



What to Expect in 5th Grade

Skills Required at the Beginning of 5th Grade

Reading

- Read a newspaper or grade-level book
- Produce projects demonstrating reading comprehension (e.g. a book report, poster, diorama, skit, mobile, or book jacket)
- Differentiate between fiction and nonfiction
- Ask and answer critical questions about characters and plot that explore similarities, contrasts, and hypothetical scenarios
- Integrate reading skills with science, social studies, and math

Writing and Verbal Communication

- Write in cursive (longhand) as requested
- Accurately take notes from reference materials
- Write papers, ranging from three to four pages, that require research
- Use higher-level vocabulary words, including synonyms and antonyms
- Write for a purpose: to explain, to describe, to persuade, to entertain, to list, to express an opinion, and so on.
- Produce polished assignments that have been self-edited for grammar, punctuation, and spelling mistakes
- Present oral reports

Math

- Solve long-division math problems with double-digit divisors
- Multiply two- and three-digit numbers
- Work with fractions and decimals
- Calculate perimeter and averages
- Use a calculator
- Understand that there is more than one way to solve a math problem; know when and how to incorporate various methods of calculation
- Do "mental math" (calculating without paper; ability varies widely among students)

Science

- Analyze, predict, observe, and think scientifically
- Explain how an answer to a scientific question is found
- Retain science facts from previous year

History and Social Studies

- Know home state history
- Understand the branches of the U.S. government
- Retain history facts from previous year
- Know U.S. geography

Naturally, 5th grade will be more academically challenging than the earlier grades. Not only is this the final year of elementary school, but **teachers are preparing your child for the rigors of middle school.** Help him begin with a positive attitude by encouraging him to keep up the good work in the subjects he enjoys, while still motivating him to improve in areas that are more difficult. **If he lags in reading or math skills, you may want to consider consulting with a tutor or other educational specialist, since the work only gets more demanding.**