

2011–2012



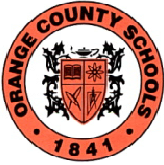
P A R E N T G U I D E

to Elementary Curriculum

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First Grade

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
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ARTS EDUCATION
HEALTHFUL LIVING
WORLD LANGUAGE



Orange County Board of Education

200 East King Street
Hillsborough, NC 27278

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Dear Parents/Guardians:

This Orange County Schools Curriculum Guide reflects the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* for students in grades K-5. It is designed to give you an overview of the content students study in grades K-5 as well as the variety skills students need in order to be successful. More in-depth information can be found about specific subjects and skills by visiting the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction at its web site www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum.

It is important to understand that reading and writing skills are process skills that students learn and master in grades K-12; consequently, there are no grade specific skills or month-by-month sequential topics in reading and writing. Instead, it is the level of complexity with which students are able to analyze, interpret, generalize, and hypothesize that changes from grade to grade. As students advance from grade to grade the text levels that students will read and work with across content areas becomes more difficult. Finally, vocabulary and grammatical techniques become more advanced as students progress.

Through this Guide, we hope to provide you with enough information to enable you to discuss curriculum with your child and his/her teacher(s). The Orange County Schools teachers are happy to discuss curriculum in depth so that you have knowledge of how our district works to ensure that each student reaches her/his potential.

The Standards-Based Report Card for Grades K-5, which we began using in 2006-2007, reports more accurately how students are performing in relation to state described proficiency standards. Should you desire more information about how the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and the Orange County Report Card align, please ask your child's teacher to discuss this with you.

Finally, we believe that all students deserve the best teachers and the best educational opportunities possible. To this end, we in Orange County Schools commit ourselves to plan and deliver a purposeful program of study that challenges all students to be learners and generators of knowledge and maximizes their many and varied abilities.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can provide additional information or assistance to you, your family, and your Orange County Schools student(s).

Sincerely,

Denise Morton, Ed.D, Chief Academic Officer

Lisa Ann Napp

Lisa Ann Napp, Ed.D, Director of Elementary Instruction

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

First grade students extend their understanding of phonemic awareness, decoding, and word recognition while they extend their comprehension and use of conventions for written language. First grade students:

- **Read fluently a variety of texts both assigned and self-selected**
- **Listen to literature**
- **Respond to books, poetry, plays, and age-appropriate expository texts, environmental print, and self-selected reading materials.**

Students expand their oral language skills and their knowledge about recording oral language to express themselves clearly. First grade students:

- **Use specific words to retell a simple text**
- **Elaborate on how information and events connect to life experiences**
- **Discuss unfamiliar oral vocabulary after listening to text**
- **Develop phonemic awareness by counting the number of syllables in a word**
- **Change the beginning, middle, and ending sounds to produce new words.**

As they discuss and construct texts, students expand their vocabulary and begin to use new words for their written products. First grade students:

- **Use words that name characters and settings**
- **Use words that tell action and events**
- **Write and/or participate in writing by using and extending an author's model of language**
- **Compose a variety of products—stories, journal entries, letters, poems**
- **Use phonic knowledge and basic patterns to spell correctly three and four letter words**
- **Apply phonics to write independently using temporary and/or conventional spelling**
- **Use basic capitalization and punctuation**

- **Identify personal topics for their writing and research**
- **Use complete sentences to write simple texts.**

Students spend from two to three hours each day engaged in English Language Arts activities.



MATHEMATICS

The North Carolina Mathematics Standard Course of study is organized around five strands or goals for all K-8 students. These strands are: Number and Operations, Measurement, Geometry, Data Analysis and Probability, and Algebra. The knowledge and skills required from students become more complex at each grade level.

First grade students are expected to:

- **Read, write, model and compute with whole numbers through 99**
- **Use non-standard units of measure and tell time**
- **Identify, describe, draw, and build basic geometric figures**
- **Understand and use data and simple probability concepts**
- **Demonstrate an understanding of classification and patterning**

Students spend approximately one hour each day engaged in a study of mathematics.



SCIENCE

Science in the first grade extends the foundation begun in kindergarten with the unifying concepts of evidence, explanation, and measurement; students devise their own rules to classify living and nonliving objects as they consider order and organization. Teachers build on students' natural inclination to ask questions and investigate common objects in the natural world. Students engage in active construction of ideas and explanations as they observe, collect data, and classify to provide types and levels of order and organization to their ideas about science concepts.

First grade students conduct investigations and make observations in order to better understand:

- **Needs of living organisms**
- **Solid earth materials**
- **Properties and relationships of objects**
- **Balance, motion, and weight of objects**



SOCIAL STUDIES

In first grade, students continue to focus on a global understanding of families as they learn about their neighborhood and community. They examine a variety of neighborhoods and recognize the multiple roles that individuals and families play. Students explore characteristics of the local government while expanding their understanding of justice, authority, and responsibility. They continue to focus on the concept of change and begin to evaluate the effects of change on communities.

First grade students

- Analyze how individuals, families, and groups are similar and different
- Identify the qualities of good citizenship
- Recognize the concept of change and how it affects families and communities
- Apply basic economic and geographic concepts to real life situations
- Recognize the importance of technology to families and communities.



INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

Students in the first grade are introduced to identifying sources of information and relevant sources of information, understanding the difference between text read for enjoyment and text read for information, using technology tools, understanding the importance of good questions in conducting research and safety and ethical issues related to information and technology resources.

