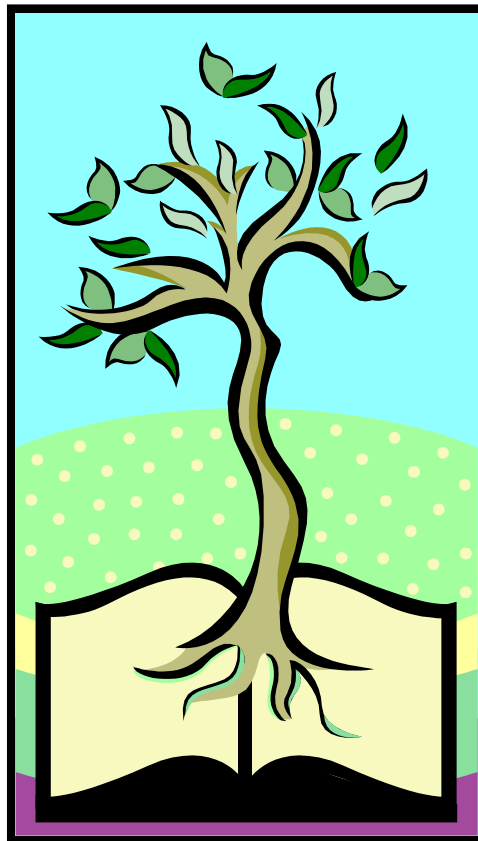


South Lyon Community Schools
Middle School
Parent Curriculum Guide
For English Language Arts
and Mathematics
2011 - 2012



Curriculum
Instruction

CITA

South Lyon Community Schools

Technology
Assessments

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 3

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English Language Arts

READING

Definition of Reading

Reading is the process of constructing meaning through the dynamic interaction among the reader, the text, and the context of the reading situation. (MRA, 1984)



From this perspective, a good reader is no longer defined as one who demonstrates mastery of a series of isolated skills, but rather as one who can apply these skills independently and flexibly in a variety of reading situations. This means that readers need to know how to employ certain skills, when and why to apply their skills, and that they must be willing and able to apply their skills spontaneously. Good readers must be able to apply their knowledge and skills as they construct meaning for different texts under a variety of reading conditions.

Good readers should be able to integrate information within a story to identify a central theme, or to use titles and subtitles within an informational passage (e.g. science, social studies, etc.) to identify the author's central purpose. Good readers also must have knowledge about the purposes for reading, the skills and strategies they can use, and about how different reader, text, and contextual factors can influence their reading. For example, it is important for readers to understand how the structure of stories may differ from the structures of different content area materials. Finally, good readers are those who have developed positive attitudes about reading and positive self-perceptions about themselves as readers. It is also important for readers to develop an interest in reading a variety of materials for a variety of purposes.

WRITING



Pre-Writing

Pre-writing is the stage in which writers generate and discover ideas and consider the purpose and audience for their writing.

Virtually all experiences within the school setting and outside of school may serve as pre-writing activities. Some examples are using journals, reading, researching, discussing, brainstorming, free-writing, listening to music, and so on. These activities may stimulate thinking, generate ideas, extend vocabulary, and deepen concepts.

Drafting

Written composition is the development, organization and recording of the thoughts initiated in the pre-writing stage. Drafting is discovering thoughts, as well as communicating them. Students may write the first draft with little concern for form or mechanics, or they may dictate ideas to a scribe. This stage would include informal sharing with peers or adults.

Revising

Revision is the "re-seeing" of the content of a piece of writing. At its best, revision entails reorganization and development of subject matter, as well as stylistic changes made to suit a writer's purpose and intended audience. Only selected pieces of writing should be subjected to close analysis of content and form, depending upon the particular purpose or audience. Students will revise if they care about the piece they have written. Because of its substantive nature, revision should be seen as distinct from proofreading.

