



# A Guide for Parents and Families About What Your 7th Grader Should Be Learning in School This Year

## *It's no longer a secret...*

This guide shares important information about the South Carolina Curriculum Standards. These standards outline state requirements for your child's learning program and what students across the state should be able to do in certain subjects.

A good educational system provides many tools that help children learn. Curriculum standards are useful for making sure:

- teachers know what is to be taught;
- children know what is to be learned; and
- parents and the public can determine how well the concepts are being learned.



The following pages provide information about the South Carolina Curriculum Standards for mathematics, English language arts, science and social studies for **7th Grade**. The information can help you become familiar with what your child is learning at school and may include sample assessment questions, activities to reinforce and support your child's learning, selected book titles for additional reading, and Web site addresses for extended learning. Because sites change, please preview before students begin work. This version does not include every standard taught in **7th Grade**. The complete South Carolina Curriculum Standards for each subject area can be found at [www.sctlc.com](http://www.sctlc.com) or at [www.myschools.com](http://www.myschools.com).

The state-developed test, Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT), is based on the South Carolina Curriculum Standards.

## **South Carolina Curriculum Standards**

Here are seven key reasons parents should be in the **know** about the curriculum standards:

1. Standards set clear, high expectations for student achievement. Standards tell what students need to do in order to progress through school on grade level.
2. Standards guide efforts to measure student achievement. Results of tests (PACT) on grade-level curriculum standards show if students have learned and teachers have taught for mastery.
3. Standards promote educational equity for all. Instruction in every school in the state will be based on the same curriculum standards.
4. Standards help parents determine if children in South Carolina are being taught the same subject content as children across the nation. South Carolina Curriculum Standards have been compared with and matched to national standards as well as standards of other states to make sure that they are challenging.
5. Standards inform parents about the academic expectations for their child. Standards give parents more specific information for helping their child at home. Parents no longer have to guess the type of help their child needs to do better in school.
6. Standards enable parents to participate more actively in parent/teacher conferences. Knowledge of the curriculum standards helps parents understand more about what their child is learning and what they can do at each grade level. Parents are able to have conversations with teachers about student progress in specific areas and understand more completely the progress of their child.
7. Standards help parents see how the current grade level expectations are related to successive years' expectations. Parents are able to see how their child's knowledge is growing from one year to the next.

# MATHEMATICS

Students should be able to:

## Number and Operations

- Explain the reasoning used for creating and writing ratios and proportions for real-world situations.
- Use pictures, diagrams and numbers to develop an algorithm (method) for solving problems with positive and negative integers (numbers).
- Use pictures, diagrams and numbers to examine several methods of solving problems with positive and negative integers (numbers) in order to choose the best method.
- Add, subtract, multiply and divide positive and negative integers (numbers) to solve real-world problems.

## Algebra

- Use graphs, tables and equations to solve practical problems involving tips, discounts, sales tax and simple interest.

## Geometry

- Describe the changes in the volume of a prism (box) when its edge lengths are varied.
- Compare and contrast characteristics of same shape, different size (similar) figures and same shape, same size (congruent) figures.
- State the relationships among the coordinates of the vertices (corners) of four-sided figures in a coordinate plane to examine whether sides are parallel or perpendicular.
- Draw two-dimensional objects from a given geometric description.
- Write a description of geometric properties for a given object.

## Measurement

- Use circumference and area to solve real-world problems.
- Describe the change in the volume of a prism (box, pyramid and cylinder) when the area of the base is changed.
- Determine the unit rate of measurement.

## Data Analysis and Probability

- Describe the relationship between a data set and its corresponding graph.
- Determine the probability (likelihood) that an independent event will occur.

### Sample PACT Question

An auto mechanic earns \$14.75 per hour for a 40-hour week. She pays 16% of her earnings in taxes and 7.7% for Social Security. What is her net (take-home) pay for the week?