In the first grade, the curriculum provides structured, supervised learning experiences that include:

- **Identifying various resources for information (e.g. print, audio-visual, electronic, people)**
- **Classifying resources as relevant for a given purpose and/or topic.**
- **Classifying text as nonfiction or fiction.**
- **Comparing important facts and minor details.**
- **Using a variety of technology tools to gather data and information (e.g., Web-based resources, e-books, online communication tools, etc.).**
- **Using a variety of technology tools to organize data and information (e.g., word processor, graphic organizer, audio and visual recording, online collaboration tools, etc.).**

- Using technology tools to present data and information (multimedia, audio and visual recording, online collaboration tools, etc.).
- Recognizing the steps of a simple (or simplified) research process.
- Using technology hardware and software responsibly.
- Explaining why safety is important when using the Internet.
- Recognizing the need to obtain permission or give credit when using intellectual property of others.



MUSIC

The purpose of the music program is to provide experiences and opportunities, which develop the child's creativity, growth in musical knowledge and skills, and an appreciation for a variety of cultures and musical styles. The focus in grades K-2 is to create, respond to, and perform music. The music program reinforces instruction in other areas by providing a connection to the total school curriculum

At the first grade level, music selections, as well as related activities, materials and exploration of musical concepts, become more complex. It is during second grade, that students begin reading music, playing rhythms and melodies on instruments and exploring more in-depth integrated curriculum activities.



VISUAL ARTS

Students in first grade are introduced to the four basic areas of the visual arts: art production, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics. Importance is placed on fostering confidence by involving students in art activities directly related to their own experiences. The development of observation skills, exploration of their imagination, and eye and hand coordination are encouraged and reinforced.

In the first grade level, the students begin to build upon their basic kindergarten experiences to further enhance their fine motor skills. The students will further enhance their fine motor skills. They also are exposed to a variety of media and techniques.

HEALTHFUL LIVING

A comprehensive healthful living education program is designed to help each student develop pro-active health promotion behaviors. Students should develop positive attitudes toward regular physical activity and its effect on health. The following educational descriptors are reflective of the goals and objectives found in the K-3 healthful living education curriculum:

By the end of grade three:

Students will be aware of the important health risks for their age group and will comprehend some of the major influences on their own health, especially including the role of their own behaviors in regard to eating breakfast and balanced meals; rest and exercise; using seat belts; responding to traffic, fire, and other warning signs, sounds, and symbols; avoiding burns and getting help in an emergency; and the impact of substances, including alcohol and tobacco, on their lives; identify social and psychological contributions of physical activity.

Students will be able to demonstrate ways in which they can manage stress; be responsible for their own behaviors; cope with fear, embarrassment and failure;

HEALTHFUL LIVING – continued

recognize and respond appropriately to teasing, aggression and bullying; resolve conflict; cooperate, share, and respecting the rights of others; know safe practices, class rules and procedures and apply them with little or no effort.

Students will know and understand the value of being physically fit and the types of activities that contribute to total fitness; express feelings with challenges; be aware that choosing to be physically active is a conscious decision and personal choice for both enjoyment and health-related benefits. Students will be able to demonstrate fundamental motor skills; develop and refine creative movements; demonstrate manipulative skills; work cooperatively with others to complete a task; display appropriate behaviors during social situations; express an enjoyment for movement experiences; and want to participate in community activities.

Healthful Living Focus Areas –Grade 1

- **Problem solving and decision making**
- **Personal safety**
- **Coping skills**
- **Conflict resolution**
- **Identify a variety of healthy foods from each food group**
- **Recognize heart rate**
- **Demonstration of beginning locomotor, non-locomotor, and manipulative skills**
- **Work cooperatively with others**



WORLD LANGUAGE

In the Elementary School Foreign Language Program, the primary goal is the development of listening and speaking skills and cultural awareness through concrete experiences. Because language acquisition begins with listening, successful language learning activities emphasize comprehension rather than speaking at the beginning stages.

Successful language learning activities involve students in interpersonal communication as they learn songs, recite poems, and give oral commands. At this level, reading and writing are not introduced; instead, emphasis is placed on the oral language necessary for students to become good readers and writers later on.



MODIFIED CURRICULUM

Because some students learn at a more rapid pace than others, because some students come to school who speak a language other than English, and because some students require additional assistance to be successful in learning the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, accommodations are made which modify and/or adapt the curriculum to meet students' needs. Students who qualify for accommodations may have extended time to complete assignments or take tests or they may have the opportunity to work on assignments that have been compressed. The pace of the lessons may be slowed down or increased depending on students' needs.

K-2 ASSESSMENTS

Assessments are both formal and informal in nature. On the one hand, they are part of an on-going informal process to enable each classroom teacher to design instruction to meet the individual needs of each child; on the other hand, they are more formal and enable the teacher to compare the child's progress against a standard measure and complete a report to parents. The same instrument may be used for both informal and formal assessments because it monitors achievement of benchmarks in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.

While teachers continually use assessment to plan instruction, results are reported to parents at the end of each nine-week marking period.

Grade K-2 Literacy assessment provides for documentation of each student's development and progress in reading and writing skills, strategies, and comprehension, as well as documentation of growth over time. Grade K-2 mathematics assessment provides documented, on-going, individualized assessments throughout the year and a summative evaluation at the end of the year.

The intended purpose of these assessments is fourfold:

- **To provide information about the progress of each student for instructional adaptations and early interventions**
- **To provide next-year's teachers with information about the status of each of their incoming students**
- **To inform parents about the status of their children relative to grade-level standards at the end of the year**
- **To provide the school and school district with information about the achievement status and progress of groups of students (by grade, by school, etc.)**

