

Curriculum Guide | Grade 1

This guide provides an overview of what your child will be learning in **first grade**. It is based on the Common Core Standards, the Massachusetts Frameworks, and the curricular approaches which have been adopted by the Somerville Public Schools. Read the [Massachusetts Frameworks](#) for more details.

Academic standards are important. They ensure that all students, no matter where they start, are prepared for success in the next grade level, college, and their careers. By defining standards clearly, we aim to help families and teachers work together to ensure that students succeed. There are some students who will need additional support to meet a standard. Other students will need more complex work to go deeper with the standards. Teachers craft their day-to-day classroom instruction based on the standards, individual student needs, and the unique characters of their schools and community.

How can I support my child's learning at home?

- Talk to your child about what they are learning in school
- Contact your child's teacher with any questions or concerns and attend Parent Teacher Conferences
- Check your child's folder and/or agenda book every night
- Provide a space and a consistent time for your child to complete their homework

English Language Arts

For curriculum, we use FUNdations for Phonics, Heggarty for Phonological Awareness, and In-District developed reading and writing units based on "Science of Reading" principles and the recommendations of the National Reading Panel. Student's reading progress is monitored using the DIBELS reading assessment.

Reading

During the year, students in first grade will be working on:

- Using the words and pictures to help understand and describe the characters, setting, and plot of fiction texts
- Demonstrating an understanding of the characters, setting, and plot through retelling the story
- Describing the lesson/message a story teaches using details from the story
- Using text features (headings, table of contents, glossaries) to find and learn more information in nonfiction texts
- Asking questions before, during, and after reading and then searching for answers
- Figuring out the main idea and key details in grade-appropriate nonfiction texts
- Noticing that poems use describing words, sound words, feeling (emotion) words, and sensory words to make a picture in their minds
- Understanding that poems sound different because of rhyme (or not rhyme), repetition, and rhythm
- Using phonics skills to figure out unknown words (phonics skills are also directly taught through the FUNdations curriculum).
- Identifying basic similarities and differences between two texts on the same topic
- Identifying a folktale/fairytale based on its characteristics
- Participating in conversations and discussions by following rules (for example, speaking one at a time, listening to others), building on others' comments, and asking questions.

Writing

Somerville's writing program emphasizes giving students many opportunities to write each day across subject areas. As they write during the year, students in first grade will be working on:

- Writing five sentences that go together on a topic
- Including a beginning and ending
- Using time words like first, then, next, and after
- Describing ideas or events using details
- Using words that make my writing interesting to the reader (happy versus excited, nice versus friendly)
- Making sure writing makes sense to others
- Spelling high frequency words correctly as they are learned and correctly spelling grade level words using resources if needed
- Capitalizing the first word of each sentence and people's names
- Correctly using a variety of end punctuation in every sentence
- Using singular and plural nouns correctly

Over the course of the year, students will complete three types of writing: narrative (story), informative, and opinion. Examples of these in the first grade could include: Creating a "How-To" book, writing a poem about a famous person, writing an opinion about a character in a story, or writing a fiction story based on a fairy tale.

How can I support my child's literacy learning at home?

- Read to your child daily
- Encourage your child to read daily and discuss the books he/she is reading
- When your child shares an opinion or thought about a book, ask them why? and have them use evidence from the book
- Encourage your child to write by keeping a diary, or sending a thank you note or letter to family or friends



Mathematics

Illustrative Mathematics (IM) curriculum districtwide in Grades K-8. You can find more information for families in this document.

During the year, students in the first grade will be working on:

- Counting forward and backward within 120
- Solving addition and subtraction word problems within 20 using objects, drawings, or an equation
- Building fluency with adding and subtracting within 10 (for example, $3 + 7$, $8 - 5$, etc.)
- Understanding what the digits mean in two-digit numbers (place value); for example, the number 42 has 4 tens and 2 ones
- Using the symbols $<$, $>$, and $=$ to compare numbers
- Using understanding of place value and different strategies to add and subtract within 100 (e.g., $38 + 5$, $29 + 20$, $64 + 27$, $80 - 50$)
- Mentally adding 10 to a two-digit number (e.g., $57 + 10 = 67$) or subtracting 10 (e.g., $57 - 10 = 47$)
- Understanding the relationship between addition and subtraction
- Measuring lengths of objects by using a shorter object as a unit of length
- Making new shapes by joining shapes together
- Dividing circles and rectangles into halves or fourths
- Comparing shapes by their size, number of sides, and orientation
- Telling time to the nearest half hour
- Identifying the value of all U.S. coins (pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters) and how they compare to each other (e.g., 5 pennies = 1 nickel)

How can I support my child's math learning at home?

- Play matching and memory games, and games with dice and cards
- Practice writing and reading numbers
- Practice counting forward and backward within 120
- Practice adding and subtracting to 10
- Drawing shapes and noticing shapes all around you

Social Studies

During the year, students in the first grade will be learning:

- About communities (government, economy) and how they function
- About America's holidays and symbols and legends and folktales
- The Pledge of Allegiance and patriotic songs
- The reasons for celebrating events or people commemorated on state and national holidays
- To distinguish oceans, lakes, rivers, mountains on maps and globes
- To identify city, state, and nation by name and location on maps and globes

Science, Technology, and Engineering

During the year, students in the first grade will be learning:

- How different materials can either block light, redirect light, or allow light to pass through them (includes shadows)
- That vibrating materials can make sound and that sound can make materials vibrate
- That you can design a device that uses light or sound to communicate a signal
- To identify differences and similarities among animals and plants of the same kind
- How animals use their body parts and senses to see, hear, grasp objects, protect themselves, move from place to place, and find and take in food, water, and air
- How plants have roots, stems, leaves, flowers, and fruits to take in water, air, and other nutrients and produce food for the plant
- That the behavior of different animal parents and their offspring help the offspring to survive
- To identify the seasonal patterns of change, including rainfall/snowfall, temperature, and sunrise/sunset times
- To use observations of the sun, moon, and stars to describe that each appears to rise in one part of the sky, appears to move across the sky, and appears to set

Social/Emotional

The elementary years are an important time to nurture social-emotional competence and develop foundational learning skills. The Somerville Public Schools uses the Second Step curriculum, an evidence-based program that includes everything schools need to integrate social-emotional learning into their classrooms and school-wide. The curriculum is designed to promote school success, self-regulation, and a sense of safety and support. Classroom teachers are responsible for implementing Second Step. Schools guidance counselors and other support personnel assist teachers and students to work toward attaining curriculum goals. Staff at your child's school can give you more detailed information about the sequence of skills taught and how social/emotional skills are taught.

1st Grade Lessons:

UNIT 1: Growth Mindset and Goal Setting

1. Time to Pay Attention
2. Everyone Gets Distracted
3. You Did It!
4. Helpful Thoughts
5. We Can Do It!

UNIT 2: Emotional Management

6. Noticing Feelings
7. Sometimes We Feel Worried
8. Feeling Calm
9. Feeling Frustrated
10. Noticing Clues

UNIT 3: Empathy and Kindness

11. The Power of Kindness
12. Ways to be Kind
13. Offering Kind Acts
14. Practicing Kind Acts
15. Demonstrating Kind Acts

UNIT 4: Problem Solving

16. How to Say the Problem
17. Was it an Accident?
18. Ask for What You Need
19. We Can Make it Better
20. Solving Problems

Specialists

Somerville Public Schools provides each student with 40 minutes per week of instruction in General Music, Library/Media, Art, and Physical Education. The specialists at each school are available to give you more detailed information about specific skills addressed.