**Answer**

\$450.17

## Activities:

Have your child:

- Go on a pretend shopping spree using sale brochures and newspaper advertisements to select as many outfits as possible for a given dollar total. Remember to include sales tax and percent discounts.
- Estimate his or her height. The child should then hold a yardstick at a right angle to the ground while you use a tape measure to measure the length of the yardstick's shadow. Then, near the same spot, measure your child's shadow. Make a proportion to find the actual height of the child. Compare the child's actual height to the estimate made earlier. Choose several other objects in the neighborhood (such as a tree, streetlight, or basketball hoop) and estimate its height by measuring its shadow.
- Choose a half-hour evening entertainment program and record the number of commercials, the total number of minutes of the commercials and the total number of minutes for non-commercial interruptions. Determine what percent of the half-hour program was made up of commercials. Repeat this activity for a Saturday morning program. Discuss with your child the impact of commercials on their daily lives.

## Books:

- Barlow, Bob. *Bob Barlow's Book of Brain Boosters!*
- Blum, Raymond. *Mathamusements.*
- Fitzgerald, Theresa. *The Absolutely Essential Math Dictionary: Every Kid's Guide to Mathematical Terms, Strategies, and Tables.*
- *Geometry To Go.* (Published by Great Source Education Group; 1-800-289-4490).
- Johnson, Art. *Famous Problems and Their Mathematicians.*
- Lasky, Katherine. *The Librarian Who Measured the Earth.*
- Neuschwander, Cindy. *Sir Cumference and the Great Knight of Angleland: A Math Adventure.*
- Suiter, Mary and Sarapage McCorkle. *Money Mathematics: Lessons for Life.*
- Tumanov, Vladimir. *Jayden's Rescue.*

## Web Sites:

- [www.figurethis.org](http://www.figurethis.org) – This site has fun and engaging mathematics activities for middle school students.
- [www.myschools.com](http://www.myschools.com) or [www.sctlc.com](http://www.sctlc.com) – Web sites where parents can view the complete curriculum standards.
- [www.scetv.org/education/index.cfm](http://www.scetv.org/education/index.cfm) - This site has parent and student activities and ideas.
- [www.vrd.org/locator/sites/drmath.shtml](http://www.vrd.org/locator/sites/drmath.shtml) - at this site, Dr. Math answers all math related questions.

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Students should be able to:

## Reading

- Use techniques such as skimming and scanning to read many types of printed materials for different purposes.
- Read and analyze works of fiction, poetry, drama, and informational texts.
- Read all kinds of information critically, including technical and career-related materials.
- Recognize the difference between fact and opinion.
- Understand various viewpoints when reading.
- Summarize, paraphrase, and analyze what he/she has read.
- Analyze main ideas and details in a selection.
- Select materials and read independently for extended periods of time.
- Draw conclusions and make inferences.
- Recognize when statements of fact are not documented and when opinions are not adequately supported.
- Follow multi-step directions such as those for preparing applications and completing forms.
- Identify propaganda techniques and detect bias in what is read.
- Analyze an author's use of characters, flashback and foreshadowing, point of view and tone.
- Compare and contrast conflict in what is read.
- Identify elements of poetry, such as rhyme scheme, refrain, and stanza.
- Compare and contrast information from two or more pieces of written material.
- Use the structure of a sentence and its meaning to read and understand unfamiliar words and words with more than one meaning.
- Make simple and complex analogies.

## Communication

- Identify persuasive techniques used in the media.
- Tell the difference between fact and opinion in what is heard.
- Plan and deliver a variety of oral presentations.
- Edit oral presentations for effectiveness.
- Demonstrate awareness of audience when planning and delivering an oral presentation.
- Make statements to indicate if he/she agrees or disagrees with others.

## Writing

- Plan and organize ideas for writing.
- Choose and use effective vocabulary words.
- Expand sentences for meaning and clarity.
- Revise and edit writing through self-evaluation and discussion with others.
- Continue to use good literature as a model to enhance personal writing style.
- Write for extended periods of time.
- Write multiple-paragraph compositions, friendly letters, and creative and informational pieces.
- Write business letters.
- Write essays, reports, articles, and proposals.
- Use writing to explain, inform, learn, entertain, and describe.
- Use writing to persuade, analyze, and transact business.

## Research

- Apply previously learned research skills and knowledge to identify and organize information from various sources.
- Use note-taking skills.
- Compare information sources for specific research projects and purposes.
- Use technology to locate books, materials and other sources.
- Share research in written and oral presentations.
- Select and evaluate information from various sources for accuracy and bias.

