes' location.

Measurement

- Select the appropriate tool for the attribute being measured.
- Tell time to the nearest hour.
- Count money to \$.50 including quarters and half dollars.
- Use repetition of a single unit to measure something larger than the unit, e.g. measuring the length of the room with a single meter stick.



Data and Probability

- Pose questions and gather data about themselves and their surroundings.
- Sort and classify items according to their attributes.
- Represent data using pictures and bar graphs.

Science

By the end of first grade, students will be able to:

Matter and Energy

- Given an equal arm balance and various objects, illustrate arrangements in which the beam is balanced.
- Measure and compare the mass of objects (more or less).
- Order objects according to mass.
- Identify the source of energy that causes an increase in the temperature of an object (e.g., sun, stove, flame, light bulb).
- Compare the temperature of hot and cold objects using a simple thermometer.
- Describe the change in temperature of an object as warmer or cooler.
- Identify light from the sun as a basic need of most plants.



Force and Motion

- Compare the position of an object relative to another object (e.g., left of or right of).
- Describe an objects motion as straight, circular, vibration (back and forth), zigzag, stopping, starting, or falling.
- Compare the speeds (faster vs. slower) of two moving objects.
- Identify the force (i.e., push or pull) required to do work (move an object)
- Describe ways to change the motion of an object (i.e., how to cause an object to go slower, go faster, go farther, change direct, stop).

Living Organisms

- Identify the basic needs of most animals (i.e. air, water, food, shelter).
- Identify the basic needs of most plants (i.e. air, water, light).
- Predict and investigate the growth of plants when growing conditions are altered (e.g., dark vs. light, water vs. no water).
- Identify and compare the physical structures of a variety of plants (e.g., stem, leaves, flowers, seeds, roots).
- Identify and compare the physical structures of a variety of animals (e.g., sensory organs, beaks, appendages, body coverings).
- Identify the relationships between their physical structures of plants and the function of those structures (e.g., absorption of water, absorption of light energy, support, reproduction).
- Identify the relationships between the physical structures of animals and the function of those structures (e.g., taking in water, support, movement, obtaining food, reproduction).

Earth's Systems

- Observe, measure, record weather data throughout the year (i.e., cloud cover, temperature, precipitation, wind speed) by using thermometers, rain gauges, wind socks.
- Compare temperatures in different locations (e.g., inside, outside, in the sun, in the shade).
- Compare weather data observed at different times throughout the year (e.g., hot vs. cold, cloudy vs. clear, types of precipitation, windy vs. calm).
- Recognize patterns indicating relationships between observed weather data and weather phenomena (e.g., temperature and types of precipitation, clouds and amounts of precipitation).
- Observe and describe ways water, both as a solid and liquid, is used in every day activities at different times of the year (e.g., bathe, drink, make ice cubes, build snowmen, cook, swim).

Science cont.

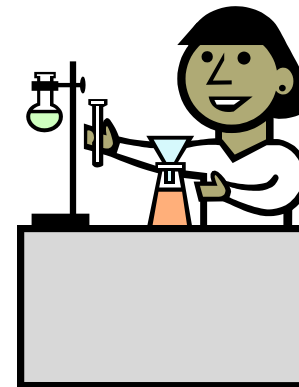
Scientific Inquiry

- Pose questions about objects, materials, organisms, and events in the environment.
- Plan and conduct a simple investigation (fair test) to answer a question.
- Make qualitative observations using the five senses.
- Make observations using simple tools and equipment (e.g., magnifiers/hand lenses, magnets, equal arm balances, thermometers).
- Measure length, mass, and temperature using standard and non-standard units.
- Compare amounts/measurements.
- Use observations as support for reasonable explanations.
- Use observations to describe relationships and patterns and to make predictions to be tested.
- Compare explanations with prior knowledge.
- Communicate simple procedures and results of investigations and explanations through: oral presentations, drawings and maps, data tables, graphs (bar, pictograph), writing.



Impact of Science, Technology and Human Activity

- Recognize that some objects occur in nature (natural objects); others have been designed and made by people.
- Identify a question that was asked, or could be asked, or a problem that needed to be solved when given a brief scenario (fiction or nonfiction of individuals solving everyday problems or learning through discovery).
- Work with a group to solve problem, giving due credit to the ideas and contributions of each.



Social Studies

By the end of first grade students will be able to:

Principles of Constitutional Democracy

- Explain how laws and rules are made and changed to promote the common good.
- List the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
- Recognize and explain the significance of the following national symbols: Statue of Liberty, nation's capitol.

Missouri, United States and World History Strand

- Describe the contributions of non-Missourians typically studied in K-4 programs, e.g., George Washington, Abraham Lincoln.



Principles and Process of Governance Systems Strand

- Examine how individual rights are protected (knowledge of democratic principles of governance, especially as applied to school, community and state).
- Propose peaceful resolutions of disputes in the classroom and on the playground.
- Describe how authoritative decisions are made, enforced and interpreted within schools. Explain what it means to make, enforce, carry out and interpret rules (i.e., explain what rules mean in specific cases).