

Family Friendly

GUIDE FOR FIRST GRADE

English Language Arts

In first grade, the primary focus is **connecting letters and sounds together**. This helps students to change words from print to speech (read) or change words from speech to print (write). Further practice of this helps to produce reading fluency.

First graders focus on finding meaning in texts. They gather information from pictures and illustrations from printed text. This helps students with retelling stories and to use information to find morals and lessons within those stories. By continuing to receive guidance, first graders should show independent proficiency by the end of the year.

In first grade, students read four major types of literary texts in print and multimedia format. These include fiction, literary nonfiction, poetry, and drama. Students read a variety of informational texts in print and multimedia formats and begin using text features such as captions, graphs, and glossaries to locate information.

In writing, first grade students focus on mastery of writing in print and continue to explore opinion, informative, and narrative types of writing at developmentally appropriate levels. First grade students learn how to appropriately enter conversations and adjust their voice based on the situation.



This document is designed to:

- Provide examples of the standards, skills, and knowledge your child will learn in English Language Arts and should be able to do upon exiting first grade.
- Suggest activities on how you can help your child at home.
- Offer additional resources for information and help.

Log on to the [SC Department of Education website](#), for the complete standards.

The 2023 South Carolina College and Career-Ready English Language Arts (ELA) Standards:

- Outline the knowledge and skills students must master to be successful in college, career, or the military.
- Provide a set of grade-level indicators that are built on the previous grades' learning.
- Guarantee that no matter where a student lives in South Carolina, the expectations for learning are the same.
- Align to the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate*, which summarizes the knowledge, skills, and habits employers expect.



OVERARCHING EXPECTATIONS

The ELA Overarching Expectations (OE) capture expectations of students as readers, writers, and communicators over the course of K-12 ELA education.

In first grade, students should:

- **read and write** on their own for different reasons.
- **talk about and ask questions** about all sorts of texts, such as pictures, videos, and songs, not just books.
- with some help, **ask and answer** questions about stories, like who, what, when, where, why, and how.
- **take turns speaking**, listening carefully, and responding when others talk about books and other topics.



FOUNDATIONS OF LITERACY

The Foundations of Literacy (F) strand contains four standards that help students build fundamental skills to be successful in reading, writing, and communicating. These standards outline how a student learns to read, spell, and write.

In first grade, students should:

- have fun making up words that sound the same or rhyme and breaking them into smaller parts.
- practice taking sounds out, adding new ones, or swapping them in words they say to make new ones.
- learn different tricks to read longer words, like ones that have two parts or special groups of letters that make certain sounds.
- figure out which letters make different sounds when they read, especially when they are together in a word.
- use things like the title, table of contents, and the list of words at the back of the book to help them find their way around and understand what they are reading.

APPLICATIONS OF READING

The Applications of Reading (AOR) strand has ten standards. It shows the reading skills and ideas all students must learn to become successful readers who can think carefully about different kinds of texts.

In first grade, students should:

- learn about characters, where the story takes place, and what happens in a story when reading.
- figure out who is telling a story.
- learn about language in stories, like words that sound the same, imitate noises, or paint a picture in their mind.
- learn about stories that tell a tale and books that give facts, and use special parts of the book such as captions and word lists to find information they need.
- practice telling stories they have heard or read, focusing on the most important parts, the main idea, and/or the lessons they learned.

RESEARCH

The Research (R) standard and indicators support students in learning the processes of inquiry, investigation, and drawing conclusions on a wide variety of topics.

In first grade, students should:

- ask and answer questions about books and other items they read or see to learn more.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Written and Oral Communications (C) strand is organized into nine standards and describes the skills required to effectively communicate ideas, information, arguments, and stories through writing, speaking, and presenting.

In first grade, students should:

- write pieces that share what they think, back it up with reasons, and end with a strong conclusion.
- write about topics, give lots of details to explain them, and finish with a good ending.
- write stories that make sense, have a beginning, middle, and end, and use words to show what characters do and think.
- write with correct capital letters, punctuation marks, and make sure the words match up right.
- use different kinds of words, like names, action words, describing words, and words that join things together, in the right way when they write.



HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR LEARNER AT HOME



By working together, parents and educators can ensure students have a successful learning experience. Below, you will see ways to work with your learner at home to support learning at school. Staying in communication with your child's teacher and knowing whether help is needed with specific skills is an important way to help support your learner.

Overarching Expectations:

- **Literacy Rich Home:** Provide literacy materials around the home such as children's literature, magazines, coupons, brochures, take-out menus, catalogs, newspapers, etc.
- **Role Model:** Read, write, talk, and listen in front of your child.
- **Daily Reading:** Provide dedicated time for reading together and talking about books. Independent reading is important as well.

Foundations of Literacy:

- **Road Trip Reading:** While traveling, read road signs.
- **Fridge Fun:** Use magnetic letters to spell words on the refrigerator.
- **Unscramble Words:** Draw three boxes side-by-side on a piece of paper. Using magnetic or paper letters, scramble the letters of a simple three-letter word (big, bug, top, tap). Ask your child to unscramble the letters and place them into the correct box.

Applications of Reading:

- **Set Reading Time:** Set aside a time to read together after dinner and/or bedtime. Read picture books and informational texts with your child. Have them read grade appropriate texts to you.
- **Encourage Discussions:** After reading a page, encourage discussion about the pictures and what happened. If it is nonfiction, read a page and discuss the pictures and facts.
- **Make Predictions:** Before reading, use the front cover to predict what might happen. As you read together, stop to make new and/or confirm predictions.

Research:

- **Encourage Discussions:** Engage in discussions while reading informational texts. State facts learned. Look at corresponding illustrations, photographs, charts, tables, graphs, maps, etc.
- **Record Facts:** After reading informational texts, record and illustrate facts on paper or a digital device.
- **Encourage Curiosity:** Spark natural curiosity by asking and answering questions. Explore topics of interest. Visit the library to find resources. Search child-friendly internet sites. Take a "family field trip."

Communications:

- **Trip Journals:** While visiting places, draw a picture and/or write about a thing, animal, or person. Talk about the experience.
- **Create Sentences Using Pictures:** Create simple and complex sentences from pictures of various people, places, and things. Ask questions to expand sentences orally and written.
- **Role Model and Engage:** Talk together while in the car, making dinner, running errands, in the store, etc. Greet others, take turns responding to others, and ask/answer questions.

ASSESSMENT

Your student will be assessed in various ways throughout the school year. In the classroom, your student will participate in informative, interim, and summative assessments. Your student's teacher can help support your understanding of these classroom-level assessments.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- To access a variety of support and supplemental documents for the 2023 SC CCR ELA Standards, visit the [SCDE ELA Instructional Resources Page](#).
- Consider using the [glossary](#) to support understanding of any unknown words within the Family Friendly ELA Standards.
- Go to your [public library](#) for books and/or DVDs for learning and fun. Let your child get his/her own library card.
- Consider selecting books that have won the [Caldecott Award](#) or [Newbery Award](#), and browse the [SC Picture Book Award](#) winners and [SC Children's Book Award](#) winners.
- For more information about special services, visit the Office of Special Education Services [here](#).
- For more information about Federal Education programs, click [here](#).