



Growing Up: Kindergarten

Your child will develop skills and grow in a number of ways during this important year.

Physical

As the year goes on, kindergarteners improve their fine motor skills (e.g., holding a pencil properly) and gross motor skills (e.g., running and skipping).

To help your child improve fine motor skills, do art projects that involve drawing and cutting. To help develop gross motor skills, encourage activities such as playing ball, dancing, or swimming.

Intellectual

Kindergarteners are curious about their world, and they ask lots of questions.

Be open to your child's questions, and encourage his/her curiosity by taking trips to museums, nature centers, and aquariums.

Emotional

Friendships are becoming more important to kindergarteners.

Set up play dates with classmates and encourage your child to take turns, share, and be respectful.

"Play gives children a chance to practice what they are learning." Fred Rogers



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Kindergarten

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Parent Involvement Guide

Building Independence

Kindergarteners are expected to be able to take care of more things on their own. You can help your child become more self-sufficient and independent by teaching self-care skills, providing your child with choices, and giving your kindergartener age-appropriate responsibilities.

Ways to Help at Home

- ▶ Teach your child how to properly hold utensils, open a milk carton, use a napkin, and tidy up when he/she is finished eating.
- ▶ Make sure your child can wash his/her hands and use the bathroom independently.
- ▶ Encourage your child to get dressed without your help. Be patient if your child becomes frustrated with zippers or buttons.
- ▶ Give your child simple household tasks to complete, such as feeding the dog, helping set the table, or watering the plants.
- ▶ Help your child develop decision-making skills by giving him/her choices. Let your child choose which shirt to wear, what to eat for lunch, or which game to play.
- ▶ When something is difficult, don't immediately swoop in to help. Let your child try to problem solve—and celebrate when he/she is successful.

Welcome to Kindergarten!

Kindergarten is an exciting time for you and your child. During this important year, your child will become accustomed to the routine of school, and he/she will develop the basic skills needed to read, write, and do math. This will be a year of tremendous growth!

Your child will learn a great deal this year, but kindergarten is about more than academics. In kindergarten, students develop important social skills, and they become more self-sufficient, responsible, and independent.

In this guide you will find information that will help you help your child have a successful year in kindergarten. Included in this guide are:

- ▶ Tips to help your child build his/her reading, writing, and math skills.
- ▶ Ways to help your child become more independent, self-reliant, and confident.
- ▶ Information on the physical, intellectual, and emotional growth of kindergarteners.

Your involvement and support are key to your child's success!



Learning in Kindergarten

Reading

Kindergarteners go from identifying letters to reading words and short sentences.

Ways to Help at Home

- ▶ Read aloud to your child every day. While reading a story, ask your child questions such as, "What do you think will happen next?" "What would you do?" "How do you think that made him feel?"
- ▶ Help your child learn "sight words." Look for these common words in everyday situations and in the books you read.

a	come	in	my	this
am	do	is	no	to
an	go	it	on	up
and	he	like	see	we
at	here	look	so	went
can	I	me	the	you

Writing

Your child will start the year writing individual letters, and will progress to writing whole words and short sentences.

Ways to Help at Home

- ▶ Have writing supplies readily available (e.g., pencils, crayons, various kinds of paper, markers).
- ▶ Help your child hold a pencil properly and steady the paper.
- ▶ Take a break from paper. Practice writing words with sidewalk chalk, finger paint, salt or sugar on a cookie sheet, or with fingers on a steamy window.

Math

In kindergarten, children learn about numbers, counting, sorting, and grouping.

Ways to Help at Home

- ▶ Ask your child to bring you a specific number of objects, such as four spoons or five cups.
- ▶ Play board games that require moving a number of spaces, or card games that involve identifying a number, such as "Go Fish."
- ▶ Look for opportunities to use relative terms such as more, less, bigger, smaller, taller, shorter, heavier, lighter. For example, ask your child, "Which of these glasses has more juice?"
- ▶ Have your child sort Legos or blocks by color and shape, or put coins into categories (pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters).

By the end of the year, your child should be able to count to 100, write numbers up to 20, and give you the "next number" for numbers 1 to 100.