Proofreading

Proofreading is the stage of the writing process in which the writer attends to correctness in punctuation, spelling, word choice, usage, and so on. Correctness is not only a courtesy the writer owes the reader, but also the lack of correctness may affect communication.

Publishing

Only selected pieces of writing will be taken to the final stage of publishing in the classroom. Some publishing is beneficial for young writers, although, only limited time, effort, and value should be given to it in contrast to time, effort, and value given to pre-writing, drafting, and sharing. Perfection should not be expected in published writing, particularly in the writing of beginning and developing writers.

A copy of the 6-8 Reading and Writing GLCE's maybe found at the State website <http://www.michigan.gov/glce> or obtained through the office at your students school.

Sixth Grade ELA

READING

Word Study

Students will...

- ❖ **(D2.2)** Use word structure, sentence structure, and prediction to aid in decoding and understanding the meanings of words encountered in context
- ❖ **(C3.2)** Use structural, syntactic, and semantic analysis to recognize unfamiliar words in context (e.g., origins and meanings of foreign words, words with multiple meanings, knowledge of major word chunks/rimes, syllabication)
- ❖ **(C3.2)** Recognize frequently encountered words automatically
- ❖ **(C3.2)** Know the meaning of frequently encountered words in written and oral contexts (research to support specific words)
- ❖ **(C3.2)** Apply strategies to construct meaning and identify unknown words
- ❖ **(D1)** Read fluently sixth grade level texts (increasingly demanding texts read with fluency as the year proceeds)
- ❖ **(D2.1)** Use strategies (e.g., connotation, denotation) and authentic content-related resources to determine the meaning of words and phrases in context (e.g., regional idioms, content area vocabulary, technical terms)

Narrative Text

Students will...

- ❖ **(B4)** Describe how characters in classic and contemporary literature recognized for quality and literary merit form opinions about one another in ways that can be fair and unfair
- ❖ **(A2.1)** Analyze elements and style of narrative genres (e.g., folktales, fantasy, adventure, action)
- ❖ **(A2.1)** Analyze the role of dialogue, plot, characters, themes, major and minor characters, and climax
- ❖ **(B5)** Analyze how authors use dialogue, imagery, and understatement to develop plot

Informational Text

Students will...

- ❖ **(A3.1)** Analyze elements and style of informational genre (e.g., research report, how-to articles, essays)
- ❖ **(A3.1)** Analyze organizational patterns
- ❖ **(A3.2)** Explain how authors use text features to enhance the understanding of central, key, and supporting ideas (e.g., footnotes, bibliographies, introductions, summaries, conclusions, appendices)

Comprehension

Students will...

- ❖ **(D2)** Connect personal knowledge, experience, and understanding of the world to themes and perspectives in the text
- ❖ **(D2.3)** Read, retell and summarize grade level appropriate narrative and informational texts of grade level appropriate informational text
- ❖ **(D3)** State global themes, universal truths, and principles within and across texts to create a deeper understanding
- ❖ **(D2.1)** Apply significant knowledge from what has been read in grade level appropriate science and social studies texts

Metacognition

Students will...

- ❖ **(D5)** Independently self-monitor comprehension when reading or listening to text by automatically using and discussing the strategies used by mature readers to increase comprehension and engage in interpretative discussions (e.g., predicting, constructing mental images representing ideas in text, questioning, rereading or listening again if uncertain about meaning, inferring, summarizing)
- ❖ **(D5)** Plan, monitor, regulate, and evaluate skills, strategies, and processes for their own reading comprehension by applying appropriate metacognitive skills (e.g. SQ3R, pattern guides, process of reading guides)

Critical Standards

Students will...

- ❖ **(D6)** Compare the appropriateness of shared, individual, and expert standards based on purpose, context, and audience in order to assess their own work and work of others

Reading Attitude

Students will...

- ❖ **(D7)** Be enthusiastic about reading and do substantial reading on their own

WRITING

Writing Genres

Students will...

