

# PARENTS' GUIDE TO

subjects, which will build a strong foundation for success throughout the school year. This guide is based on the standards that have been adopted by more than 40 states and the District of Columbia. If your child is meeting these standards, he or she will be well prepared for 6th grade.

## HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD?

You should use this guide with your child and his or her teacher regularly about how your child is doing — beyond parent-teacher conferences.

At home, you can play an important role in setting high expectations and supporting your child in meeting them. If your child needs a little extra help or wants to learn more about a subject, work with his or her teacher to identify opportunities for tutoring, to get involved in clubs after school, or to find other resources.

# 5TH GRADE

## WHY ARE ACADEMIC STANDARDS IMPORTANT?

Academic standards are important because they help ensure that all students, no matter where they live, are prepared for success in college and the workforce. They help set clear and consistent expectations for students, parents, and teachers; they help ensure that all students are prepared for the challenges of the 21st century. They build

## THIS GUIDE INCLUDES

An overview of some of the key things your child will learn in English/literacy and math in 5th grade

Ideas for activities to help your child learn at home

Topics of discussion for talking to your child's teacher about his or her academic progress

# English Language Arts & Literacy

In 5th grade, your child will read widely and deeply from a range of high-quality, increasingly challenging fiction and nonfiction from diverse cultures and time periods. Building knowledge about subjects through research projects and responding analytically to literary and informational sources will be key to your child's continuing success. Your child will write stories or essays that are several paragraphs long. By devoting significant time and effort to producing numerous written pieces over short and extended timeframes throughout the year, he or she also will gain control over many conventions of grammar, usage, and punctuation as well as learn ways to make himself or herself understood.

Summarizing the key details of stories, dramas, poems, and nonfiction materials, including their themes or main ideas

Identifying and judging evidence that supports particular ideas in an author's argument to change a reader's point of view

Integrating information from several print and digital sources to answer questions and solve problems

Writing opinions that offer reasoned arguments and provide facts and examples that are logically grouped to support the writer's point of view

Writing stories, real or imaginary, that unfold naturally and developing the plot with dialogue, description, and effective pacing of the action

# Mathematics

Fifth grade is a milestone and a pivot point for students. The classroom focus on arithmetic during the elementary grades will develop into a more formal study of algebra in middle school. To be ready for algebra, students must have an understanding of fractional arithmetic, in part because even simple equations cannot be solved without fractions. Because of this, whole-number arithmetic comes mostly to a close in 5th grade, while multiplying and dividing fractions becomes a major focus.

## Keeping the conversation focused.

When you talk to the teacher, do not worry about covering everything. Instead, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In 5th grade, these include:

- Multiplying and dividing fractions, and solving related word problems
- Decimals (concepts and arithmetic)
- Volume (concepts and problem-solving)

Ask to see a sample of your child's work. Ask the teacher questions such as: Is this piece of work satisfactory? How could it be better? Is my child on track? How can I help my child improve or excel in this area? If my child needs extra support or wants to learn more about a subject, are there resources to help his or her learn more about it?

# Help Your Child Learn at Home

