

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS IN

GRADE 7

Your Child's Progress

A parent resource for understanding what your child should learn and be able to do this year, and helpful suggestions for supporting your child's learning at home.



CONNECTICUT STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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We owe it to our kids to make sure that they receive an education that prepares them to thrive in a global economy and civic life. That's why Connecticut raised the bar and issued a new instructional roadmap that will prepare our kids for college and careers.

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Our new roadmap, the Connecticut Core Standards, sets learning expectations for what students should learn and be able to do at each grade level so that by the time they graduate from high school, they are ready to succeed in college and the workplace. Local teachers and educators still select and develop curriculum documents and lesson plans.

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New ruler for measuring student success

With these new learning expectations, Connecticut needs new ways to measure student progress. The Smarter Balanced assessments have replaced our old state test, the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT), for Grades 3–8 in English language arts and math.

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With the new tests, students will receive new scores. **Results will be different.** In many cases, the scores will look lower on the Smarter Balanced tests than what many are used to seeing on the old state tests. This does not mean that students are learning less. Rather, it reflects that we set the bar higher.

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States that made the transition to college- and career-ready standards saw lower scores the first year, but they also saw improvements year-to-year. For example, in Kentucky the percentage of high school graduates ready for college and careers has increased from 38 percent to 62 percent in just four years.

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This means that, in the beginning, fewer Connecticut students may score at higher levels. But we expect our students will rise to meet the challenge, as they always do.

Real-world skills

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The Connecticut Core Standards focus on critical thinking and problem-solving—the skills students need to be successful in college and careers. The Smarter Balanced assessments are administered on computers and are designed to measure these skills through reading comprehension, writing, and math questions that require students to demonstrate that they truly understand the content—not just fill in a bubble.

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Smarter Balanced will help parents and teachers better understand how the student is progressing, revealing where the student is excelling and where the student needs extra help.



What Your Child Learned in **Grade 6**

Mathematics

- Using reasoning of multiplication and division to solve problems about quantities, including such things as percent, cost per gallon, and comparison of boys to girls in a class.
- Learning how to divide fractions and using negative numbers.
- Adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing multidigit decimals, and dividing multidigit whole numbers quickly and accurately.
- Writing expressions (math statements) with numbers and variables (letters)
- Evaluating expressions (relationship using numbers and letters with no equal sign) by replacing the variables with numbers and using addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division to calculate the value;
- Understanding when two expressions are the same
- Writing equations (relationship using numbers and letters with an equal sign) to model real world problems and solving equations such as $10 + x = 15$ to find the value of x to make the equation true.
- Learning about mean (average) and median (middle) to develop an understanding of how data sets can be summarized and what the difference in these values say about the data.
- Solving real-world and mathematical problems involving area (space inside) and volume (how much something holds).

English Language Arts

- Providing detailed summaries of texts.
- Comparing and contrasting various texts, including poems, stories, and historical novels.
- Describing how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds and how characters respond to the plot development.
- Citing evidence to explain what a story, play, poem, or informational text says, and what clues can be used to make inferences.
- Identifying and evaluating specific claims and arguments in a text.
- Supporting written claims or arguments with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- Producing writing that is appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.
- Conducting short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources.
- Gathering information from print and digital sources and assessing the credibility of each source.
- Participating in class discussions about various texts and topics in which the student is prepared to refer to evidence in a text when discussing ideas, to restate other people's ideas, and to understand other perspectives

Please note: Text is printed materials (books, newspapers, magazines) as well as graphics, drawings, and multimedia such as audio or visual recordings.

What Your Child Will Learn in **Grade 7**

Mathematics

- Applying what is known about rates (such as miles per hour) and ratios (relationship between two numbers) to determine whether two quantities are in a proportional relationship (have equivalent rates or ratios).
- Using proportionality to solve a variety of percent problems, including those involving discounts, interest, taxes, and tips.
- Graphing proportional relationships and understanding the unit rate (amount per 1) informally as a measure of the slope (steepness) of the related line.
- Solving multistep word problems by adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing positive and negative rational numbers in any form (whole numbers, fractions, or decimals).
- Solving real world problems that can be modeled with an inequality such as $x > 8$ or an equation such as $\frac{1}{4}(x + 5) = 21$ by answering the question: “What number does x have to be to make this statement true?”
- Solving real-world and mathematical problems involving the area (space inside) and circumference (distance around) of a circle, the area of two-dimensional objects such as triangles, and the volume (capacity inside) and surface area (total of all outside space) of three-dimensional objects such as boxes.
- Using and evaluating probability for single (picking a 4 from a deck of cards) and compound events (picking a 5 and then a 2 from a deck of cards).

English Language Arts

- Citing several pieces of evidence when analyzing a text.
- Comparing and contrasting a written story, drama or poem to an audio, filmed, or staged version.
- Identifying and evaluating specific claims and arguments in a text.
- Comparing and contrasting various texts, including poems, stories, and historical novels.
- Determining how an author’s word choices affect the meaning and tone of a text.
- Producing writing that is appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.
- Using technology to produce and publish writing that links to sources.
- Conducting short research projects to answer a question, drawing information from several reliable sources.
- Including multimedia and visuals in presentations to help support their findings.
- Participating in class discussions about various texts and topics in which the student is prepared to refer to evidence in a text when discussing ideas, to restate other people’s ideas, and to understand other perspectives.

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How You Can Help Your Child

Mathematics

- Communicate with your child and the teachers about successes and challenges in mathematics class.
- Reinforce mathematics by sharing your thinking as you work through real problems, especially if it takes some time and effort to find a solution.
- Encourage your child to stick with a problem that may seem difficult at first.
- Show how fractions, decimals and percentages are used during cooking, carpentry, discounts and other financial calculations.
- Encourage your child to explain how they solve problems involving negative numbers in everyday contexts, such as amounts owed or temperatures below zero.
- Use dice, cards, or coins to test probabilities.

English Language Arts

- Encourage your child to read a self-selected text for at least 20 minutes each day.
- Talk about the daily news. Pick a news event in a newspaper or posted online to read, and then watch a news clip on the same topic. Compare the facts, details, and points of view of the news story.
- Visit museums or historical sites to increase exposure to new knowledge and vocabulary.
- Urge your child to research a place he or she would like to travel to. Collect and read brochures and informational materials on that location.
- Prompt writing in various forms. Your child can handwrite a card, send an e-mail to friends or relatives, keep a journal, or write a blog.
- Encourage discussion as much as possible. Ask your child for his or her opinion on books, movies, music, or social issues. Prompt your child to express ideas thoughtfully and to back up claims with evidence.
- Listen to audiobooks in the car. Audiobooks can be found at the public library. The drive in the car is a great time to listen to the book or have a brief discussion about a novel.

Resources

Mathematics

Khan Academy

This site 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 from any computer with access to the Internet.

<https://www.khanacademy.org/commoncore>

IXL

Let your child get extra practice from a limited number of free problems organized by grade level and topic. <http://www.ixl.com/math/>

English Language Arts

Let's Raise the Bar

Sponsored by America Achieves, this site offers helpful tools and free resources to learn how your child is doing and useful guidance on ways to help your child work on key skills where they need practice. <http://raisethebarparents.org/>

NEWSELA

This website provides students with high interest nonfiction articles that are updated daily. Each article offers a choice of five different reading levels, making it just right for each child. <https://newsela.com/>



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