- ❖ **(C1.1)** Write a cohesive narrative piece (e.g., personal narrative, adventure, tall tale, folk tale, fantasy) that includes elements of characterization for major and minor characters, internal and/or external conflict, and address issues of plot, theme, and imagery
- ❖ **(C1.2)** Write an essay (e.g., personal, persuasive, or comparative) for authentic audiences that includes organizational patterns that support key ideas
- ❖ **(D4.1)** Formulate research questions using multiple resources and perspectives that allow them to organize, analyze, and explore problems and pose solutions that culminate in a presented, final project

Writing Process

Students will...

- ❖ **(D3.1)** Set a purpose, consider audience, and replicate authors' styles and patterns when writing narrative or informational text
- ❖ **(D3.1)** Apply a variety of pre-writing strategies for both narrative (e.g., graphic organizers such as story maps or webs designed to develop a plot that includes major and minor characters, builds climax, and uses dialogue to enhance a theme) and informational text (e.g., problem/solution, and sequence)
- ❖ **(D3.3)** Review and revise their drafts with audience and purpose in mind regarding consistent voice and genre characteristics
- ❖ **(D3.3)** Write for a specific purpose by using multiple paragraphs, sentence variety, and voice to meet the needs of an audience (e.g. word choice, level of formality, example)
- ❖ **(D3.4)** Edit their writing using proofreaders' checklists both individually and in peer editing groups

Personal Style

Students will...

- ❖ **(C2.1)** Exhibit individual style to enhance the written message (e.g., in narrative text: personification, humor, element of surprise; in informational text: emotional appeal, strong opinion, credible support)

Grammar and Usage

In the context of their writing, students will...

- ❖ **(A1.2)** Use style conventions (e.g., MLA) and a variety of grammatical structures in their writing including indefinite and predicate pronouns, transitive and intransitive verbs, adjective and adverb phrases, adjective and adverb subordinate clauses, comparative adverbs and adjectives, superlatives, conjunctions, compound sentences, appositives, independent and dependent clauses, introductory phrases, periods, commas, quotation marks, and the uses of underlining and italics for specific purposes

Spelling

Students will...

- ❖ **(A1.3)** Spell frequently misspelled words correctly (e.g., their, there, they're) in the context of their own writing

Handwriting

Students will...

- ❖ **(D3.5)** Write legibly in their compositions

Writing Attitude

Students will...

- ❖ **(D7)** Be enthusiastic about writing

SPEAKING

Conventions

Students will...

- ❖ **(C1.3)** Ask and respond to questions and remarks to engage the audience when presenting texts
- ❖ **(C1.3)** Use rhyme, rhythm, cadence, and word play for effect when presenting
- ❖ **(C1.3)** Present their work in standard American English if it is their first language (students whose second language is English will present their work in their developing version of standard American English)

Discourse

Students will...

- ❖ **(C1.3)** Engage in interactive, extended discourse to socially construct meaning (e.g., book clubs, literature circles, partnerships, or other conversation protocols)
- ❖ **(C1.3)** Discuss multiple text types in order to compare/contrast ideas, form, and style to evaluate quality and to identify personally with a universal theme
- ❖ **(C1.3)** Discuss their written narratives that include a variety of literary and plot devices (e.g., established context plot, point of view, sensory details, dialogue, suspense)
- ❖ **(C1.3)** Plan a focused and coherent oral presentation using an informational text pattern (e.g., problem/solution sequence), select a focus question to address, and organize the message to ensure that it matches the intent and the audience to which it will be delivered

LISTENING

Conventions & VIEWING

Students will...

- ❖ **(C1.4)** Respond to, evaluate, and analyze speeches and presentations delivered by peers
- ❖ **(C1.4)** Demonstrate the appropriate social skills of audience behavior (e.g., eye contact, quiet and still, attentive, supportive) during speeches and presentations

Response

Students will...

