

Parent Guide

Fourth Grade

Reading Public Schools
Reading, MA 01867



This guide provides an overview of what your child will learn by the end of fourth grade in Mathematics and English Language Arts. It focuses on the key skills your child will learn in these subjects, which will build a strong foundation for success in the other subjects he or she studies throughout the school year. This guide is based on the new Massachusetts State Frameworks. These K–12 standards are informed by the highest state standards from across the country. If your child is meeting the expectations outlined in these standards, he or she will be well prepared for fifth grade.

A sample of what your child will be working on in FOURTH GRADE:

Mathematics:

In grade four, your child will use addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division to solve word problems, including problems involving measurement of volume, mass, and time. Students will continue to build their understanding of fractions—creating equal fractions, comparing the size of fractions, adding and subtracting fractions, and multiplying fractions by whole numbers. They will also start to understand the relationship between fractions and decimals. Activities in these areas will include:

- Adding and subtracting whole numbers up to 1 million quickly and accurately
- Solving multi-step word problems, including problems involving measurement and converting measurements from larger to smaller units
- Multiplying and dividing multi-digit numbers
- Extending understanding of fractions by comparing the size of two fractions with different numerators (top numbers) and different denominators (bottom numbers)
- Creating equal fractions ($\frac{3}{4} = \frac{3 \times 2}{4 \times 2} = \frac{6}{8}$)
- Adding and subtracting fractions with the same denominator
- Building fractions from smaller fractions ($\frac{3}{8} = \frac{1}{8} + \frac{1}{8} + \frac{1}{8}$)
- Connecting addition and subtraction of whole numbers to multiplying fractions by whole numbers
- Connecting addition of fractions to the concept of angle measurement
- Representing and interpreting data
- Converting fractions with denominators of 10 or 100 into decimals
- Locating decimals on a number line
- Comparing decimals and fractions using the symbols $>$ (more than), $=$ (equal to), and $<$ (less than)

English Language Arts:

In grade four, students will continue to build important reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. They will read more challenging literature, articles, and other sources of information and continue to grow their vocabulary. They will also be expected to clearly explain in detail what they have read by referring to details or information from the text.

In writing, students will organize their ideas and develop topics with reasons, facts, details, and other information. Activities in these areas will include:

- Identifying the theme or main idea of a story, play, or poem
- Comparing stories from different cultures
- Explaining how an author uses facts, details, and evidence to support their points
- Reading and understanding information presented in charts, graphs, timelines, and other illustrations
- Learning the rules of spoken and written English
- Learning and using new words, including words related to specific subjects (such as science words)
- Participating in class discussions by listening, asking questions, sharing ideas, and building on the ideas of others
- Giving a class presentation on a topic or telling a story using relevant, organized facts and details and speaking clearly
- Writing stories with dialogue and descriptions of character's actions, thoughts, and feelings
- Taking notes and organizing information from books, articles, and online sources to learn more about a topic
- Writing research or opinion papers over extended periods of time

Tips for Fourth Grade Families to Support Students at Home



Try to create a quiet place for your child to study, and carve out time every day when your child can concentrate. You should also try to sit down with your child at least once a week for 15 to 30 minutes while he or she works on homework. This will keep you informed about what your child is working on, and it will help you be the first to know if your child needs help with specific topics. Additionally, here are some activities you can do with your child to support learning at home.

Mathematics:

1. Look for “word problems” in real life. Some 4th grade examples might include:
 - Ask your child to compare numbers using phrases like “times as much.” For example, if the family cat weighs 8 lbs. and the family dog weighs 56 lbs., how many times as much does the dog weigh?
 - Ask your child to help you compare fractional amounts — for example, if one recipe calls for $\frac{2}{3}$ of a cup of oil, but another recipe calls for $\frac{3}{4}$ of a cup of oil, which recipe calls for more oil? (In 5th grade, your child will learn ways to determine just how much more oil.)
2. Use everyday objects to allow your child to explore the concept of fractions. For example, use measuring cups so students see how many times you have to refill a $\frac{1}{4}$ cup to equal a $\frac{1}{2}$ cup or how many $\frac{1}{3}$'s are in two cups. Have students describe two fractions that are equal using a measuring cup (filling a $\frac{1}{4}$ measuring cup twice is the same as filling one $\frac{1}{2}$ measuring cup).
3. Have your child write or describe fractions in different ways. For example, what are some different ways to make $\frac{3}{4}$? Answers could include $\frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{4}$ or $3 \times \frac{1}{4}$
4. Ask your child create and describe equal fractions. For example, have students take a sheet of paper, fold the paper in half, and then unfold and shade $\frac{1}{2}$. Then have students take the same sheet of paper and fold the paper in a half again. Unfold the paper and have students discuss the number of parts that are now shaded. Encourage your child to talk about ways to show that $\frac{1}{2} = \frac{2}{4}$. (Students may continue this process creating other equal fractions.)
5. Encourage your child to stick with it whenever a problem seems difficult. This will help your child see that everyone can learn math.
6. 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.
7. Support daily math facts practice and track your child’s progress. Fourth graders who recall math facts (all operations) automatically and fluently have much greater success with fourth grade standards.
8. Explore some of the following websites with your child for a fun way to practice and support current classroom lessons:
 - www.eduplace.com/kids/mw (test prep questions, manipulative, etc.)
 - www.mathplayground.com (math videos, games, logic puzzles, etc.)
 - www.mrnussbaum.com (lots of math games)
 - www.coolmath4kids.com (practice, tutorials, games, etc.)
 - www.aplusmath.com/flashcards (flashcards, math games)
 - www.gamequarium.com (activities for math, reading, etc.)Khan Academy tutorials with a separate heading for Singapore Math (type in Singapore Math in the search bar): <http://www.khanacademy.org/>

9. For more information on the Common Core State Standards for mathematics, go to <http://www.corestandards.org/about-the-standards/key-points-in-mathematics> <http://www.commoncoreworks.org>.
10. For more information on helping your child learn mathematics (with activities from pre-school to grade five), go to <http://www2.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/math/index.html>

English Language Arts:

1. Provide time and space for your child to read independently. This time should be free from distractions such as television. The grade level expectation for at-home reading is 20 - 30 minutes daily.
2. Ask your child what he or she learned from reading and how that knowledge can be used in real life. Have him or her read the most interesting or useful sections aloud.
3. It is also helpful when your child sees other people reading at home. You could share what you have read.
4. Talk about the news together. Pick one story in the news, read it together, and discuss with your child what it means.
5. Keep track of the time that your child spends reading every day. Note what kind of reading materials he or she likes (books, magazines, newspaper articles, the Internet, etc.). Then look for additional materials that would encourage your child to read more.
6. Urge your child to use logical arguments to defend his or her opinion. If your child wants a raise in allowance, ask him or her to research commonsense allowance systems and, based on that research, explain reasons why, supported by facts and details.
7. Children should select books they are interested in to develop a passion for reading. The Reading Public Library is a town treasure. Be sure your child has a library card. The RPL website includes lists of eBooks and audiobooks, apps, cool websites, and a calendar of ongoing events. <http://www.readingpl.org/kids/>
8. Use technology to help build your child's interest in reading. There are several websites where students can read books or articles online. The computer will help with words the student cannot read independently. Libraries also have computers students can use to access those sites. Feel free to ask a librarian or teacher for suggestions.
 - www.scholastic.com/resources/article/leveled-reading/ (parent guide for leveled reading)
 - <http://www.salemstate.edu/academics/schools/3698.php> (MA Children's Book Award master list)
 - <http://www.scholastic.com/parents/resources> (book lists, guides, resources)
 - www.readingrockets.org/audience/parents/ (lots of parent resources, articles, videos)
 - <http://www.readwritethink.org/parent-afterschool-resources/> (ELA projects, activities, games)
 - <http://www.guysread.com/> (booklists, activities, & other "stuff for guys")
9. Use websites like Common Sense Media to make sure the content of the books that your child has selected is age appropriate. <http://www.common sense media.org/book-reviews>
10. For more information on the Common Core State Standards for English language arts and literacy, go to www.corestandards.org/about-the-standards/key-points-in-english-language-arts or www.commoncoreworks.org

This document was created using the following sources:

http://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/36/ParentGuide_Math_4.pdf

Council of the Great City Schools Parent Roadmaps to the Common Core Math Standards

http://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/36/ParentGuide_ELA_4_v1r5_newfont.pdf CGCS

Parent Roadmaps to the Common Core ELA Standards

http://pta.org/files/2012_NPTA_PG-4thGrade.pdf

National PTA Curriculum Guild