

Working with the "Shifts"

What Parents Can Do to Help their Children Learn

The Common Core State Standards ask teachers to make 12 major “shifts” or (changes) in their classrooms – six shifts in English language arts and six shifts in Mathematics. These changes may be tough at first as students and teachers adjust to higher expectations.

As a parent, you can help and learn more by talking with your child about what they are learning. Ask open-ended questions about what they learned in school each day, read their homework and attend school events to learn about what their teachers expect.

This document explains some of the ways that your child’s classroom is changing and how you can help; for more information, check out www.engageny.org.

THE 12 SHIFTS

English Language Arts/Literacy	Mathematics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read as much non-fiction as fiction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build skills across grade levels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about the world by reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn more about less
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read more challenging material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use math facts easily
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about reading using "<i>evidence</i>" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think fast AND solve problems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write about texts using "<i>evidence</i>" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Really know it, really do it
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know more vocab words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use math in the real world

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY: EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS & IDEAS FOR PARENTS

What's the shift?	What will students have to do?	What can parents do to help?
Read as much fiction as non-fiction	Read more non-fiction	Supply more non-fiction texts
	Understand how non-fiction is written and put together	Read non-fiction books aloud or with your child
	Enjoy and discuss the details of non-fiction	Have fun with non-fiction in front of your child
Learn about the world by reading	Learn more about science and social studies through reading	Supply series of texts on topics that interest your child
	Use "primary source" documents	Find books that explain how things work and why
	Get smarter through the use of texts	Discuss non-fiction texts and their ideas
Read more challenging material	Re-read until they understand	Know what is grade-level appropriate
	Read books both at and above their comfort level	Provide challenging texts as well as books they can read easily
	Handle frustration	Read challenging books with your child
	Keep pushing to improve	Show that challenging books are worth reading
Talk about reading using evidence	Find evidence to support their arguments	Talk about texts
	Form judgments and opinions	Demand evidence in everyday discussions and disagreements
	Discuss what the author is thinking	Read aloud or read the same book as your child and discuss
	Make predictions about what will happen next	Discuss predictions
Write about text using evidence	Make arguments in writing using evidence	Encourage writing at home
	Compare multiple texts in writing	Write "books" together using evidence and detail
	Learn to write well	Review samples of exemplar student writing
Know more vocab words	Learn the words they will need to use in college and career	Read often and constantly with young children
	Get smarter at using the "language of power"	Read multiple books on the same topic
		Talk to your children, read to them, listen to them, sing with them, make up silly rhymes and word games

MATHEMATICS: EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS & IDEAS FOR PARENTS

What's the shift?	What will students have to do?	What can parents do to help?
Build skills across grade levels	Keep building on learning year after year	Be aware of what your child struggled with last year and how that will effect ongoing learning
		Advocate for your child
		Ensure that support is given for “gap” skills, such as negative numbers, fractions, etc.
Learn more about less	Spend more time on fewer concepts	Know what the priority work is for your child at their grade level
Use math facts easily	Go more in-depth on each concept	Spend time with your child on priority work
		Ask your child’s teacher for reports on your child’s progress on priority work
Think fast AND solve problems	Spend time practicing by doing lots of problems on the same idea	Push children to know, understand and memorize basic math facts
		Know all of the fluencies your child should have
		Prioritize learning the fluencies your child finds most difficult
Really know it, really do it	Make the math work, and understand why it does	Ask questions and review homework to see whether your child understands <i>why</i> as well as <i>what</i> the answer is.
	Talk about why the math works	Advocate for the time your child needs to learn key math skills
	Prove that they know why and how the math works	Provide time for your child to work on math skills at home
Use math in the real world	Apply math in real world situations	Ask your child to do the math that comes up in daily life
	Know which math skills to use for which situation	