Support Your Child

Kindergarteners are learning many new skills, and they may become frustrated at times. If your child is feeling discouraged or frustrated, provide encouragement, keep a positive attitude, and be available to help.

If you have concerns about your child's progress, or if you are looking for more ways to help build your child's skills at home, talk to your child's teacher.





Growing Up: 1st Grade

Your child will develop skills and grow in a number of ways during this important year.

Physical

As the year goes on, look for your child to improve his/her fine motor skills (e.g., tying shoes) and gross motor skills (e.g., kicking a ball).

To help your child improve fine motor skills, put together puzzles and do art projects. To help develop gross motor skills, dance, shoot hoops, jump rope, and ride bikes.

Intellectual

Your child is becoming more and more curious about the world and how it works.

Be open to your child's questions, and encourage his/her curiosity by taking trips to museums, zoos, and nature centers.

Emotional

First graders are often interested in helping others, and they enjoy doing things with friends.

Consider your child's interests and look for group activities he/she might enjoy (e.g., swim club, gymnastics).

"There are two great things that you can give your children: one is roots, the other is wings."

Hodding Carter



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First Grade

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Support Your Child

1st Grade



Parent Involvement Guide

Promoting Confidence

It's important for first graders to develop a positive self-image, and to become independent, confident learners. As a parent, you can help your child develop skills that will help him/her be successful both in and out of the classroom.

Ways to Help at Home

- ▶ Give your child a small job to do each week (e.g., set the table, put clothes away, feed a pet). When you give your child a task, make sure that it's completed. It's important for children to learn to finish what they start.
- ▶ Let your child make choices. Allow him/her to choose the bedtime book, which clothes to wear (with your help), or what game to play.
- ▶ Have a set time and place for homework, and be available to help if needed.
- ▶ Praise your child for a job well done, and also for good effort. Make the praise as specific as possible. For example, "I like how neatly you put the books on the shelf."
- ▶ Have conversations with your child and encourage him/her to speak clearly and in complete sentences.
- ▶ Set up play dates with classmates, and look for social opportunities with family and friends.

Welcome to First Grade!

First grade is a year full of firsts. It's the year students start writing sentences, adding and subtracting, and even conducting small science experiments. Most importantly, it's the year students make tremendous strides in reading.

Your child will learn a great deal this year, but first grade is about more than academics. In first grade, students become more self-sufficient, responsible, and independent. They also develop important social skills.

In this guide you will find information that will help you help your child have a successful first grade year. Included in this guide are:

- ▶ tips to help your child build his/her reading, writing, and math skills.
- ▶ ways to help your child build important social skills, become more independent, and develop a sense of responsibility.
- ▶ information on the physical, intellectual, and emotional growth of first graders.

Your involvement and support are key to your child's success!



Learning in the First Grade

Reading

First graders learn new words and strategies to help them figure out unknown words. They also begin to have a better understanding of what they read.

Ways to Help at Home

- ▶ Practice reading wherever you go. Ask your child to point out words he/she recognizes, and to sound out unknown words he/she sees on street signs, billboards, and in stores.
- ▶ While reading a story, ask your child questions such as, "What do you think will happen next?" "How do you think that character felt?"
- ▶ Regularly go to the library and have your child choose fiction and nonfiction books. Read to your child every day, and have your child read to you.

Writing

First graders' writing and spelling skills grow throughout the year, making it possible for them to write longer sentences. They also learn how to use capitalization and punctuation.

Ways to Help at Home

- ▶ Together write a thank you note for a gift, a letter to a favorite relative, or a get well message to a sick friend. Talk about how to use the correct capitalization and punctuation.
- ▶ Have your child draw a picture of a family outing and write a sentence or two about it.
- ▶ Take a break from paper. Have a whiteboard or chalkboard your child can use to practice writing.



Math

In first grade, children practice counting higher, learn how to skip count, and work on addition and subtraction.

Ways to Help at Home

- ▶ Provide small objects such as cereal or blocks for your child to practice counting up to 120.
- ▶ Use drawings or small objects to practice adding and subtracting. For example, ask your first grader to draw three apples and six oranges. Then ask your child how many total pieces of fruit there are. You might also ask how many pieces of fruit would be left if you ate two of the apples.
- ▶ Practice drawing basic shapes, and talk about terms such as greater than, less than, and equal.

