

This guide provides an overview of what your child will be learning in **fifth 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

In 5th grade, we use the Fishtank Curriculum for ELA. This program is grounded in science of reading and meets the state requirements for high quality instructional materials. The guiding principles for Fishtank are:

- Building knowledge to nurture critical thinking.
- Centering diverse, relevant, and rigorous texts.
- Prioritizing student voices and ideas to build agency.
- Learning to write, writing to learn.

Unit 2: Exploring Human Rights

How can family relationships and dynamics influence a person's actions? How can one person impact a community? *Core text: The Breadwinner*

Unit 3: Protecting the Earth: Plastic Pollution

How is plastic pollution hurting the world's oceans? What steps can be taken to lessen the amount of plastic in the ocean? *Core text: Trash Vortex*

Unit 4: Young Heroes: Children of the Civil Rights Movement

What role did children play in the Civil Rights Movement? How does reading both historical texts and personal stories help us understand the past?

Core texts: Witnesses to Freedom, Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom, Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice

Unit 5: Friendship Across Boundaries

How can stereotypes lead to prejudice and discrimination? How can friendships and learning across lines of difference help build empathy and stop the spread of stereotypes?

Core text: Return to Sender

READING

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

- Encourage your child to read daily and discuss the texts 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 a letter to a family member or friends

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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 fifth grade will be working on:

- Multiplying multi-digit whole numbers using the standard algorithm
- Using parentheses, brackets, and braces in solving equations, for example $[3 \times (45 + 42)] =$
- Reading, writing, comparing, and rounding decimals to the thousandths place
- Adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing decimals to hundredths
- Adding and subtracting fractions with unlike denominators (including mixed numbers)
- Solving word problems involving addition and subtraction of fractions
- Solving word problems involving multiplication and division of whole numbers
- Solving word problems involving multiplication and division of fractions
- Understanding the concept of volume, and solving word problems that involve volume
- Graphing points in the coordinate plane (two dimensions) to solve problems
- Analyzing mathematical patterns and relationships

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

- Point out examples of using math in everyday life such as using fractions while measuring ingredients for a recipe, estimating the cost of items at a store.
- Look for "word problems" in real life. Some 5th grade examples might include: Doing arithmetic with decimals, for example when balancing a checkbook. Multiplying with fractions — for example, if you used about $\frac{2}{3}$ of a $\frac{3}{4}$ -cup measure of vegetable stock, then how much stock did you use? About how much is left? Using the length, width, and depth of a garden plot to determine how many bags of garden soil to buy.

Social Studies

Fifth grade students use the Investigating History curriculum. This is an inquiry based Massachusetts-specific curriculum. More information can be found [here](#).

Science, Technology, and Engineering

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

- To use a model to communicate Earth's relationship to the sun, moon, and other stars that explain (a) why people on Earth experience day and night, (b) patterns in daily changes in length and direction of shadows over a day, and (c) changes in the apparent position of the sun, moon, and stars at different times during a day, over a month, and over a year
- To describe the cycling of water through a watershed through evaporation, precipitation, absorption, surface runoff, and condensation
- How relative amounts of salt water in the ocean, and fresh water in lakes, rivers, and groundwater, and fresh water frozen in glaciers and polar ice caps relate to the availability of fresh water in Earth's biosphere
- How communities can reduce human impact on the Earth's resources and environment by changing an agricultural, industrial, or community practice or process
- The process by which plants use air, water, and energy from sunlight to produce sugars and plant materials needed for growth and reproduction
- How matter moves among producers, consumers, decomposers, and the air, water, and soil in the environment
- How different designs for a composter can effectively encourage decomposition of materials
- Use a particle model of matter to explain common phenomena involving gases, and phase changes between gas and liquid and between liquid and solid
- How the total mass of matter is conserved even after a reaction or phase change
- How to determine whether the mixing of two or more substances results in new substances with new properties (a chemical reaction) or not (a mixture)
- How the gravitational force exerted by Earth on objects is directed toward Earth's center
- That the food animals digest (a) contains energy that was once energy from the sun, and (b) provides energy and nutrients for life processes, including body repair, growth, motion, body warmth, and reproduction
- To provide examples of improvements to existing technologies (innovations) and the development of new technologies (inventions)

Social/Emotional

The elementary years are an important time to nurture social-emotional competence and develop foundational learning skills. 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.

Fifth Grade Lessons:

UNIT 1: Growth Mindset and Goal Setting

1. The Right Goal for Me
2. My Plan
3. Changing My Plan
4. Time to Reflect
5. My 10-minute Goal

UNIT 2: Emotional Management

6. Strong Emotions
7. What is Stress?
8. Planning for Change
9. What Can I Change?
10. Making a Change

UNIT 3: Empathy and Kindness

11. Empathy in the Community
12. What is the Problem?
13. A Different Point of View
14. Community Solutions
15. Your Solution

UNIT 4: Problem Solving

16. Beginning to STEP
17. When? Where? Who?
18. Solutions Web
19. Let's Reflect
20. Putting it All Together

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.