

Curriculum Guide | Kindergarten

This guide provides an overview of what your child will be learning in kindergarten. 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 beyond the standard. 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. We are in the process of selecting a new k-5 literacy curriculum and will begin implementation in 2025. Student's reading progress is monitored using the DIBELS reading assessment.

Reading

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

- Reading from top to bottom, left to right
- Pointing under a word as we read
- Recognizing words we have seen before
- Readers identify spacing between words
- Identifying uppercase and lowercase letters quickly and accurately
- Using phonics skills to figure out unknown words (Making and checking predictions)
- Identifying the character in the story along with what they do and how they feel
- Identifying the setting of the story
- Noticing the problem and solution in a story
- Retelling the story in order
- Retelling key facts in a nonfiction book
- Asking questions before, during, and after reading
- Making connections between a story and their lives

- Noticing how poems look different than other texts
- Thinking about how poems make us feel
- Finding and sharing poems we love
- Making pictures in their brains as we read
- Noticing words that make us use our senses
- Participating in conversations and discussions while following rules (including listening to others and taking turns speaking)

Writing

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

- Writing a title
- Writing one idea in one sentence
- Writing three sentences that go together (for example, beginning, middle, end; three steps)
- Sharing something we want to say by talking, drawing, and writing
- Using details in drawing (later used for writing)
- Using interesting words in our writing (for example, big versus huge)
- Writing the sounds we hear using the alphabet chart
- Leaving finger spacing between words
- Spelling high-frequency words from memory or using the word wall
- Writing on the top line, top to bottom, left to right
- Capitalizing the word "I"

We use the Thinking, Drawing, Writing program to help students learn to put their detailed thoughts on paper, as well as the Handwriting Without Tears program to help students learn to form their letters.

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

- Read to your child daily and discuss the books he/she is reading
- When your child shares an opinion or thought about a book, ask them why?
- Encourage your child to write by sending a thank you note or a 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 Kindergarten work on:

- Counting objects to tell how many there are
- Comparing two groups of objects to tell which group, if either, has more; comparing two written numbers to tell which is greater
- Acting out addition and subtraction word problems and drawing diagrams to represent them
- Adding with a sum of 10 or less; subtracting from a number 10 or less; and solving addition and subtraction word problems
- Building fluency with adding and subtracting within 5 (e.g., $3 + 1$)
- Correctly naming shapes regardless of orientation or size (e.g., a square oriented as a “diamond” is still a square)

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

- Practice counting forward and backward within 20, starting from any number, then try within 50, then within 100.
- Play “Write the next number.” You write a number, and your child writes the next number.
- Ask your child questions that require counting as many as 20 things. For example, ask, “How many books do you have about wild animals?”
- Ask your child questions that require comparing numbers. “Who is wearing more bracelets, you or your sister?” (Your child might use matching or counting to find the answer.)

Social Studies

During the year, kindergarten students will be learning about:

- Appropriate school behavior
- Respect for peers, teacher, community workers/authorities, classroom property, school property, environment, national symbols
- Respect the cultural diversity of people in their community (including family customs and celebrations)
- How to handle disagreement and conflict in acceptable ways
- How to construct and describe simple maps of their environment using location words (including neighborhood landmarks)
- The roles of community helpers (including fire safety, personal safety) as well as different kinds of jobs in their home and community
- Uses of money (buying, selling)
- United States national holidays (Indigenous People's Day, Independence Day, Martin Luther King Day, Presidents' Day, and Thanksgiving)
- Important United States symbols (United States flag, Pledge of Allegiance, current president, National Anthem melody)

Science, Technology, and Engineering

During the year, kindergarten students will be learning:

- How different strengths or different directions of pushes and pulls change the motion of an object.
- How sunlight warms materials on the Earth's surface
- That different materials can be solid or liquid depending on temperature
- That all plants and animals grow and change over time
- That animals and plants need food, water, and air to survive
- Plants make their own food and need light to live and grow
- To find patterns over time in the weather
- To learn how people prepare for and respond to different types of weather
- How plants and animals can change their environments
- How an individual can reduce the amount of natural resources he/she uses

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. Learning to listen
2. Focusing attention
3. Following directions
4. Self-talk for staying on task
5. Being assertive

UNIT 2: Emotional Management

6. Feelings
7. More feelings
8. Identifying anger
9. Same or different?
10. Accidents
11. Caring and helping

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.

UNIT 3: Empathy and Kindness

12. We feel feelings in our bodies
13. Managing frustrations
14. Calming down strong feelings
15. Handling waiting
16. Managing anger
17. Managing disappointment
18. Handling being knocked down

UNIT 4: Problem Solving

19. Solving problems
20. Inviting to play
21. Fair ways to play
22. Having fun with our friends
23. Handling having things taken away
24. Handling name-calling
25. Reviewing Second Step Skills