

# My Child Can!

## First Grade Booklet

The Alabama Department of Education

**An Early Literacy  
Guide for Families**

The *Alabama Families Read-at-Home Guide* was designed to provide a variety of standards-based resources for regular, family-guided, home reading.








# My Child Can! First Grade Booklet

## An Early Literacy Guide for Families

Dear Families,

The *My Child Can! First Grade Booklet*, developed by the Alabama State Department of Education, is a guide to help Alabama families understand the critical reading knowledge expected to be mastered at the end of First Grade by all Alabama students. We know that families are a child's first teacher in life and understand the learning needs of their child. Families are essential in setting high expectations for learning and encouraging their child's academic achievement, growth, and success! Your active participation and partnership with your child's teacher and school, along with reading support at home, is critical to their success in meeting the assessment standards established in Alabama.

This resource guide includes:

-  The Alabama English Language Arts Course of Study Standards.
-  An explanation of what your child can do with your help.
-  Unplugged activities your family can do.
-  Interactive resources designed for your child.
-  Resources designed to assist you in supporting your child's learning.



Parent  
Videos



Parent  
Articles



Printable  
Crafts or Games



Online  
Games



Videos for  
Kids



Songs for  
Kids

Please use the *My Child Can! First Grade Booklet: An Early Literacy Guide for Families* to help your child continue the joy of learning at home.



# ELA Critical Standards

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Reading Standards for Literature 3

Reading Standards for Informational Text 4

Reading Standards: Foundational Skills 5

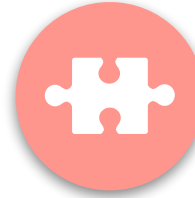
Writing Standards 9

Speaking and Listening Standards 10

Language Standards 11



# First Grade Reading Standards for Literature



## Alabama ELA Course of Study Standards

1. Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
2. Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.
3. Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.
8. Compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in stories.



## My Child Can

1. My child can ask and answer questions about key details in a story.
2. My child can retell the beginning, middle, and end of a story, and identify the lesson the main character(s) learned.
3. My child can describe the characters, settings, and major events in a story.
8. My child can compare the adventures and experiences of characters in different stories.



## Families Can

**Before Reading:** Ask questions such as: What will this book be about? How do you know? What is the title of this story? What clues does the title give us about the story?

**During Reading:** Ask questions such as: What do you think will happen next? Where is this story taking place? What is the main problem?

**After Reading:** DIY Question Ball

1. Buy a cheap beach ball.
2. Blow it up and set it on a bowl.
3. Use puff paint or permanent marker to write a question word in each section.
  - a. Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?
4. Let it dry and get ready to play!



## Digital Resources for Children



[Storyline Online](#)



[Jack Hartmann:  
Six Questions](#)



## Digital Resources for Parents



[Reading Rockets:  
Story Maps](#)

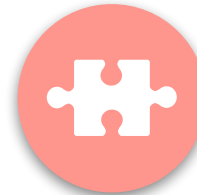


[Scholastic:  
Question  
Bookmarks](#)



[Make-and-Check  
a Prediction](#)

# First Grade Reading Standards for Informational Text



## Alabama ELA Course of Study Standards

10. Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
11. Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.
12. Describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.
18. Identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).



## My Child Can

10. My child can ask and answer questions about key details in an informational text.
11. My child can identify the main topic and retell key details he or she has learned.
12. My child can describe the connection between two people, events, ideas, or facts in a text.
18. My child can identify things that are the same and different between two informational books on the same topic.



## Families Can

Families can choose a topic or event to explore together.

**Before reading:** Take a “walk” through the book before reading. Looking closely at the front cover, table of contents, and photographs. This will help your little reader get a sense about the topic.

**During reading:** Encourage your child to ask questions. Use the *Expository Fact Strips* to keep track of what your reader is learning.

**After reading:** Draw a picture to show what the book was mainly about. Label the picture.



## Digital Resources for Children



[PBS Kids: Martha Speaks - True Stories](#)



[National Geographic Kids](#)



[What's the Main Idea?](#)



## Digital Resources for Parents



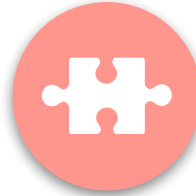
[Reading Rockets: Start with a Book](#)



[FCRR: Expository Fact Strips](#)

# First Grade

## Reading Standards: Foundational Skills



### Alabama ELA Course of Study Standards

20. Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.
- Recognize the distinguishing features of a sentence (e.g., first word, capitalization, ending punctuation).



### My Child Can

20. My child can understand the organization and basic features of print.
- My child can recognize the features of a sentence: the first word in a sentence begins with a capital letter, and every sentence ends with punctuation.



### Families Can

Using letter tiles, magnet letters, or letters written on index cards, have students sort capital letters and lowercase letters.

Using a magazine, advertisement or even junk mail, mark capital letters that begin new sentences with a highlighter or crayon. Circle ending punctuation marks.