## Sample PACT Question

Read the poem below. Then answer the questions.

### AT ONE TIME

In this city once,  
Long, flowing plains stood.  
Endless blue skies reached  
From clouds to ground.  
A wilderness of cornflowers  
Spread a thick blanket  
Rippling in the wind.

There were no junk food wrappers  
Scattering the earth,  
No gas stations, mini malls,  
No rows and rows of cars.

Deer grazed in bright  
meadows of sunlight.  
Buffalo stomped enormous  
hooves in moist, black dirt.  
Mountain lions jumped  
through hills with cat eyes  
blinking in the darkest of nights.

In this city once,  
the sun and moon  
glowed in the skyline,  
the stars were not dim.  
Here, plants grew  
and animals roamed.  
Here, at one time,  
everything listened.

### 1. What point is the poet making in this poem?

- A. The most important facts about history are often not recorded.
- B. The city's growth involved the loss of something valuable.
- C. Progress involves changes that are usually good.
- D. Imagination helps to recreate the distant past.

Answer: B

## SCIENCE

### Students should be able to:

#### Inquiry and Process Skills

- Make observations of objects and events, distinguishing between qualitative and quantitative observations.
- Arrange data in sequential order and use scientific and dichotomous keys for classification.
- Select and use appropriate tools, units of measurement and technology to collect data.
- Make inferences and predictions based on prior knowledge and observable patterns, and discriminate among observations, inferences and predictions.
- Design and conduct scientific investigations, identifying the independent, dependent and controlled variables, and collecting, recording, organizing, analyzing, communicating and interpreting data.
- Identify and implement the four stages of problem solving: problem identification, solution design, implementation, and evaluation.
- Research contributions people have made to science and technology, and investigate the relationship between science and technology.
- Investigate and describe factors that affect product design, risk versus benefit factors and constraints on technological designs.

#### Life Science

- Classify organisms as single-celled or multi-cellular, and describe the major components and processes within a cell.
- Observe, compare and contrast the structure and functions of different cells, tissues, organs and organ systems.
- Classify living organisms according to similarities in structure using a dichotomous key.
- Investigate the major human body systems, how they work together, common diseases and compare human body systems to other animals.
- Analyze how animals respond to environmental stimuli in order to survive.
- Compare and contrast sexual and asexual reproduction, investigate the genetics and heredity of organisms, including inherited and learned behavior.
- Investigate populations of organisms and the function they serve in an ecosystem (producer, consumer, decomposer, predator and prey) and analyze energy flow in a food chain/food web as an energy pyramid.
- Distinguish between populations and communities, habitats and niches, ecosystem and biome.

#### Earth Science

- Investigate and examine how weathering, erosion, deposition and human impact constantly changes the Earth's surface, including major landform regions in South Carolina.
- Investigate soil properties and human effects on soil.
- Investigate groundwater, surface water, runoff and watersheds.
- Investigate the effects of air pollution on both people and the environment.

- Evaluate the effects of humans on air, water and land, and the benefits of solid waste management (reduce, reuse and recycle).

#### Physical Science

- Investigate chemical reactions and distinguish between physical and chemical properties and changes.
- Identify chemical symbols and formulas of common substances such as H<sub>2</sub>O (water) and CO<sub>2</sub> (carbon dioxide).
- Use balanced equations to describe simple chemical reactions (such as photosynthesis and respiration) showing the conservation of matter.

#### Sample PACT Questions

PACT questions are available at <http://www.myscschools.com/offices/assessment/pact/releaseitems/science.htm>

#### Activities:

Have your child:

- Make a model of one of the human body systems using common household items (such as balloons, wires, or flexible pipes).
- Collect samples of soil from several different environments, analyze the soil for moisture content, pH, organic matter, etc. and compare the biotic life found with each soil sample.
- Research the possible effects on human body systems of air, water or soil pollution.
- Start a recycling project in his/her home or school.
- Identify examples of chemical and physical changes in your home or environment such as rusting, food spoilage and freezing and thawing of water.

