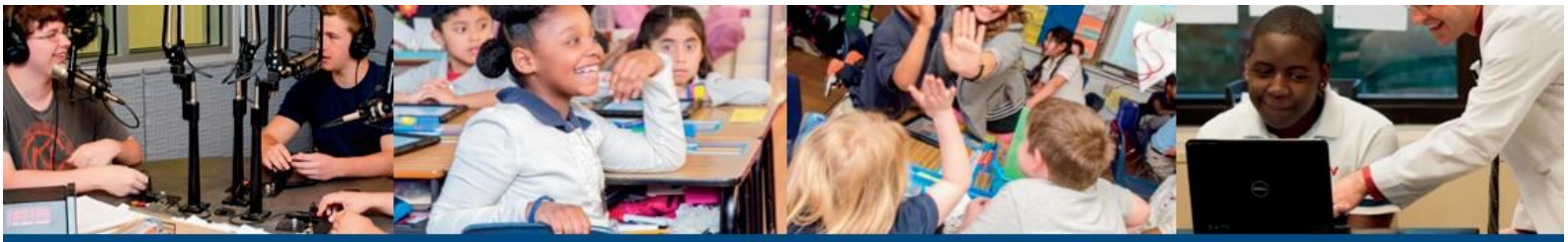

Delaware Parent Guide

Preparing Students for Success in

Grade 6

Your Child's Progress

A parent resource for understanding what your child should have learned this year as well as helpful suggestions for supporting your child's learning at home in preparation for the upcoming school year.

Delaware Department of Education

Dear Families:

In a few weeks you will receive your child's Smarter Assessment score results for this past school year. This Family Score Report provides a great deal of information about your child's scores, including how well your child performed on the test compared to other students and a chart tracking performance across school years. Please take the time to review the report thoroughly so that you understand what type of supports your child needs to progress to the next grade.

The enclosed Family Guide is meant to be used alongside your Family Score Report and offers suggestions for ways to support your child based on his or her Smarter scores. This guide outlines what your child should have learned this year as well as how to prepare for success in the upcoming school year. The information in this guide is based directly on best practices from the national Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and other states and provides guidance to help your child in English language arts/literacy and mathematics.

As you may know, Delaware uses the Smarter Assessment in grades 3 through 8 to help measure student progress toward mastery of the state's academic standards in English language arts/literacy and mathematics. While no single test tells us everything we need to know about how a student is performing in school, these test scores along with in-class work provide you with information on how your child is progressing. We encourage you to meet with your child's teachers to discuss his or her progress, raise any questions you may have, and determine how you can best support the work happening in school.

Preliminary results for Smarter were available to educators through an online reporting system about three weeks after tests were submitted for scoring. Your child's teachers were able to access these Smarter scores to assist with instructional planning. Your child's teachers for the upcoming school year will use Smarter scores to assist with instructional planning as well.

We sincerely appreciate the hard work and support provided at home to ensure that your child is ready to meet the learning goals. We welcome your feedback or suggestions for improving Delaware's Family Score Report and the enclosed Family Guide. Please email us at assessment@doe.k12.de.us or call (302) 857- 3391. Best wishes for a wonderful summer.

Sincerely yours,

Mark A. Holodick, Ed.D.
Secretary of Education

Monica Gant, Ph.D.
Associate Secretary
Academic Support Team

Subjects on the Smarter Assessment

When you receive your child's score report, you will receive an overall score as well as information on how your child is progressing in each area. These areas are aligned to the Delaware standards and tell you, your child, and your child's teachers how well your child is mastering the standards.

Mathematics

The Smarter Assessment for Mathematics is organized by three (3) areas, or claims:

Different Areas of the Mathematics Assessment	
Concepts & Procedures	Applying mathematical concepts and procedures
Problem Solving: Modeling and Data Analysis	Using appropriate tools and strategies to solve real world and mathematical problems
Communicating Reasoning	Demonstrating ability to support mathematical conclusions

English Language Arts (ELA) / Literacy

The Smarter Assessment for ELA and Literacy is organized by four (4) areas, or claims:

Different Areas of the ELA/Literacy Assessment	
Reading	Demonstrating understanding of literary and nonfiction texts
Listening	Demonstrating effective communication skills
Writing	Producing clear and purposeful writing
Research/Inquiry	Investigating, analyzing and presenting information