Using any book or text, have your child “frame” a sentence using two fingers. Place one finger at the beginning of the sentence and one at the end of the sentence.



### Digital Resources for Children



Roy the Zebra:  
Capital Letter  
Games



Jack Hartmann:  
Parts of Sentence



### Digital Resources for Parents



Early Literacy:  
Print  
Awareness



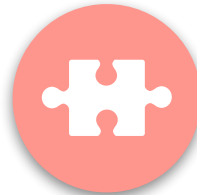
Guidelines for  
Promoting Print  
Awareness



FCRR: Build a  
Sentence

# First Grade

## Reading Standards: Foundational Skills



### Alabama ELA Course of Study Standards

21. Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).
- Distinguish long from short vowel sounds in spoken single-syllable words.
  - Orally produce single-syllable words by blending sounds (phonemes), including consonant blends.
  - Isolate and pronounce initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in spoken single-syllable words.
  - Segment spoken single-syllable words into their complete sequence of individual sounds (phonemes).



### My Child Can

21. My child can hear the difference in words that are spoken aloud.
- My child can hear and identify the difference between words with long and short vowel sounds, like *cap* and *cape*.
  - My child can blend individual sounds to produce words, including words with blends.
  - My child can produce the beginning, ending, and middle sounds in spoken words.
  - My child can produce, in order, the sounds of a short word.

**Parent Note:** Sounds of letters are represented inside of two bars like /m/. This representation should be read by making the sound mmmm.



### Families Can Play Games

**Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down:** Give me a thumbs up when you hear a word with a short vowel sound: pet, Pete, cup, cape ...

**Robot Talk:** The parent will produce individual sounds in a mystery word, pausing between each sound in a robotic manner. It is your child's job to blend the sounds together to produce the whole word. Ex. Guess my mystery word: /c/ /l/ /i/ /p/ The child would reply, "clip."

**Guess My Sound:** Say a word with 3 sounds. Ask: What sound do you hear at the (beginning, middle, or end) of the word \_\_\_\_? (ex: dog, kite, peach)



### Digital Resources for Parents



[Scholastic:  
Phonological  
Awareness Activities](#)



[Phoneme  
Hop Scotch](#)



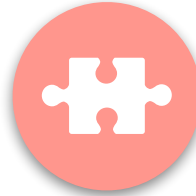
[Say and Slide Words](#)



[Say and Slide Words](#)

# First Grade

## Reading Standards: Foundational Skills



### Alabama ELA Course of Study Standards

22. Know and apply grade level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.



### My Child Can

22. My child can apply first grade level phonics and word analysis skills in reading words.



### Families Can

**Read Decodable Texts:** Decodable text is a type of text used in beginning reading instruction. Decodable texts are carefully sequenced to progressively incorporate words that are consistent with the letter–sound relationships. [Click here for links](#), compiled by The Reading League, for a list of decodable text sources for students in grades K-2, 3-8, teens, and all ages.

**Let's Cut Up!** Write two syllable words on index cards. Ask your child to cut the word where the two syllables divide. The word *rabbit* would be cut into two parts: rab bit.

**Sight Words and Nerf™ Blasters:** Write [irregularly spelled words](#) on index cards, a dry erase board, or even your sidewalk ... Call out a word for your child to find. Your child can read and blast the word.



### Digital Resources for Children



[Sight Word Hopper](#)



[Teach Your Monster to Read](#)



[Blazer Fresh: Clap it Out!](#)



### Digital Resources for Parents



[15 Phonics Rules for Reading and Spelling](#)



[FCRR: Digraph Delights](#)

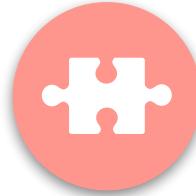


[FCRR: Silent E Changes](#)



# First Grade

## Reading Standards: Foundational Skills



### Alabama ELA Course of Study Standards

23. Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.



### My Child Can

23. My child can read accurately and with expression.



### Families Can

#### Emphasize One Word

Read the same sentence multiple times, taking turns by changing the emphasis.

Do you have my yellow crayon?

Do **you** have my yellow crayon?

Do you **have** my yellow crayon?

Do you have **my** yellow crayon?

Do you have my **yellow** crayon?

Do you have my yellow **crayon**?

Continue this activity until all words have been individually emphasized. Spend time talking about how the emphasized word changed the meaning of the sentence.

#### Broadcast the Book

Choose an old familiar story that your child knows well. Allow him/her to reread it out loud using a pretend microphone. (Pro-tip: Spoons make great microphones!)



### Digital Resources for Children



[Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood](#)



[Teach Your Monster to Read](#)



[Blazer Fresh: Don't Read Like a Robot](#)



### Digital Resources for Parents

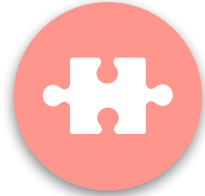


[FCRR: Reading with Expression](#)



[What Reading Fluency Looks like in First Grade](#)

# First Grade Writing Standards



## Alabama ELA Course of Study Standards

24. Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure.
- Write simple poems addressing a topic.
26. Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.



## My Child Can

24. My child can write his or her opinion about a book that includes: the name of the book, the topic, a reason for the opinion, and provide a sense of closure.
- My child can write simple poems about one topic.
26. My child can write narrative stories in which they: tell about two or more events, include some details, use temporal words (first, next, then, last) and end with a feeling.



## Families Can

**Step 1:** Families can read a text and share their feelings about the text by forming an opinion statement using the sentence starter: I liked (state the title of the book) because ... OR I didn't like (state the title of the book) because...

**Step 2:** Draw a picture that represents what you liked or disliked. Write a sentence using the previous sentence starter.

**Step 3:** On the back of your paper, leave a message for the audience as a way to close the writing. Ex. I think you should give this book a try. This book is a winner!



## Digital Resources for Children



[Writing a Personal Narrative](#)



[Scholastic: Craft a Kid's Journal](#)



## Digital Resources for Parents



[Scholastic: Playing with Poetry](#)

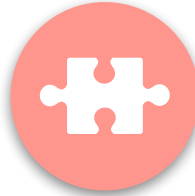


[Diverse Poetry Picture Books](#)



[Tips for Helping Young Kids Learn to Write](#)

# First Grade Speaking and Listening Standards



## Alabama ELA Course of Study Standards

31. Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about Grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.



## My Child Can

31. My child can carry on a conversation about one topic by listening to others, building onto shared ideas, and asking questions.



## Families Can

### Food For Thought Box:

Fill a small container with *The Family Dinner Project: Conversation Starters* or index cards where you have written a thought provoking prompt on each card. This prompt should be one that can apply to everyone at the table. Take turns pulling out a card. Read the prompt aloud and allow time for one member of your family to respond. Table members are invited to ask questions, build onto what was said, and add ideas that are within the topic.



## Digital Resources for Parents



[Strategies for Encouraging Your Child's Speech and Language Development](#)



[The Family Dinner Project: Conversation Starters](#)

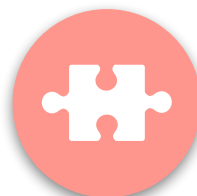


[Oral Language: Expanding Your Child's Vocabulary](#)



[Scholastic: Listening and Learning](#)

# First Grade Language Standards



## Alabama ELA Course of Study Standards

37. Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
38. Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.



## My Child Can

37. When writing and speaking, my child can demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar.
38. When writing, my child can demonstrate correct capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.



## Families Can

Help your child keep a journal of daily activities. Guide your child in creating and writing sentences describing some of the following information in the journal:

- Today's date
- What I must do
- What I want to do
- A list of people I will see/saw
- A list of games I will play/played
- Something that surprised or scared me: may require an exclamation mark
- A question I have about something I saw, heard, or learned today: requires a question mark

Have your child choose one sentence from the journal to “expand” by adding more pronouns, adjectives, conjunctions, determiners, or prepositions.



## Digital Resources for Children



The Sentence Song



Jack Hartmann: Capitalize



## Digital Resources for Parents



Reading Rockets: Letters and Sounds: Practical Ideas for Parents

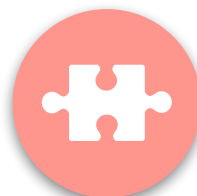


Multisensory Techniques for Teaching Handwriting



Starfall: Writing Paper

# First Grade Language Standards



## Alabama ELA Course of Study Standards

39. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on Grade 1 reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.
40. With guidance and support from adults, demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.



## My Child Can

39. My child can determine the meaning of unknown words by flexibly using specific strategies.
40. With my help, my child can demonstrate an understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.



## Families Can

Help your child understand the meaning of unknown words and phrases by asking him/her clarifying questions:

- What strategies have you used to help you figure out what this word means?
- Have you read the sentences around the word to help you determine what the word means?
- There are two words you know in this word. Can you use them to help you understand what the word means?

### Word Bubble

Create a word bubble by drawing a large circle in the middle of a piece of paper. Write a word inside the bubble that has several synonyms (words that have similar meanings such as “run/jog” or “look/gaze”). Have your child think of as many possible words that are similar in meaning to the word written on the inside of the bubble. Write those words around the outside of the bubble. Add new words to your bubble as you read future stories and acquire more words! (e.g., big = large, gigantic, enormous, massive, huge).



## Digital Resources for Children



ABCYA:  
Alphabetical  
Order



Peg and Cat:  
Sort, Sort, Sort



The Bazillions:  
Prefix or Suffix?



## Digital Resources for Parents



7 Ways to Boost  
Your Child's  
Vocabulary



FCRR: Words  
in Context



Reading Rockets:  
Building Your  
Child's  
Vocabulary



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