- ❖ **(C1.5)** Summarize, take notes on key points, and ask clarifying questions.
- ❖ **(B4)** Respond thoughtfully to both classic and contemporary texts recognized for quality and literary merit
- ❖ **(C1.5)** Identify a speaker's affective communications expressed through tone, mood, and emotional cues
- ❖ **(C1.5)** Relate a speaker's verbal communications (e.g., tone of voice) to the nonverbal message communication (e.g., eye contact, posture, gestures)
- ❖ **(C1.5)** Respond to multiple texts when listened to or viewed by speaking, illustrating, and/or writing in order to compare/contrast similarities and differences in idea, form, and style to evaluate quality and to identify personal and universal themes
- ❖ **(C1.5)** Respond to, evaluate, and analyze the credibility of a speaker who uses persuasion to affirm his/her point of view in a speech or presentation
- ❖ **(C1.5)** Identify persuasive and propaganda techniques used in television, and identify false and misleading information

Seventh Grade ELA

READING

Word Study

Students will...

- ❖ **(D2.2)** Use word structure, sentence structure, and prediction to aid in decoding and understanding the meanings of words encountered in context
- ❖ **(C3.2)** Use structural, syntactic, and semantic analysis to recognize unfamiliar words in context (e.g., origins and meanings of foreign words, words with multiple meanings, knowledge of major word chunks/rimes, syllabication)
- ❖ **(C3.2)** Recognize frequently encountered words automatically
- ❖ **(C3.2)** Know the meaning of frequently encountered words in written and oral contexts (research to support specific words)
- ❖ **(C3.2)** Apply strategies to construct meaning and identify unknown words
- ❖ **(D1)** Read fluently sixth grade level texts (increasingly demanding texts read with fluency as the year proceeds)
- ❖ **(D2.1)** Use strategies (e.g., connotation, denotation) and authentic content-related resources to determine the meaning of words and phrases in context (e.g., regional idioms, content area vocabulary, technical terms)

Narrative Text

Students will...

- ❖ **(B4)** Describe how characters in classic and contemporary literature recognized for quality and literary merit form opinions about one another in ways that can be fair and unfair
- ❖ **(A2.1)** Analyze elements and style of narrative genres (e.g., folktales, fantasy, adventure, action)
- ❖ **(A2.1)** Analyze the role of dialogue, plot, characters, themes, major and minor characters, and climax
- ❖ **(B5)** Analyze how authors use dialogue, imagery, and understatement to develop plot

Informational Text

Students will...

- ❖ **(A3.1)** Analyze elements and style of informational genre (e.g., research report, how-to articles, essays)
- ❖ **(A3.1)** Analyze organizational patterns
- ❖ **(A3.2)** Explain how authors use text features to enhance the understanding of central, key, and supporting ideas (e.g., footnotes, bibliographies, introductions, summaries, conclusions, appendices)

Comprehension

Students will...

- ❖ **(D2)** Connect personal knowledge, experience, and understanding of the world to themes and perspectives in the text
- ❖ **(D2.3)** Read, retell and summarize grade level appropriate narrative and informational texts of grade level appropriate informational text
- ❖ **(D3)** State global themes, universal truths, and principles within and across text to create a deeper understanding
- ❖ **(D2.1)** Apply significant knowledge from what has been read in grade level appropriate science and social studies texts

Metacognition

Students will...

- ❖ **(D5)** Independently self-monitor comprehension when reading or listening to text by automatically using and discussing the strategies used by mature readers to increase comprehension and engage in interpretative discussions (e.g., predicting, constructing mental images representing ideas in text, questioning, rereading or listening again if uncertain about meaning, inferring, summarizing)
- ❖ **(D5)** Plan, monitor, regulate, and evaluate skills, strategies, and processes for their own reading comprehension by applying appropriate metacognitive skills (e.g. SQ3R, pattern guides, process of reading guides)

Critical Standards

Students will...

- ❖ **(D6)** Compare the appropriateness of shared, individual, and expert standards based on purpose, context, and audience in order to assess their own work and work of others

Reading Attitude

Students will...

