

Welcome to PRE-KINDERGARTEN!

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts sets expectations, or standards, for what every student will know and be able to do in school. This guide is designed to help you understand those standards and partner with teachers to support your child's learning during pre-kindergarten. If you have questions about this information or your child needs extra help, please talk to your child's teacher.

To talk to your child about school, you can ask:

- ▶ Can you tell me about something you **read** today?
- ▶ How could you use the **math** you learned today?
- ▶ What **scientific ideas** did you talk about today?
- ▶ How did you contribute to your **community** today?
- ▶ How did someone help you learn today?

If your child is also learning English, you can ask:

- ▶ How does your teacher help you understand and participate in class?
- ▶ How do you work on your English while you learn academic material?



TO LEARN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY at every grade, your child will:

- ▶ Read various texts, like books, poems, letters, news articles, and Internet pages.
- ▶ Speak and listen in formal and informal ways, like presentations and conversations.
- ▶ Communicate opinions, information, and experiences in writing for various readers.
- ▶ Use knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary in both speech and writing.

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TO LEARN MATHEMATICS at every grade, your child will:

- ▶ Use math to represent and solve real-world problems.
- ▶ Use math to make arguments about why something is true or false.
- ▶ Use tools, like rulers and calculators, to show mathematical relationships.
- ▶ Use patterns and the structures of numbers to think about math.

TO LEARN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY/ENGINEERING at every grade, your child will:

- ▶ Ask scientific questions about the natural world and things humans design.
- ▶ Learn through various experiences, like observations and experiments.
- ▶ Solve problems using the skills and tools of engineers and scientists.
- ▶ Share solutions and communicate explanations of how the world works.

TO LEARN HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE at every grade, your child will:

- ▶ Learn about their local community and about the state, country, and world.
- ▶ Discover how people and events from the past relate to the present.
- ▶ Work to understand how different people see the world differently.
- ▶ Use various sources of information in research, discussion, and inquiry.



NEW EXPERIENCES FOR STUDENTS ENTERING PRE-KINDERGARTEN:

- ▶ Work and talk with many different people, both adults and other children, during classroom activities and play time.
- ▶ Listen to stories and poems read aloud. With help from adults, talk about the characters and what happens in a story or poem.
- ▶ Listen to nonfiction books read aloud. With help from adults, draw or act out what they learn from a book.
- ▶ Tell a story to an adult while the adult writes it down. Draw pictures to show what happens in the story.



BY THE END OF PRE-KINDERGARTEN, STUDENTS CAN:



- ▶ Talk and play well with other children in groups.
- ▶ Speak in complete sentences, including asking questions.
- ▶ Tell what they think (their opinion) or how they feel about something.
- ▶ Sort objects into categories. For example, group blocks by color or shape.
- ▶ Clap or move in ways that match the rhythm of a poem or song.
- ▶ With help from adults, ask and answer questions about words and information in a book read aloud.
- ▶ Handle a book appropriately: hold it right side up and turn the pages one at a time.
- ▶ Recognize their written name and some common labels. For example, understand the word “crayons” when they see it on a box of crayons.
- ▶ Recognize and say rhyming words (like *cat*, *bat*, and *sat*) with help from adults.

QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK YOUR CHILD:

- ▶ Can you use the pictures to “read” this book to me (tell me what happens in the book)?
- ▶ What song would you like to sing?
- ▶ Would you rather have ___ or ___? Why?



TOPICS YOU CAN DISCUSS WITH YOUR CHILD’S TEACHER:

- ▶ Books and authors to look for at the library
- ▶ Experiences that can help build your child’s vocabulary



FOCUS AREAS FOR PRE-KINDERGARTEN:

- ▶ Count from zero to ten and understand how numbers can represent groups of objects. For example, show that a plate has six cookies by counting the cookies aloud, making sure to count each cookie only once.
- ▶ Use counting to find out whether one group has more or fewer objects than another group. For example, find out whether one bowl has more oranges than another bowl by counting the oranges in each bowl.
- ▶ Use language to describe and compare objects based on their length, width, or height. For example, explain that one book is *taller* or *thicker* than another book.