From cooking to telling time to making purchases, we are continually using math. Increase your child's interest in math by showing how important numbers and math are in our daily lives.

Support Your Child

First graders are learning many new skills, and they may become frustrated at times. If your child is feeling discouraged or frustrated, provide encouragement, keep a positive attitude, and be available to help.

If you have concerns about your child's progress, or are looking for additional ways to help build your child's skills at home, talk to your child's teacher.



Growing Up: 2nd Grade

Your child will develop skills and grow in a number of ways during this important year.

Physical

Second graders begin to increase muscle strength and stamina. This makes it a great time for your child to join a sports team, or to take gymnastics, dance, or martial arts classes.

Intellectual

Their vocabulary is increasing, making it easier for second graders to express their ideas and engage in discussions.

Have conversations at dinner time. Ask your child to tell you about his/her day, or about something specific that's happened.

Emotional

Second graders are often interested in doing *everything* for themselves, even when they need help.

When something is difficult, don't immediately swoop in to help. Let your child try to problem solve, and celebrate when he/she is successful.

"It is not what you do for your children, but what you have taught them to do for themselves that will make them successful human beings."

Ann Landers



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Support Your Child

2nd Grade



Parent Involvement Guide

Welcome to Second Grade!

In second grade, students make great strides in reading, writing, and math. Your child will learn to read fluently, use writing to communicate ideas, and learn how math is used in real world situations. This is a very exciting year!

Your child will learn a great deal this year, but second grade is about more than academics. In second grade, students become more confident and independent, and they develop important social skills.

In this guide you will find information that will help you help your child have a successful second grade year. Included in this guide are:

- ▶ tips to help your child build his/her reading, writing, and math skills.
- ▶ ways to help your child build social skills, make friends, and be more self-reliant.
- ▶ information on the physical, intellectual, and emotional growth of second graders.

Your involvement and support are key to your child's success!



Learning in the Second Grade

Reading

In second grade, the focus is on reading for meaning – reading to understand and to remember. Second graders learn to recognize more words by sight, and they learn strategies to help them figure out new words.

Ways to Help at Home

- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud, changing the tone of his/her voice for different characters.
- ▶ Help your child decode unfamiliar words and look up new words in a print or online dictionary.
- ▶ Discuss what your child is reading and ask questions such as, “What do you think will happen next?” “What would you do?” “How do you think that character felt?” “Did you like this book?”
- ▶ Most importantly, read to your child every day, and have your child read to you.

Writing

In second grade, children start writing about different topics, experiences, and their opinions. They also practice finding and correcting their spelling and punctuation errors.

Ways to Help at Home

- ▶ Ask your child to write about something that was enjoyable or fun, such as a friend's birthday party, family outing, or vacation.
- ▶ Encourage your child to write a letter to a favorite relative or send a get well card to a sick friend, and to also make birthday and holiday greeting cards for family members and friends.

Math

Second graders learn how to add and subtract two-digit numbers, and they work on learning addition and subtraction facts. Your second grader will also study money, measurement, and telling time.

Ways to Help at Home

- ▶ While your child is completing routine tasks such as getting ready for school, verbally quiz him/her on addition and subtraction facts (e.g., $9+1$, $10-4$). Be sure to keep it fun!
- ▶ Give your child a ruler to practice measuring objects around the house. When you're cooking, have your child help you read the recipe and measure ingredients.
- ▶ Help your child practice counting money using play or real money. Encourage him/her to pay attention when you check out at the grocery store. Try using the self-checkout for small items and let your child insert the cash.

Support Your Child

Second graders are learning many new skills, and they may become frustrated at times. If your child is feeling discouraged or frustrated, provide encouragement, keep a positive attitude, and be available to help.

If you have concerns about your child's progress, or are looking for additional ways to help build your child's skills at home, talk to your child's teacher.





Growing Up: 3rd Grade

Your child will develop skills and grow in a number of ways during this important year.

Physical

Third graders are full of energy, but they often don't know when to stop and relax.

Provide your child with an outlet for his/her energy (e.g., a sport, gymnastics, martial arts). Also, make sure that your child gets the recommended 9-11 hours of sleep each night.