- ❖ **(D7)** Be enthusiastic about reading and do substantial reading on their own

WRITING

Writing Genres

Students will...

- ❖ **(C1.1)** Write a cohesive narrative piece (e.g., personal narrative, adventure, tall tale, folk tale, fantasy) that includes elements of characterization for major and minor characters, internal and/or external conflict, and address issues of plot, theme, and imagery
- ❖ **(C1.2)** Write an essay (e.g., personal, persuasive, or comparative) for authentic audiences that includes organizational patterns that support key ideas
- ❖ **(D4.1)** Formulate research questions using multiple resources and perspectives that allow them to organize, analyze, and explore problems and pose solutions that culminate in a presented, final project

Writing Process

Students will...

- ❖ **(D3.1)** Set a purpose, consider audience, and replicate authors' styles and patterns when writing narrative or informational text
- ❖ **(D3.1)** Apply a variety of pre-writing strategies for both narrative (e.g., graphic organizers such as story maps or webs designed to develop a plot that includes major and minor characters, builds climax, and uses dialogue to enhance a theme) and informational text (e.g., problem/solution, and sequence)
- ❖ **(D3.3)** Review and revise their drafts with audience and purpose in mind regarding consistent voice and genre characteristics
- ❖ **(D3.3)** Write for a specific purpose by using multiple paragraphs, sentence variety, and voice to meet the needs of an audience (e.g. word choice, level of formality, example)
- ❖ **(D3.4)** Edit their writing using proofreaders' checklists both individually and in peer editing groups

Personal Style

Students will...

- ❖ **(C2.1)** Exhibit individual style to enhance the written message (e.g., in narrative text: personification, humor, element of surprise; in informational text: emotional appeal, strong opinion, credible support)

Grammar and Usage

In the context of their writing, students will...

- ❖ **(A1.2)** Use style conventions (e.g., MLA) and a variety of grammatical structures in their writing including indefinite and predicate pronouns, transitive and intransitive verbs, adjective and adverb phrases, adjective and adverb subordinate clauses, comparative adverbs and adjectives, superlatives, conjunctions, compound sentences, appositives, independent and dependent clauses, introductory phrases, periods, commas, quotation marks, and the uses of underlining and italics for specific purposes

Spelling

Students will...

- ❖ **(A1.3)** Spell frequently misspelled words correctly (e.g., their, there, they're) in the context of their own writing

Handwriting

Students will...

- ❖ **(D3.5)** Write legibly in their compositions

Writing Attitude

Students will...

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SPEAKING

Conventions

Students will...

- ❖ **(C1.3)** Ask and respond to questions and remarks to engage the audience when presenting texts
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- ❖ **(C1.3)** Present their work in standard American English if it is their first language (students whose second language is English will present their work in their developing version of standard American English)

Discourse

Students will...

- ❖ **(C1.3)** Engage in interactive, extended discourse to socially construct meaning (e.g., book clubs, literature circles, partnerships, or other conversation protocols)
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Students will...

- ❖ **(C1.4)** Respond to, evaluate, and analyze speeches and presentations delivered by peers
- ❖ **(C1.4)** Demonstrate the appropriate social skills of audience behavior (e.g., eye contact, quiet and still, attentive, supportive) during speeches and presentations

Response

Students will...

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- ❖ **(B4)** Respond thoughtfully to both classic and contemporary texts recognized for quality and literary merit
- ❖ **(C1.5)** Identify a speaker's affective communications expressed through tone, mood, and emotional cues
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Eighth Grade ELA

READING

Word Study

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LISTENING

Conventions & VIEWING

Students will...

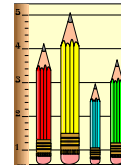
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Students will...

