



## A Parent's Guide to: **First 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](http://www.sdprn.org), or call toll free at 1-800-219-6247.

**Proficiency Statement: Students are able to read grade level text using knowledge of letters and sounds.**

**This means that by the end of the first grade children—**

- Say letter sounds slowly to read new words from beginning to end.
- Understand and use long and short vowel sounds. (a long vowel says its name – the ‘i’ in like; the short vowel would be the ‘i’ in lick).
- Identify ‘parts’ within words and use the parts to read a new words such as ‘to-day’ or ‘yes-ter-day’.

**Proficiency Statement: Students are able to read with accuracy, fluency, and comprehension.**

**This means that by the end of the first grade children—**

- Recognize words that are used often (they, but, and...) and can correct their mistakes while reading. They are beginning to read with feeling. For example, using different voice tones (higher/lower), volumes (loud/soft), and different speeds (faster/ slower).
- Understand what is happening or what could happen in a story based on asking questions, picturing the story in their mind, and relating the story with what they know about their own experiences.

**Proficiency Statement: Students are able to examine and identify major structures and elements in text.**

**This means that by the end of the first grade children—**

- Can identify cause/effect or the problem/solution in the story or the book. (For example: In the book *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*, every time the boy gives the mouse what he wants it creates a new problem.)
- Can identify the main problem or idea in a story and can retell stories with a beginning, middle, and end using the character and events.

**Proficiency Statement: Students are able to identify patterns of rhyming words and phrases.**

**This means that by the end of the first grade children—**

- Are able to recognize a pattern. A pattern is when some of the words or phrases in a sentence are used over and over. Some book examples that use a pattern include: *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*, or *Green Eggs and Ham*.
- Can say words that “sound alike” such as (can, pan, man...)

**Proficiency Statement: Students are able to explain what authors and illustrators do.**

**This means that by the end of the first grade children—**

- Understand that illustrators draw and create the pictures of a story and authors create and write the plot, setting, and the characters in a story.

**Proficiency Statement: Students are able to identify similarities and differences in stories written by the same author.**

**This means that by the end of the first grade children—**

- Recognize that stories written by the same person might be alike and different. (Example: Books by the same author may have the same rhyming style or use the same characters but have different plots such as Winnie the Pooh books or Bernstein Bear books.)

**Proficiency Statement: Students are able to use the basic structural elements of informational text.**

**This means that by the end of the first grade children—**

- Know how a book is put together – there is a table of contents, an index (the alphabetized list of subjects in the book) and a glossary (the listing of words at the end of the book).
- Know that different parts of a book help the reader to understand what the book is about. (For example, maps and photos give the reader visual information or a different print type such as **bold** or *italic* may be used to identify important words.)

**Proficiency Statement: Students can alphabetize to the first letter.**

**This means that by the end of the first grade children—**

- Can correctly place words in alphabetical order using the first letter of the word. (can comes before fruit)

## Proficiency Statement: Students are able to explain the difference between fantasy and reality.

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

- Know and can tell you the difference between fantasy (a story that is made up such as *Cinderella* or *Little Red Riding Hood*) and reality (a real event or a story that happened or could happen).

## LEARNING AT HOME

- Read to and with your child every day! Take turns reading. You read a sentence or a page and then have your child read. Stop and talk about what is being read. Ask questions that relate to your child's experiences such as, "What do you think you would do?" "Has something like that ever happened to you?" "What will happen next?" "Can a frog really become a prince?"
- When your child does not know a word make sure you give them a chance to figure it out. Assist your child by talking about what word would make sense in the sentence/story. Point out clues in the illustrations or other sentences. Say the first letter and say all the sounds slowly or find 'parts' of the word he or she may know or 'chunks' of the word such as 'to-day'. Play simple word games such as scrabble or hangman and practice the sounds of letters as you play. Use a simple word like 'hop' and take turns thinking of words that sound like 'hop'. Make words on the refrigerator with letter magnets. Make a string of rhyming words.
- Give your child two or three words and have them place them in the correct order alphabetically. (Horse, fruit, zebra – which word would be first, second...)
- Have your child practice reading sentences with feeling. (Excitement, sadness, worry, fears, etc.). Show how different kinds of print such as **bold** or *italic* or the end punctuation in a sentence (?,.! ) might change how the sentence is read.
- While you are reading, point out examples of patterns of sounds or words. Have your child repeat this pattern at the right place in the story. That can be "her/his" part of the story to read. ("I don't like green eggs and ham! I don't like them Sam I am.")
- While reading point out the names of the author and the illustrator. Talk about what an author and illustrator do. Read books the same author and ask how each book is similar or different from the others. Have your child write and illustrate/their own story. Have your child tell a story with his/her own words as you write and let the child read the story back to you or another family member.
- Point out different parts of a book or different print styles. If your child needs help with a word, show him/her how to use a dictionary or how an encyclopedia can be used to find information. Practice finding interesting information together.
- Read a longer book and continue reading it from one night to the next. Before you begin reading the next night – have your child retell what happened the previous night. Read both fantasy and reality based books.
- Model reading and add books to your child's library when possible.

### South Dakota Resource Network

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