Intellectual

Third graders are interested in learning about the world around them and about how things work.

Be prepared to field questions ranging from the human body to how certain technologies work. If you don't know the answers to your child's questions, search for the answers together.

Emotional

Friends are very important to third graders, and they often have a best friend.

Children can sometimes be hurtful to others. If your child experiences rejection or is teased—listen, be supportive, and talk to your child about how to best deal with the situation.

"Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn."

Benjamin Franklin



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Third Grade

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Support Your Child

3rd Grade



Parent Involvement Guide

Welcome to Third Grade!

Third grade is an important and exciting year. In third grade, students read longer books, write paragraphs, and do more complex math. This is also the year that standardized testing often begins.

Your child will learn a great deal this year, but third grade is about more than academics. In third grade, students develop important social skills. They also become more self-sufficient, responsible, and independent.

In this guide you will find information that will help you help your child have a successful third grade year. Included in this guide are:

- ▶ Tips to help your child build his/her reading, writing, and math skills.
- ▶ Ways to help your child build important social skills—and develop the confidence to handle tougher school demands.
- ▶ Information on the physical, intellectual, and emotional growth of third graders.

**Your involvement and support are
key to your child's success!**



Learning in the Third Grade

Reading

In third grade, students go from learning to read to reading to learn. Students read books, articles, and poems—and they discuss what they read with others.

Ways to Help at Home

- ▶ Read magazines and online articles together and talk about what you both find interesting, funny, or important.
- ▶ Encourage your child to read independently—and ask for your child's thoughts and opinions on what he/she has read.
- ▶ Choose a book series to work through together (e.g., *Captain Underpants*, *Horrible Harry*, *Magic Tree House*). Take turns reading to each other.
- ▶ Have a 20-minute period each night when the entire family reads.

Writing

Third graders write reports, descriptions, and stories. They also edit and proofread their work, which means a lot more grammar rules to remember.

Ways to Help at Home

- ▶ Give your child a journal to write about whatever he/she wants.
- ▶ Encourage your child to read his/her writing aloud to understand natural breaks and flow.
- ▶ Have your child practice typing on a computer at home or at the library.
- ▶ Ask your child to write a story or poem and read it to the family.

Math

Third grade students do addition and subtraction problems with large numbers. They work with fractions and decimals, and they start learning how to do multiplication and division.

Ways to Help at Home

- ▶ While your child is completing routine tasks (e.g., getting ready for school), verbally quiz him/her on multiplication facts (e.g., 4×6 , 9×3). Be sure to keep it fun and pressure-free!
- ▶ Point out decimals in everyday life, such as examining how the gallons and dollars change when you put gas in your car.
- ▶ Show how we use fractions every day. Ask your child to fill a glass half full or cut a sandwich into fourths.

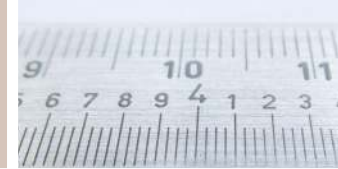
Your child may be learning math very differently from how you learned it. Let your child teach you how he/she does math!

If you or your child need help with a math problem or skill, visit [khanacademy.org](https://www.khanacademy.org). This website has many excellent free online math videos.

Support Your Child

Third graders are learning many new skills, and they may become frustrated at times. If your child is feeling discouraged or frustrated, provide encouragement, keep a positive attitude, and be available to help.

If you have concerns about your child's progress, or if you are looking for more ways to help build your child's skills at home, talk to your child's teacher.





Growing Up: 4th Grade

Your child will develop skills and grow in a number of ways during this important year.

Physical

Fourth graders have improved coordination and often show an interest in physical activities such as jumping rope or playing a particular sport.

Students this age need a physical outlet for all of their energy. Explore your options and help your child find activities he/she enjoys (e.g., gymnastics, swimming, martial arts).

Intellectual

Fourth graders have an interest in, and a better understanding of, world events and social issues.

Be open to questions, and have age-appropriate discussions on real-world issues and events.

Emotional

Peers are important to fourth graders and they like being part of a group. The emotions of fourth graders can change quickly, and cliques and peer pressure can be an issue, especially for girls.