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- ❖ **(C1.5)** Respond to, evaluate, and analyze the credibility of a speaker who uses persuasion to affirm his/her point of view in a speech or presentation
- ❖ **(C1.5)** Identify persuasive and propaganda techniques used in television, and identify false and misleading information

MATHEMATICS



All students will:

- ◆ learn to think and reason mathematically
- ◆ develop operational knowledge and conceptual understanding in mathematics
- ◆ construct new meaning in mathematics by actively building from prior knowledge

Communicate Mathematically

Students will read, write, and discuss mathematics using signs, symbols, and vocabulary. Students demonstrate their mathematical literacy in three areas: computational (includes vocabulary), mathematical reasoning (conceptual understanding), and problem solving. There is a powerful connection between developing a strong mathematical vocabulary and developing meaningful mathematical knowledge. Students use math vocabulary to explain their mathematical reasoning, ask and understand questions, evaluate and verbalize conjectures, and communicate solutions.

Parents can assist students in learning their vocabulary by asking them to verbally explain their algorithmic thinking with the use of their vocabulary. Simple and complex vocabulary can become second nature to a student through frequent use. A functional knowledge and usage of mathematical vocabulary will empower your student to communicate and reason with more confidence. For many students, understanding and using math vocabulary is essential to their development of a deeper understanding of the math concepts.

“I am a word person. Numbers don’t mean anything to me unless there are words behind them - reasons I can verbalize.”

Anne, eighth grader

Mathematical Reasoning

Students learn to gather evidence, make conjectures, and come to logical conclusions using critical thinking skills. When students can connect mathematical ideas, their understanding is deeper and more lasting. Students learn to:

- ❖ recognize and use connections among mathematical ideas
- ❖ understand how mathematical ideas interconnect and build on one another
- ❖ explain their reasoning and look for evidence or proof (justify) that their understandings will apply consistently over time

Students as Mathematical Problem Solvers

Students will have opportunities to solve a wide variety of problems in their mathematics class. Students refine, over the 6-8 experience, their ability to systematically and with confidence attack difficult mathematical problems. Students learn to apply Habits of Mind in the classroom. Persistence and Communicating with Accuracy and Precision are two Habits of Mind that students apply while using problem solving strategies to solve algorithmic problems and investigations.

Our mathematics curriculum involves content and the processes used to master the content at each grade level. In grades 6-8 students are immersed in mathematics in real-world scenarios as they journey through Connected Mathematics Program 2 and the Discovering Algebra program. These challenge students in all three areas of math literacy: computation, math reasoning, and problem solving.

Parents should note that due to Grade Level Content Expectations for 6th and 7th grades the CMP2 book has been adjusted down one level for alignment to the State of Michigan Expectations.

What is Connected Mathematics or CMP2 ?

Students in 6th and 7th grades will be studying mathematics from the Connected Mathematics Project materials. The materials are organized into units. Each unit is focused around problem situations that help students to learn an important set of related mathematical ideas and to become skillful at using these ideas to solve problems. The curriculum is structured to help students communicate their strategies and their reasoning so that their mathematical understandings are deepened. The kinds of problems that the students will work on in class, as well as for homework, may be more challenging and interesting than those they have encountered in the past. Practice with ideas and skills are provided throughout the units in the Applications-Connections-Extensions (ACE) questions assigned for homework.

Sixth Grade Mathematics Units of Study:

- Variables and Patterns (Introducing Algebra)
- Stretching and Shrinking (Similar Figures and Transformations)
- Comparing and Scaling (Ratio, Proportion, and Percent)
- Accentuate the Negative (Integers and Integer Operations)
- Moving Straight Ahead (Linear Relationships)
- Filling and Wrapping (Three-dimensional measurement)
- What Do You Expect? (Probability)
- Data Distributions (Data and Statistics)



Seventh Grade Mathematics Units of Study:

- Comparing and Scaling (Ratio, Proportion, and Percent)
- Moving Straight Ahead (Linear Relationships)
- Thinking with Mathematical Models (Linear and Inverse Variations)
- Say It With Symbols (Expressions and Equations)
- Shapes of Algebra (Parallel and Perpendicular Lines)
- Samples and Populations (Data and Statistics)
- Geometry



A copy of the 6-8 Mathematics GLCE's may be found at the State website <http://www.michigan.gov/glce> or obtained through the office at your student's school.