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BY THE END OF PRE-KINDERGARTEN, STUDENTS CAN:



- ▶ Recognize and name numerals 0-10.
- ▶ Use a numeral from 0 to 10 to show how many objects are in a group.
- ▶ Use objects to add and subtract with numbers up to 5. For example, take one ball away from four balls to find out that $4 - 1 = 3$.
- ▶ Sort everyday objects based on their characteristics. For example, put large toys in one basket and small toys in another basket.
- ▶ Use language to describe objects' positions and relationships. For example, tell what is *beside* a desk or *above* the door.
- ▶ Create three-dimensional shapes using Popsicle sticks, pattern blocks, and other objects.
- ▶ Recognize and name squares, circles, triangles, and rectangles.
- ▶ Recognize coins and paper money (bills). Understand that the coins and bills have value.

QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK YOUR CHILD:

- ▶ How many green beans are on your plate? Do I have more than you?
- ▶ How many points will we have if we get one more?
- ▶ Which is heavier: the stove or a plate?

TOPICS YOU CAN DISCUSS WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER:

- ▶ How high (how many numbers) your child can count
- ▶ Games that can help your child practice math at home





FOCUS AREAS FOR PRE-KINDERGARTEN:



- ▶ Experience and observe the world around us.
- ▶ Observe and think about daily weather, the moon and the sun, and plants and animals.
- ▶ Understand that both humans and animals use their senses (like smell) and body parts (like noses) to meet their basic needs (like finding food and shelter).
- ▶ Explore how sounds can change, how shadows are made, how liquids are different from solids, and how things move.

BY THE END OF PRE-KINDERGARTEN, STUDENTS CAN:



- ▶ Observe how the moon changes. Draw its different shapes.
- ▶ Use simple tools (like thermometers and buckets) to collect information about daily weather.
- ▶ Describe how weather changes from day to day and season to season. Explain how weather affects living things.
- ▶ Talk about how environments provide homes for living things and how humans affect the local environment.
- ▶ Study natural and human-made objects. Tell the difference between living and nonliving things.
- ▶ Explain how plants and animals meet their needs (like getting water and air) and how they depend on each other.
- ▶ Explore how young plants and animals are similar to their parents but not exactly the same. Notice similarities and differences between people.
- ▶ Sort objects and materials based on their characteristics: for example, their color or how they feel.
- ▶ Build and compare structures using blocks or other objects. Talk about why and how a structure stays standing or falls down.
- ▶ Explore relationships between shadows and the light sources that create them.

QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK YOUR CHILD:



- ▶ What are some examples of liquids and solids? How are they different?
- ▶ Can you show me how to change the size and shape of your shadow?
- ▶ How tall do you think we can make this block tower before it falls down?

TOPICS YOU CAN DISCUSS WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER:



- ▶ How science relates to everyday situations in your child's life
- ▶ Places in the community that can help your child learn science

FOCUS AREAS FOR PRE-KINDERGARTEN:

- ▶ Understand why it is important to respect people, cooperate, and follow rules.
- ▶ Understand the locations of people and places.
- ▶ Remember and describe events that happened in the classroom or in a story.
- ▶ Understand what it means to buy, sell, and trade things.



BY THE END OF PRE-KINDERGARTEN, STUDENTS CAN:

- ▶ Explain why rules exist at school and at home. Follow agreed-upon rules.
- ▶ Give examples from texts of people respecting and working with each other.
- ▶ Explain what maps can show about places. Make a map of a place they know.
- ▶ Use words like *first*, *next*, and *last* to explain how events happened.
- ▶ Use words like *up*, *off*, *inside*, and *below* to explain where people, animals, and things are.
- ▶ Describe cultural traditions of people in the local community and from diverse backgrounds.
- ▶ Describe some things people do when they work inside or outside their homes.
- ▶ Explain how people decide what things they need and want.
- ▶ Ask and answer questions about buying, selling, and trading.
- ▶ Ask and answer questions about history or social science texts.



QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK YOUR CHILD:

- ▶ Why do we need rules?
- ▶ What does a map show?
- ▶ What kinds of work do people do?



TOPICS YOU CAN DISCUSS WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER:

- ▶ Books about different cultural traditions to look for at the library
- ▶ Places nearby that are important for historical reasons