Encourage your child to focus on being the best he/she can be, and regularly talk to your child about how things are going with friends and at school.

"All kids need is a little help, and somebody who believes in them." Magic Johnson



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Support Your Child

4th Grade



Parent Involvement Guide

Shaping Social Growth

In fourth grade, children are developing the social skills they need to succeed in this grade, and beyond.

Dealing with Stress

There is a lot going on in fourth grade—more homework, harder classes, growing bodies, and more complex social interactions.

Regularly talk to your child about what's going on at school, provide lots of support, and teach your child some calming strategies, such as deep breathing (inhale, count to four, exhale).

Understanding Limits

Fourth graders are concerned about what's "fair" (or more likely "unfair"). They also like to test the limits—the limits of physical play, school rules, home rules, and even your patience.

Take the time to explain to your child the "why" behind school and home rules.

Balancing Family and Friends

Your fourth grader may be more interested in spending time with peers than with family, a trend that is likely to continue.

Maintain a dependable routine (e.g. nightly family dinners or weekly family outings) so that your child can expand his/her social net while having the comfort and security that comes with family.

Welcome to Fourth Grade!

In fourth grade, students have longer and more complex assignments, and they're likely to have more homework. Fourth graders are also expected to work more independently.

Your child will learn a great deal this year, but fourth grade is about more than academics. In fourth grade, students develop important social skills, and they become more responsible, self-sufficient, and independent.

In this guide you will find information that will help you help your child have a successful fourth grade year. Included in this guide are:

- ▶ tips to help your child build his/her skills in language arts and math.
- ▶ ways to help your child build social skills, deal with stress, and have healthy relationships with family and friends.
- ▶ information on the physical, intellectual, and emotional growth of fourth graders.

Your involvement and support are key to your child's success!



Learning in the Fourth Grade

Language Arts

In fourth grade, there is a focus on reading comprehension – being able to understand the meaning of what's read. Fourth graders also do a lot of writing. They write essays and reports, and they edit and proofread their writing.

Ways to Help at Home

- ▶ Encourage independent reading by getting books at the library on topics of interest to your child. Be sure to ask your child to tell you about what he/she is reading.
- ▶ Choose a book for both of you to read, and have ongoing discussions about the characters and plot. If it's non-fiction, talk about what you've learned.
- ▶ Have family reading time—30 minutes when everyone in the family reads.
- ▶ Encourage your child to write in a journal about his/her feelings, goals, and dreams, and about things that have happened.
- ▶ Look for ways to encourage writing. Have your child write thank you notes, exchange emails with a relative (using your account), or write a letter to a friend.
- ▶ If your child expresses an opinion or preference, ask why he/she feels that way. This will help your child think about how to express his/her thoughts so that they make sense to others.

In the fourth grade, students use their reading and writing skills to complete assignments in subjects such as Social Studies and Science. For example, your child might be asked to read about volcanoes and write a report on them.

To succeed in school, it is critical that students have a solid foundation in reading and writing.

Math

In addition to working on multiplication, division, and fractions, fourth grade students are given word problems – problems that involve ideas, not just numbers.

Ways to Help at Home

- ▶ Have your fourth grader help you solve real-life math problems. For example, ask your child to help you figure out the difference in cost between two items, double a recipe, or figure out how many miles your car gets to a gallon.
- ▶ Quiz your child on multiplication facts while you're eating breakfast, driving to school, or making dinner. Keep it fun and pressure-free.
- ▶ Model problem solving. If your child asks for help with homework, verbalize your thinking as you determine how to work out a problem.

Your child may be learning math very differently from how you learned it. Let your child teach you how he/she does math!

Support Your Child

Fourth graders are learning many new skills, and they may become frustrated at times. If your child is feeling discouraged or frustrated, provide encouragement, keep a positive attitude, and be available to help.

If you have concerns about your child's progress, or are looking for additional ways to help build your child's skills at home, talk to your child's teacher.





Growing Up: 5th Grade

Your child will develop skills and grow in a number of ways during this important year.

Physical

As children grow and mature, they are frequently hungry, tired, achy, and just plain cranky.