Algebra in 8th grade

Students develop mathematical literacy as they make connections between algebra and the world around them. Success in algebra is a gateway to many varied career opportunities. With the teacher as a guide, students will learn algebra by doing mathematics. Students make sense of important algebraic concepts (mathematical reasoning), learn essential algebraic skills (computation), and discover how to use algebra (problem solving). Instruction is supported with the use of Discovering Algebra: An Investigative Approach published by Key Curriculum Press; and the use of graphing calculator technology.

During this journey, successful learning will come from student's personal involvement, often when they work with other in small groups. They will talk about algebra, share ideas, and learn from and with the members in their group. This work and communication with others strengthens their understanding of mathematical concepts.

A graphing calculator and data-collection devices are appropriately used in the classroom as tools that help students explore new ideas and investigate and answer questions. Learning to appropriately use technology and being able to interpret its output will prepare students to successfully use new technologies in the future. Parent and student access to *Calculator Notes* are available from www.keymath.com/DA or the classroom teacher.

The State requirements for more rigor in mathematics at the high school level require that all students demonstrate competency in understanding Algebra II concepts, earn four high school math credits, and take math their senior year. The State also has increased rigor in mathematical expectations at the middle school. Students are expected to understand and apply a full year of Algebra I concepts in middle school; therefore, Algebra I is the designated curriculum for grade 8. We know that some students will need extra support in meeting these more rigorous requirements. Therefore, we have created a class called "Algebra Lab."

8th Grade Mathematics Units of Study:

- Data Exploration
- Proportions and Rational Numbers
- Solving Equations
- Linear Functions
- Systems of Equations and Inequalities
- Exponential Functions
- Quadratic Functions and Radicals
- Functions



A copy of the 6-8 Mathematics GLCE's may be found at the State website <http://www.michigan.gov/glce> or obtained through the office at your student's school.

A copy of the High School Content Expectations (HSCE's) may be found at the State website <http://www.michigan.gov/hsce> or obtained through the office at your student's school.

What is Algebra Lab?

Students who qualify for this support will receive assistance to accelerate their learning of mathematics in the regular curriculum. The emphasis is on the pre-teaching of concepts that will be introduced at a later time in the classroom. Pre-teaching provides students with prior knowledge and builds a foundation that increases the student's confidence and success relative to the new information. When these new concepts are introduced in the regular classroom, this prior knowledge and mathematical foundation will assist the student in meeting the expectations to demonstrate proficiency in understanding and applying mathematical skills and concepts. For more information about Algebra Lab, please contact your middle school counselor or building administrator.

Helping your CMP2 or Discovering Algebra student:

You can do a great deal to help your student succeed in mathematics. Here are some strategies that can be used through the year with many of the mathematics units.

- Encourage your child to do their homework on a regular basis. Provide a regular place and time to do homework.
- Have your child show you their mathematics notebook and explain to you what they have been doing in class. *It is very important that students take responsibility to safeguard this notebook; it is an important instructional tool used in their development of mathematical literacy.*
- Help them to be more organized. Look for sections in the notebook that contain class notes, vocabulary, homework, and assessment pieces.
- Have your child explain the words in the vocabulary list or the solution to a problem.
- Encourage your child by explaining that you believe that they can succeed through trying and working hard at the assignments.

What Can All Families Do? Fostering your child's success in school mathematics



Be positive!

If you have a negative attitude about mathematics, chances are your son or daughter will, too. Help your child have a “can do” attitude by praising your child’s efforts as well as their accomplishments. Acknowledge the facts that mathematics can be challenging at times and that persistence and hard work are the keys to success. Relate mathematics learning to other endeavors that require hard work and persistence, such as playing a sport, learning to play an instrument, or learning a new language. Struggling at times in mathematics is normal and is actually necessary and valuable in understanding mathematics.