Mathematics

What your Child Learned in Grade 5

- Adding and subtracting fractions with unlike denominators (bottom number) by converting them to equivalent fractions with the same denominator (Example: $\frac{2}{3} - \frac{1}{2}$ is equivalent to $\frac{4}{6} - \frac{3}{6} = \frac{1}{6}$)
- Multiplying fractions, dividing fractions in simple cases and solving related word problems (Example: Find the area of a rectangle with fractional side lengths; Determine how many 1/3 cups servings are in 2 cups of raisins; Determine the size of a share if 9 people share a 50-pound sack of rice equally or if 3 people share ½ pound of chocolate equally)
- Using models and story contexts to multiply and divide unit fractions by whole numbers and whole numbers by unit fractions; Multiplying fractions by fractions (Example: $2400 \div \frac{1}{4} = 9600$; $\frac{3}{5} \times \frac{3}{4} = \frac{9}{20}$)
- Generalizing system to include decimals; Calculating with decimals to the hundredths place (two places after the decimal) (Example: 0.7 + 1.25 = 1.95)
- Multiplying whole numbers quickly and accurately (Example: 1,638 × 753); Dividing whole numbers in simple cases (Example: Dividing 6,971 by 63) using different strategies and making sense of the answer
- Understanding the concept of volume; Solving word problems that involve volume
- Graphing points in the coordinate plane (two dimensions) to solve problems
- Analyzing mathematical patterns and relationships

What Your Child Will Learn in Grade 6

- Using reasoning of multiplication and division to solve problems about quantities. Understanding ratios and rates, and solving problems involving proportional relationships (Example: If it took 7 hours to mow 4 lawns, how many lawns could be mowed in 35 hours? At what rate were lawns being mowed?)
- Dividing fractions and solving related word problems (Example: How wide is a rectangular strip of land with length $\frac{3}{4}$ mile and area $\frac{1}{2}$ square mile?)
- Using positive and negative numbers together to describe quantities; Understanding the ordering and absolute values of positive and negative numbers.
- Working with variables and expressions by generalizing the way numbers work (Example: When adding numbers the order doesn't matter so $x + y = y + x$; likewise, properties of addition and multiplication can be used to rewrite $24x + 18y$ as $6(4x + 3y)$, or $y + y + y$ as $3y$)
- Understanding the process of solving simple equations with numbers and variables
- Writing equations to solve word problems and describing relationships between quantities (Example: The distance D traveled by a train in time T might be expressed by an equation D = 85T, where D is in miles and T is in hours)
- Reasoning about relationships between shapes to determine area, surface area (outside wrapping area) and volume (how much something holds) to solve real-world and mathematical problems
- Learning about mean (average) and median (middle) to develop an understanding of how data sets can be summarized, what the difference is in these values and what it says about the data

English language Arts/Literacy

What Your Child Learned in Grade 5

- Summarizing the key details of stories, dramas, poems, and nonfiction materials, including their themes or main ideas
- Identifying and judging evidence that supports particular ideas in an author's argument to change a reader's point of view
- Integrating information from several print and digital sources to answer questions and solve problems
- Writing opinions that offer reasoned arguments and provide facts and examples that are logically grouped to support the writer's point of view
- Writing stories, real or imaginary, that unfold naturally; Developing the plot with dialogue, description, and effective pacing of the action
- Coming to classroom discussions prepared; Engaging fully and thoughtfully with others (Example: Contributing accurate, relevant information, elaborating on the remarks of others and synthesizing ideas)
- Reporting on a topic or presenting an opinion in your own words; Using a logical sequence of ideas, sufficient facts and details, and formal English when appropriate
- Expanding, combining, and reducing sentences to improve meaning, interest, and style of writing
- Building knowledge of academic words with an emphasis on those that signal a contrast in ideas or logical relationships, such as *on the other hand*, *similarly*, and *therefore*
- Producing writing on the computer

What Your Child Will Learn in Grade 6

- Analyzing how chapters of a book, scenes of a play, or stanzas of a poem fit into the overall structure of a piece and contribute to the development of ideas or themes
- Gaining knowledge from materials that make extensive use of elaborate diagrams and data to convey information and illustrate concepts
- Evaluating the argument and specific claims in written materials or a speech, and distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not
- Presenting claims and findings orally, sequencing ideas logically, and accentuating main ideas or themes
- Writing arguments that provide clear reasons and relevant evidence, and use credible sources
- Writing brief reports that examine a topic, have a clear focus, and include relevant facts, details, and quotations
- Conducting short research projects to answer a question; Drawing on several sources and sharpening the focus based on research findings
- Reviewing and paraphrasing the key ideas and multiple perspectives of a speaker
- Recognizing variations from standard English in writing and speaking, and using this knowledge to improve language use
- Determining the correct meaning of a word based on the context in which it is used (Example: The rest of the sentence or paragraph)

How You Can Help Your Child At Home

Mathematics

Strategies to improve your child's Grade 6 math understanding:

Concepts & Procedures | **Applying mathematical concepts and procedures**

- Reinforce mathematics by sharing your thinking as you work through real problems, especially if it takes some time and effort to find a solution.
- Share how fractions and decimals are used during cooking, carpentry and financial calculations.
- Discuss common rates in daily life like miles per gallon, gallons per minute, and miles per hour.
- Do an internet search for "free math games" and play a few games with your child.

Problem Solving: Modeling and Data Analysis | **Using appropriate tools and strategies to solve real world and mathematical problems**

- Encourage your child to review notes, draw pictures, and use resources to solve problems independently.
- Encourage your child to stick with a problem that may seem difficult at first. Working on different ways to solve a problem can be helpful. (Example: Determine how many candies each child will get if 36 candies are shared equally among nine children at a party. Determine how many six-inch lengths can be cut from a string 18 inches long.)
- Encourage your child to use what is already known to find answers for new problems.
- Discuss with your child real-world and mathematical problems involving area, surface area, and volume.

Communicating Reasoning | **Demonstrating ability to support mathematical conclusions**

- Ask your child to use clear definitions in discussion with others and in their own reasoning. Encourage your child to state the meaning of the symbols chosen, including using the equal sign consistently and appropriately.
- Encourage your child to justify their conclusions, communicate them to others, and respond to the arguments of others.
- Play math games with your child and ask for explanations of his or her strategies and solutions.

How You Can Help Your Child At Home

English Language Arts (ELA) / Literacy

Strategies to improve your child's Grade 6 ELA/Literacy understanding:

Reading | **Demonstrating understanding of literary and nonfiction texts**

- Ask your child who his or her favorite authors are. Why does your child like their books? What ideas does the author write about? Who are his or her favorite characters? Why?
- Encourage your child to "read like a detective" to find evidence to compare and contrast characters, events, and information.
- Use technology to read fiction and non-fiction books and stories. Many online books for children have interactive features and are available from your local library.

Listening | **Demonstrating effective communication skills**

- Listen with your child to a television reporter, politician, or other speaker. Ask your child to tell you the speaker's main points. Was the speaker trying to convince the audience of something? How?
- Talk about the daily news. Pick one news event to read, and then watch a news clip on the same topic. Compare the facts, details, and points of view of the news story.
- Have family members look for interesting words they heard that day. Have everyone share the word they collected and tell what they think it means. If the child shares an incorrect meaning, guide him or her to the correct meaning. Try to use some of the words in conversation.

Writing | **Producing clear and purposeful writing**

- Urge your child to keep a daily journal. If possible, use the computer.
- Use technology to help build your child's interest in reading. Read books, magazines, newspapers, or blogs online. Have your child write a summary on the computer; share it with an adult, and use the computer to edit.
- Urge your child to use logical arguments to defend an opinion.

Research/Inquiry | **Investigating, analyzing and presenting information**

- Work with your child to research a topic of interest through print text and online resources.
- Encourage your child to learn at the library or on the Internet what life in your community was like 100 years ago. Have your child write a story, poem, or play about that time.
- Have your child help plan a family outing, using the Internet or library to research a place he or she is interested in.

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Additional Resources

Mathematics and ELA

- ***Be a Learning Hero*** – http://bealearninghero.org/
  Provides help with mathematics homework, tips on reading, answers about the new tests, what your child should know grade by grade, and other topics from trusted partners.
- ***Roadmaps to the Standards*** – http://www.cgcs.org/page/328
  Provides parents with detailed information about the expectations of the Common Core in mathematics for K-12. Shows what children will learn and how parents can support learning.
- ***Practice Tests*** – http://www.smarterbalanced.org/assessments/practice-and-training-tests/
  Provides students with a preview of test questions aligned to the academic standards in English language arts/literacy and math for each grade. Similar in format and structure to the actual test.

Mathematics (only)

- ***Khan Academy Math*** – http://www.khanacademy.org/commoncore
  Provides an extensive library of user-friendly content for K-12 mathematics. Students can practice at their own pace and make use of interactive challenges and videos. Requires online access.
- ***Illustrative Mathematics*** – http://Illustrativemathematics.org
  Provides mathematical tasks and solutions as well as how the tasks illustrate content standards. The site also provides videos and vignettes illustrating the Mathematical Practices.

ELA (only)

- ***Adolescent Literacy*** – http://www.adlit.org
  Provides information and resources for struggling adolescent readers and writers.
- ***Newsela*** – https://newsela.com/
  Provides students with daily nonfiction news articles that build comprehension skills while keeping them connected with the latest happenings around the world.