Keep healthy snacks stocked and available for your child. Also, make sure your child gets the recommended 9-11 hours of a sleep each night.

Intellectual

Fifth graders have longer attention spans, allowing them to concentrate on one thing for a long period of time.

Increased attention span doesn't just apply to homework. Set guidelines and time limits on video game playing, TV viewing, and online activities.

Emotional

Fifth graders are often self-conscious about their appearance and concerned about what their peers think of them.

Reassure your child that he/she looks great, and help your child find something he/she is good at, enjoys doing, or has a passion for.

"If you can give your son or daughter only one gift, let it be enthusiasm." Bruce Barton



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Support Your Child

5th Grade



Parent Involvement Guide

Provide Guidance

While in previous years your child was striving for independence, your child may now be striving for group acceptance. Peer relationships are very important to fifth graders, and your child might begin feeling pressure to fit in.

Talk about differences

Students this age have a wide variety of maturity levels, both emotionally and physically—with some students already showing signs of puberty. Talk to your child about differences and about the changes he/she may be experiencing.

Stay close, but don't push

Engage in daily conversations with your child. Tell him/her about your day or about something interesting you read online. Your child may not be enthusiastic about having meaningful conversations with you every day, but that's okay.

Talk about tough issues

As your child approaches middle school, there are a number of issues that you should talk about—bullying, peer pressure, smoking, drugs, and alcohol.

Make sure your child knows where you stand on these issues—and that you are always available to listen and answer questions.

Welcome to Fifth Grade!

Fifth graders continue to develop their skills as they start preparing for middle school. They do more reading, more difficult math, and they have more homework. Balancing it all isn't always easy, but there are lots of ways that you can help.

Your child will learn a great deal this year, but fifth grade is about more than academics. In fifth grade, students work on their social skills, and they start to deal with more complicated issues and concerns.

In this guide you will find information that will help you help your child have a successful fifth grade year. Included in this guide are:

- ▶ Tips to help your child build his/her skills in language arts and math.
- ▶ Ways for you to provide guidance as your child develops important social skills.
- ▶ Information on the physical, intellectual, and emotional growth of fifth graders.

Your involvement and support are key to your child's success!



Learning in the Fifth Grade

Language Arts

Fifth graders read fiction and nonfiction books. They learn how to analyze and summarize what they read, and they write reports and work on long-term projects. Fifth graders also write multi-paragraph narratives and create works of fiction.

Ways to Help at Home

- ▶ Ask your child to tell you about what he/she is reading in school—and reading for pleasure. Encourage independent reading by getting books at the library on topics of interest to your child.
- ▶ Have family reading time – 30 minutes when everyone in the family reads.
- ▶ Read the same books, online articles, or short stories and discuss what you find most important and interesting.
- ▶ Come up with an interesting question and challenge your child to find the answer online.
- ▶ Be a good role model. Let your child see you reading articles, magazines, and books. At dinner, talk about the interesting things you've learned.
- ▶ Support all kinds of writing. Have your child write thank you notes, exchange emails with a relative, or write a poem or short story to read to the family.
- ▶ Encourage your child to write in a journal about his/her feelings, dreams, and goals, and about things that happen.

Large assignments and projects can sometimes seem overwhelming to students. Help your child break these down into more manageable parts. Set up a calendar so that large assignments and projects are completed over a period of time, not at the last minute.



Math

In fifth grade, students add, subtract, multiply and divide fractions and decimals. They also use their math skills to solve multi-step real life problems involving measurement, time, and money.

Ways to Help at Home

Include your child in everyday situations involving math. For example, ask your child to help you:

- ▶ figure out how much money to leave for a tip.
- ▶ determine how many miles your car gets to a gallon.
- ▶ decide which item is a better value – the less expensive smaller box of cereal or the bigger box that costs more.
- ▶ determine how to alter a recipe's ingredients to get the right number of servings.

Your child may be learning math very differently from how you learned it. Let your child teach you how he/she does math!

Support Your Child

Fifth graders are learning many new skills, and they may become frustrated at times. If your child is feeling discouraged or frustrated, provide encouragement, keep a positive attitude, and be available to help.

If you have concerns about your child's progress, or are looking for additional ways to help build your child's skills at home, talk to your child's teacher.