

Parent & Family Engagement in Student Learning ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS IN SECOND GRADE

English Language Arts combines instruction in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and effective language use to build literacy. Early literacy skills are foundational in second grade.

BUILDING AND EXPANDING READING SKILLS

The second-grade New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English Language Arts expand and grow students' foundational literacy skills to strengthen reading and writing independence. Families can support and build these reading and writing skills at home throughout the school year.

During the school year, second grade readers continue to master more complex phonics skills (i.e., understanding how letters or combinations of letters represent the sounds in spoken and written words) as well as reading comprehension skills in appropriate texts.

By the end of second grade, students will describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges using key details within a text. Parents can also ask their child to identify the main topic and details of an informational text and specifically refer to it as the basis for the answers. Students will describe the overall structure of a text and effectively use its features (e.g., graphs, charts, images, captions, bold print, subheadings, glossaries, indexes, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information. They will compare and contrast versions of the same text types (i.e., a story or information text). Taking time to talk about what was read will nurture a love for learning as children grow and read about many topics.

YOU MAY HEAR YOUR CHILD OR THEIR TEACHER TALK ABOUT...

Fluency: The ability to read a text with accuracy, speed, and expression, allowing readers to understand and make meaning of what they are reading.

Phonics Instruction: focuses on teaching students to decode (sound out) and encode (spell) words by recognizing the letter-sound match.

Prefix or suffix: a word part at the beginning (prefix) or end (suffix) of a base word that changes the meaning (e.g., reread or reading).

Syllable: a unit of sound in a word that typically consists of a vowel sound (which may be accompanied by consonant sounds) and is spoken as a single, uninterrupted segment (apple has 2 syllables: ap-ple).



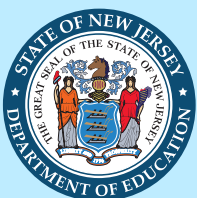
FUN ACTIVITIES AT HOME

Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges using key details within a text.

Ask open-ended questions about stories and informational text, then answer by looking back at what was read.

Retell the main idea and determine important details in stories and/or in the informational text to support the main idea.

Reread books to practice fluency.



About Learning Standards

The State of New Jersey sets developmentally appropriate learning standards for what every student will know and be able to do when they complete each grade level or grade band. This resource is designed to help families understand those standards and partner with teachers to support their child's learning during second grade.

New Jersey Department of Education | Division of Teaching and Learning Services
Office of Standards | K-3Unit@doe.nj.gov

SUPPORTING LITERACY AT HOME



Creating a warm and encouraging space for reading and writing at home makes a big difference. Try setting aside time to read together, explore new words, celebrate your child's efforts, and keep literacy activities fun and playful. Let your child see how you use reading and writing in everyday life (e.g., notes to others or reading a recipe). Little moments like these help build your child's language skills and expand their vocabulary.

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Throughout all stages of a child's growth and development, it is essential for families to make time for reading and writing activities. Here are some ideas:

- Encourage your child to read on their own. Support them as they sound out unfamiliar words and talk about what the story means.
- Read aloud together and give your child time for independent reading. Short conversations about what they read will support comprehension.
- Engage children in writing about their experiences, opinions, and/or facts that interest them. Discuss their writing and illustrations with them.
- Nurture your child's love of reading by keeping books at home and visiting the library together to explore new stories and topics that interest them.
- Pick a topic to learn about together and find materials in print or online to support a love for learning and reading about new topics.
- Build vocabulary skills by engaging in games like word detective (i.e., find unknown word's meaning and try to use it in a sentence), Scrabble, or headband (i.e., give clues to the word card on another person's forehead).
- Create a family storybook by writing and illustrating your own stories together. Add new pages over time to celebrate your child's creativity and growth.
- Participate in conversations that prompt your child to tell their own stories. Ask about the central idea, details, beginning, middle, and end of their story.
- Make an "I Wonder..." Jar: Write questions your child has on slips of paper and put them in a jar. Pull one each day to explore together.

Consistency and enthusiasm are key when implementing these ELA activities. By integrating language and literacy activities into everyday interactions, families can foster vocabulary and language development in young children.

BUILDING WRITING SKILLS

Write and spell two- and three-syllable words (e.g., classroom) and words with suffixes (e.g., jumping). Try to sound out and spell unfamiliar words.

Children learn to write for different reasons (e.g., inform, narrate, and/or give an opinion). Before writing, discuss who will read it and why they are writing.

Engage in both collaborative and independent writing regularly for longer periods of time. Investigate topics of interest to write about together.

Resources

[NJ Student Learning Standards](#) - Details the student learning for English Language Arts at each grade level.

[NJDOE K-3 Early Elementary Alignment](#) - Provides families and educators with valuable resources for early learning success.

[NJDOE Learning Equity and Academic Recovery](#) - Family and educator resources for literacy.

[NJDOE Special Education Parent Rights and Engagement](#) - Resources for families.

[NJDOE Title III Guidance for Families](#) - Information to help parents/ guardians fully participate in school events and activities.