#### Books:

- Bial, Raymond. *A Handful of Dirt*.
- Balkwill, F. *DNA is Here to Stay*.
- Carson, Rachel. *Silent Spring*.
- The EarthWorks Group. *50 Simple Things Kids Can Do To Save the Earth*.
- Lerner Books. *The Naked Mole-Rat Mystery: Scientific Sleuths at Work*.
- Simon, Seymour. *The Brain: Our Nervous System*.
- Van Cleave, Janice. *Biology for Every Kid*.
- Winner, Sherie. *Erosion*.

#### Web Sites:

- AAAS Science Netlinks – [www.sciencenetlinks.com](http://www.sciencenetlinks.com)
- Biology4Kids – [www.biology4kids.com](http://www.biology4kids.com)
- Chem4Kids – [www.chem4kids.com/](http://www.chem4kids.com/)
- EPA for Kids – [www.epa.gov/enviroed](http://www.epa.gov/enviroed)
- Learning Network Parent Channel – [www.familyeducation.com](http://www.familyeducation.com)
- Science Made Simple - [www.sciencemadesimple.com](http://www.sciencemadesimple.com)
- SC Department of Education – [www.myscschools.com](http://www.myscschools.com) or [www.sctlc.com](http://www.sctlc.com)
- SC Department of Natural Resources – [www.dnr.state.sc.us](http://www.dnr.state.sc.us)
- South Carolina ETV's Resources for Teachers, Students and Parents – [www.knowitall.org](http://www.knowitall.org)

## SOCIAL STUDIES

### Contemporary Cultures: 1600 to Present

#### Students should be able to:

- Use maps to identify the colonial expansion of European powers through 1770.
- Explain how technological and scientific advances affected various parts of the world and contributed to the power of European nations.
- Compare how European nations exercised political and economic influence differently in the Americas.
- Summarize the characteristics of European colonial power and explain its effects on African nations.
- Summarize the characteristics of European colonial powers in Asia and their effects on Asia.
- Explain the emergence of capitalism.
- Summarize the essential characteristics of the limited government in England following the Glorious Revolution and the unlimited governments in France and Russia.
- Summarize the influential ideas of the Enlightenment.
- Outline the role and purposes of a constitution.
- Summarize the achievements and contributions of the scientific revolution.
- Explain the causes, key ideas, and effects of the French Revolution.
- Compare the development of Latin American independence movements.
- Explain the causes and course of the Industrial Revolution in Europe, Japan, and the United States.
- Explain the impact of the new technology that emerged during the Industrial Revolution.
- Compare the emergence of nationalist movements across Europe in the nineteenth century.
- Summarize the economic origins of European imperialism.
- Use a map to illustrate where European imperialism took place in various regions.
- Explain the causes and effects of the Spanish-American War and how it reflected the United States' interest in imperial expansion.
- Compare differing views of colonization and the reactions of people under colonial rule in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
- Summarize the significant features and explain the causes of Japan's imperial expansion in East Asia.
- Explain the causes and key events of World War I.
- Explain the outcome and effects of World War I.
- Explain the worldwide depression that took place in the 1930s.
- Summarize aspects of the rise of totalitarian governments in Germany, Italy, Japan, and the Soviet Union.
- Explain the causes, key events, and outcomes of World War II.
- Summarize the Holocaust and its impact on European society and Jewish culture.
- Summarize the political and economic transformation of Western and Eastern Europe after World War II.
- Summarize the events of the Cold War.
- Explain the causes and major features of change that occurred in the Middle East in the post-World War II period.
- Compare nationalist and independence move-

- ments in different regions in the post-World War II period.
- Illustrate on a time line the events that contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union and other communist governments in Europe.
- Explain the significance and impact of the information, technological, and communications revolutions.
- Explain global influences on the environment.
- Summarize global efforts to advance human rights.
- Compare the opportunities for women around the world.
- Explain the impact of increasing global economic interdependence in the late twentieth century and the early twenty-first century.
- Summarize the dangers to the natural environment that are posed by population growth, urbanization, and industrialization.

#### Activities:

Have your child:

- Watch and discuss the local and national news. Have a map with you and locate the places mentioned in the nightly news. Make a game of it. Relate news stories about different places to history studied, such as global economic interdependence or human rights issues.
- Use the Internet to find information about women's rights and opportunities in foreign countries.
- Visit museums or memorials related to World War I and/or World War II.
- Interview a family or community member who remembers the events of the Cold War.
- Identify items in the home that are products of the information and communications revolution (Internet, satellite dish, computer, television). Discuss how these products have changed people's lifestyles and the workplace.
- Name actions he/she and friends could take that would contribute to protecting the environment.

#### Books:

- Filipovic, Zlata. *Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Sarajevo*.
- Mead, Alice. *Adem's Cross*.
- Naidoo, Beverly. *Journey to Jo'burg*.
- Richter, Hans Peter. *Friedrich*.
- Siegal, Aranka. *Upon the Head of the Goat*.
- Watkins, Yoko K. *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*.
- Westall, Robert. *Blitzcat*.
- *World Almanac*.
- *World Atlas*.

#### Web Sites:

- CIA's Homepage for Kids - [www.odci.gov/cia/ciakids/](http://www.odci.gov/cia/ciakids/)
- History for Kids - [www.historyforkids.org](http://www.historyforkids.org)
- Library of Congress Country Studies - <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/cshome.html>
- National Geographic - [www.nationalgeographic.com](http://www.nationalgeographic.com)



2. What is the main literary device used by the poet to make her point?

- A. providing a number of similes
- B. including a lot of hyperbole
- C. presenting different points of view
- D. contrasting the present and the past

Answer: D

3. What stanza describes the city as the poet sees it now?

- A. stanza 1
- B. stanza 2
- C. stanza 3
- D. stanza 4

Answer: B

4. Which word best describes the tone of this poem?

- A. sad
- B. guilty
- C. amusing
- D. persuasive

Answer: A

5. Which word best summarizes what the poet is describing?

- A. change
- B. freedom
- C. quiet
- D. space

Answer: A

#### Activities:

- Encourage your child to keep a journal and write for extended periods of time.
- Encourage your child to write letters or send e-mail to family and friends.
- Tell stories to your child about your childhood and life experiences.
- Have your child read a newspaper or magazine article and summarize what he/she read.
- Have your child analyze advertisements on television or in magazines. Determine the persuasive techniques used.

- Reward your child with books or a journal.
- Get your child a library card and regularly go to the library or bookstore.
- When watching television or a video, discuss the conflict in the episode.
- Discuss the point of view of a character.
- Discuss how a problem was solved.
- Read aloud to your child.
- Allow your child to read and write, JUST FOR FUN!

#### Books:

- Bauer, Joan. *Backwater*.
- Curtis, Christopher Paul. *Bud, Not Buddy*.
- Freedman, Russell. *Eleanor Roosevelt: A Life of Discovery*.
- Hiaasen, Carl. *Hoot*.
- Korman, Gordon. *No More Dead Dogs*
- Paulsen, Gary. *Hatchet*.
- Rinaldi, Ann. *Cast Two Shadows: The American Revolution in the South*.
- Sachar, Louis. *Holes*.
- Spinelli, Jerry. *Crash*.
- Thompson, Kate. *Switchers*.

#### Web Sites:

- International Reading Association - [www.reading.org](http://www.reading.org)
- Media Literacy Clearinghouse – <http://medialit.med.sc.edu>
- National Council of Teachers of English – [www.ncte.org](http://www.ncte.org)
- National Parent Teacher Association – [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)
- South Carolina Department of Education – [www.myscschools.com](http://www.myscschools.com)
- Surfing the Net with Kids – [www.surfnetkids.com](http://www.surfnetkids.com)
- United States Department of Education – [www.ed.gov/parents](http://www.ed.gov/parents)

#### SOCIAL STUDIES CONTINUED

- SCETV - [www.knowitall.org](http://www.knowitall.org)
- South Carolina Department of Education - [www.myscschools.com](http://www.myscschools.com)
- South Carolina Teaching, Learning and Connecting - [www.sctlc.com](http://www.sctlc.com)
- United States Holocaust Museum - [www.usholocaustmuseum.com](http://www.usholocaustmuseum.com)

#### South Carolina Education Oversight Committee

PO Box 11867  
Blatt Building, Room 227  
Columbia, SC 29211  
(803) 734-6148

[www.sceoc.org](http://www.sceoc.org)