Link mathematics with daily life

Everyday, people face situations that involve mathematics, such as deciding whether one has enough money to purchase a list of items at the store, building a budget, developing a seating plan for a party or function, or analyzing data and information to determine how many employees to schedule for the following week. Help your child realize that mathematics is a significant part of everyday life. Suggestions for discussing mathematics with your child during everyday activities are listed at the end of this section.

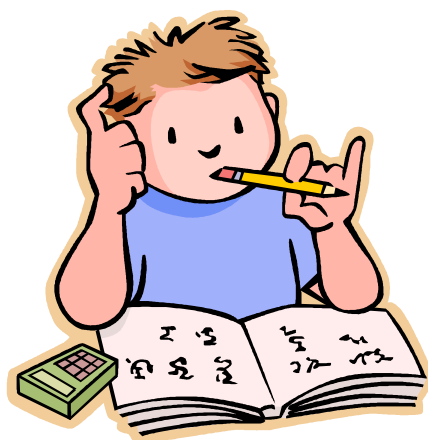


Support homework, don't do it!

Homework is an area that can cause trouble in most households. Relax, and remember whose homework it is. If you take over doing homework for your child, you encourage your son/daughter to easily give up or seek help when working on a challenging problem. If you start to panic when you do not know how to do the mathematics, you may signal negative thoughts about mathematics to your child. Your child is not likely to be resourceful, persistent, or confident if you react in either of these ways.

Think of yourself as more of a guide rather than your child's teacher. Your role is not only to support him/her but also to help them take responsibility for themselves. You can facilitate your child's homework by:

- ✓ Asking good questions that cannot be answered with a yes or no.
- ✓ Listen to your child. *The simple act of having your child explain something out loud can often help them figure out the problem.*
- ✓ Encourage your child. Let them know you understand that sometimes it will be difficult but with persistence they will learn.
- ✓ Have them show all their calculations.
- ✓ Have them explain their thinking or reasoning process on paper to support the solution to a problem. *This recording gives the student something to look back on, either for review or to spot and fix a mistake. It can also furnish the teacher with useful information related to the student's reasoning and understanding.*
- ✓ Assist them in vocabulary development by asking them to explain their reasoning to you using vocabulary words.



"The first teachers are the parents, both by example and conversation."

Lamar Alexander

Questions and comments to support mathematics homework

- ✚ What is the problem you're working on?
- ✚ What do the directions say?
- ✚ What words (vocabulary) can you use to explain the problem or your thinking?
- ✚ Where do you think you should begin?
- ✚ Are there other possibilities?
- ✚ What would happen if.....?
- ✚ What do you already know that can help you work through the problem (schema)?
- ✚ What have you done so far?
- ✚ Have you solved similar problems that would help?
- ✚ Can you draw a diagram or picture of the problem?
- ✚ How can you organize the information? Table? Chart? Graph? Columns?
- ✚ Do you see any patterns or relationships that will help solve this?
- ✚ Can you explain what the teacher asked you to do?
- ✚ Can you tell me where you are stuck?
- ✚ How does this relate to.....?
- ✚ What assumptions are you making?
- ✚ Can you re-state the problem another way?
- ✚ What math strategies have you used in the past?
- ✚ Can you think of a math strategy that you can try here?
- ✚ Is there another possibility or strategy that would work?
- ✚ Could you use any materials e.g., buttons, navy beans, paper strips, spaghetti, blocks, etc to help you work the problem?
- ✚ Can this problem be "acted out"?
- ✚ Do you have any notes or papers in you notebook that can help you?
- ✚ What did you try that did not work?
- ✚ Can you go to another problem and come back to this one later?
- ✚ How do you know your solution is reasonable?
- ✚ Help me understand this part.....
- ✚ How can you convince me your answer makes sense?

Resource

A Family's Guide: Fostering your child's success in school mathematics. Pre-kindergarten to Grade 12, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics