



A Parent's Guide to: **Fifth Grade Reading Standards**

Parents and schools
working together for
student achievement.

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There has been a lot of discussion about “academic standards” and student achievement over the past few years. Standards set the target or the end result of teaching and learning for students at each grade level in reading, math, and other subject areas.

The following guide presents the “performance descriptors” or expectations for reading at the grade level and provides an explanation or example of the skills. Most importantly, this guide has some fun activities for you and your child to do at home. This guide is a start. If you want additional information about how your child is doing and what your child is learning at school, talk to your child’s teacher. For other learning at home ideas, visit the South Dakota Parent Resource Network online at www.sdprn.org, or call toll free at 1-800-219-6247.

Proficiency Statement: Students will apply decoding and comprehension strategies to acquire vocabulary and construct meaning from grade level narrative, expository, and functional text.

This means that by the end of the fifth grade children—

- Read grade level material smoothly and with expression.
- Are able to figure out the meaning of new or difficult words by breaking words into syllables (to-day) and parts, finding root words (child is root of children), and using prefixes or suffixes. (A prefix is added to the beginning of a root word such as ‘re’ in the word rename. A suffix is added to the end of a root word such as the ‘y’ in the work sleepy.)
- Are able to recognize and organize words into groups such as synonyms (words with similar meanings), antonyms (words that have opposite meanings), or compound words (two words combined into one) etc.
- Understand what they are reading through discussion and asking questions, creating a mental picture of what is read, as well as using what is previously known to predict what might happen. Demonstrate understanding by recording or listing key ideas and important events of a story. Can recognize and explain the use of figurative language as a way of giving meaning such as:
 - a simile – comparing two unlike objects,
 - alliteration – repeating beginning sounds of words in a sentence,
 - personification – animal or things acting like humans, and
 - imagery – painting a picture with words.

- Are able to analyze (think about) what is read to determine important ideas in both fiction and informational books. Are able to record and organize the main ideas of the plot, using settings, characters, and messages of fictional books.
- Are able to determine the possible content of a story's plots, settings, messages, and characters by studying the table of contents, chapter headings, title page, and illustrations.

Proficiency Statement: Students are able to recognize the importance of literary elements, literary devices, and text organizational structures as they construct meaning across genres.

This means that by the end of the fifth grade children—

- Are able to gain a deeper understanding of the story by recognizing and analyzing the various techniques authors use to communicate meaning to the reader. Some of these techniques include the use of cause and effect, comparing and contrasting, descriptions of characters and places, the order of events, and the problems and how they are solved or not solved.
- Are able to describe how the characters, setting, plot, theme, and figurative language (words that communicate more meaning than just the ordinary meanings) affect a story.
- Know that the author's background, age, and the historical time period of the story may affect the message in the story. For example, if your child is reading information about the Civil War – if the author was alive during the War and living in the Massachusetts – their feelings and writing about the war will be different than someone who lived in the south or one who is writing about the war today.

Proficiency Statement: Students are able to locate and determine the importance of information, and use it in study and research.

This means that by the end of fifth grade children—

- Are able to gather important information from various sources and mark the information by highlighting or note taking for the purpose of research and/or writing projects.
- Are able to use parts of books to locate information such as the table of contents, the glossary, index, diagrams, illustrations, charts, maps, tables, and/or graphs.
- Are able to compare information about one topic from different sources.

Ideas for learning at home

- Encourage your child to make reading a part of each day. Read chapter books together. Take turns reading aloud. Read the same book your child is reading at school. Let your child see you reading various books, magazines, newspapers, information books, etc. Let your child know that you value reading. how the book or story makes him/her feel. Have your child tell what the message of a story is.
- Have informational books available and play games that direct them to the parts of a book to find the answers to questions.
- When watching family videos identify and discuss various techniques the writers use to make the story interesting or affect the viewers in certain ways. What writing techniques can be found in the visual story such as cause and effect, comparing and contrasting,

order of events, or problems and how they are solved or not solved? Discuss how the settings and the characters affect the story.

- Have a family book club. Choose a book and have everyone read it. You can have great discussions about the characters and the plot. Take turns choosing a book.
- Have a wide variety of reading materials available, everything from *Sports Illustrated for Kids* to poems or song lyrics, or article and books about people they are interested in.

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