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PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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PARENT CURRICULUM GUIDE

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"We know that every single parent cares deeply about their child's academic achievement. That's why we are working more closely with families, because we know their involvement is critical to the success of our children, and our schools."

- Chancellor Kaya Henderson

How to Use the Parent Curriculum Guide:

This guide gives you the tools you need to support your child at home. In this booklet, you'll find strategies based on the DCPS curriculum to help your child meet his or her learning goals. You'll have a better understanding of what your child is learning in school and how you can further learning at home.

In addition, this guide provides specific strategies to implement at home for our Cornerstone assignments. Cornerstone assignments are high-quality, in-depth activities offered across the district that all DC Public Schools students will participate in during each unit of study. We have provided you with four sample Cornerstone assignments that your child may experience along with tips and suggestions on ways to support them at home.

For more information on Cornerstones visit bit.ly/DCPSCornerstonesVid.

What You Can Do:

You play a very important role in your child's academic performance. Here are some things you can do to support learning at home:

- Let your child know that education is the foundation for success.
- Know what your child is expected to learn in Kindergarten.
- Help your child set high short-term and long-term academic goals.
- Provide a designated time and location to complete homework.
- Talk to your child about what is happening in school and constantly monitor progress.
- Advocate for your child.
- Share your child's strengths with your child's teacher.

Questions to Ask Your Child's Teacher:

When speaking with your child's teacher about academic progress, here are a few questions you may want to consider asking:

- What are the learning goals? Can you show me examples of student work that meets the learning goals?
- May I see an example of my child's work? How does it or doesn't it meet these learning goals?
- Is my child at or above grade level, what extra support is available? What can I do at home?
- What classroom routines do you have that should also be used at home?
- What kinds of questions could I ask my child on a daily basis about your class?

Talking to Your Child:

Good conversations help our children see that we are interested in their lives. Here are a few conversation starters you may want to consider asking:

- Tell me about the best part of your day.
- What was the hardest thing you had to do today?
- Can you show me something you learned today?
- What's the biggest difference between this year and last year?
- What rules are different at school than our rules at home? Do you think they're fair?

What My Kindergartener is Learning

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS	ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	MATH	SCIENCE & SOCIAL STUDIES	
AUGUST–OCTOBER	Students will learn about the different components of a book while reading about friendships.	Students will learn about number language and will be able to count, add, and subtract up to 5.	Students will learn about the effects strength and weight have on the motion of an object.	Students will learn to make friends.
OCTOBER–DECEMBER	Students will learn to make connections between texts and illustrations while reading about careers in the community.	Students will learn to count up to 10, add, and subtract within 1-5, and use drawings and hand techniques to do math.	Students will understand what humans and animals need to survive.	Students will learn about working together.
DECEMBER–FEBRUARY	Students will learn about story elements and patterns by studying one or more authors.	Students will learn comparison symbols(<, >, =), counting strategies, and sorting strategies.	Students will learn about the relationship between plants, animals, and the environment.	Students will learn about calendars, holidays, timelines, and American Symbols.
FEBRUARY–APRIL	Students will learn about time and the life cycle of plants and animals.	Students will learn to count up to 100 by 10s, solve basic word problems, draw equations, and count with objects.	Students will learn about temperature change and how these differences affect the environment.	
APRIL–JUNE	Students will learn to identify key story details while reading about the daily lives of people in around the world.	Students will learn to identify various shapes and understand placement orientation (e.g. above, beside, behind, and in front).	Students will learn basic words that describe geographic orientation (for example, left, right, close, far) and directions.	

English Language Arts Cornerstone

In this Cornerstone students learn about community workers including police officers, fire fighters, and teachers. The Cornerstone provides an opportunity for students to research different careers in the community and identify what they do and how they help the community. Students use their research to create an oral report about a community worker of their choice.

How You Can Help Your Child:

- Read *Garbage Collectors* by Tami Deedrick. As you read with your child, move your finger under the words to help your child learn that words go from left to right.
- Use alphabet refrigerator magnets to spell simple words from *Garbage Collectors* with your child.
- Give your child opportunities to speak in front of an audience. Have your child tell an audience of a few people about something where they are an expert such as their favorite sport, book, or cartoon.

Year Long Learning Tips:

- Encourage your child to share his or her thoughts and ideas with you. Ask questions that require more than yes or no answers. For example, "How did you help somebody today?" or "If you could switch seats with anyone in the class, who would you trade with? Why?"
- Regularly visit the library with your child and allow them to check out books that interest them.

English Language Arts Cornerstone

In this Cornerstone students research what it means to be a good friend and citizen. Using the skills they learn in this unit, students design a poster promoting ways to be a good friend or citizen.

How You Can Help Your Child:

- Ask your child to explain the difference between pictures and posters. (They might say: A poster is different than a picture because a poster is a larger picture with words to help teach something.)
- Find a poster around the house or in the neighborhood. Pick a letter from the poster. Talk about the sound that letter makes, and see how many things you can find around the house that begin with that letter's sound.
- Read an ABC picture book and practice the sound each letter makes.

Health and PE Cornerstone

In this Cornerstone, students learn how to sort foods by food group or by where they come from. Through a partnership with the USDA Food and Nutrition Service, students will have an opportunity to sample a wide variety of fruits and vegetables.

How You Can Help Your Child:

- Work with your child to create a list of fruits and vegetables discussed in class.
- Take your list to the grocery store and encourage your child to identify what food groups the items you're purchasing belong.
- Encourage your child to count the number of fruits and vegetables you place in your cart. Ask, "How many more fruits did we buy than vegetables?" or "How many more vegetables did we buy than fruits?"

Art Cornerstone

In this Cornerstone, students study the role of contrast (difference) in the arts following a unit on community and individualism. Students examine the role that difference plays in society, creating diverse and democratic groups. Students create artistic works that demonstrate how they might see the world from contrasting perspectives.

How You Can Help Your Child:

- When it is time for your child to put away their toys, ask them to sort the toys by shape, color or any other attribute you choose.
- Go outside with your child and allow them to select an object to draw. Help them identify small details to include in the drawing. Consider moving and have your child draw the same objects from a different perspective. Ask your child to explain how the picture will be different this time.

Year Long Learning Tips:

- Try having your child teach you what they are learning in school. The teacher always learns more than the student.
- Students who have strong oral language will have greater academic success. Build oral language by putting aside time every day to have real conversations with your child. Ask your child questions and help them to respond in complete sentences. You can also play games such as 'I Spy' while on the go or while preparing dinner: "I spy something that starts with B" or "I spy something that rhymes with star." These early literacy skill builders can fit into even the busiest of schedules.
- Encourage your child to use words to let others know how he or she is feeling. A few suggested feeling words are: excited, proud, happy, afraid, surprised, confused, bored and tired.

Activities to Practice with My Kindergartener

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Read together everyday for 20 minutes.

AUGUST–OCTOBER	Make a list and draw pictures of fun activities you can do with new friends. Post the list in your home and circle activities as you do them.	Think about your daily routines. How many times do you brush your teeth each day or eat a snack? How many daily activities can you count?	At the grocery store, discuss how your cart gets heavier and more difficult to push when you add more items.	Keep a reading journal to record how much time you spend reading each day! List titles and your favorite characters from each story. Include character traits that you admire.	Discuss what your student's new classmates are like. Have they made any new friends? How will they be a good friend to their classmates?
OCTOBER - DECEMBER	Find ten objects (such as favorite toys) and practice counting them! Sort by size, color, or any other features. How many brown stuffed animals are in your home?	Pick up trash in your neighborhood and set up recycling stations in your house for plastic, paper, and glass. Discuss how the choices we make impact our planet.	Do simple tasks together at home, like emptying the dishwasher or taking out the trash, and discuss how it is similar to clean up time in class. Discuss how it's better to work together.	Look at of the hard workers in your community! What kind of jobs are they doing? Discuss what might be fun or difficult about the different jobs you observe.	Visit your local library to check- out three new books! Visit bit.ly/findmylibrary to find your local library branch.
DECEMBER - FEBRUARY	Observe different plants and animals in your neighborhood and learn their names together.	Make a list of special dates, like birthdays, holidays, and other important dates. Then, with your child, list them in calendar order.	Write and illustrate a funny story about a trip to the park with your family as the main characters! Be sure to draw amazing pictures of the fun times you have at the park.	Visit the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History's Butterfly Pavilion, free of charge on Tuesdays. Visit www.mnh.si.edu for more information.	While doing laundry, practice sorting clothes by darks and lights, then count the number of articles in each pile. Is that a big or small load of laundry?
FEBRUARY - APRIL	Visit the National Cherry Blossom Festival bit.ly/DCPSCherry.	Keep a journal of the weather for one week and draw daily illustrations that best represents the weather you experienced.	Practice jumping rope in February, Heart Health Month! Track your pulse before and after to see how hard your heart is working. Visit bit.ly/ DCPSPulse to learn more.	Math can be done aloud! Practice coming up with simple word problems together. For example, if you have three apples and then you eat one, how many do you have left?	Butterflies are amazing! Draw a circle and illustrate the stages of a butterfly around the edge. Then find pictures of butterflies in magazines or online to paste onto your creations!
APRIL - JUNE	Write and illustrate a short story about a family in another part of the world. Include details about what they eat, where they live and go to school, and/ or the clothes they wear.	Visit the Kennilworth Park and Aquatic Gardens. Look for frogs on a pond tour, offered every weekend at 10 a.m. Visit nps.gov/keaq for more information.	Practice comparing the shape and size of different things in your home! For example, compare your TV remote to a food delivery menu and discuss the differences.	What are your summer plans? Brainstorm five activities you can do together to keep learning over the summer.	Practice looking at road signs, bus signs, or metro signs. Discuss how they tell us where to go. Use descriptors to indicate left, right, close, far.

English Language Arts · Enrichment Activity · Math · Science · Social Studies