

SPECTRUM

Common Core Language Arts and Math

Grade

2

Take the mystery out of the Common Core
while supporting standards-based learning

- Standards overview with parent-friendly explanations
- Tips and activities for helping at home
- Skill-building practice activities
- Critical thinking and problem solving



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SPECTRUM
Common Core
Language Arts and Math

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Introduction to the Common Core State Standards

Grade 2

Why Are Common Core State Standards Important for My Child?

The Common Core State Standards are a set of guidelines that outline what children are expected to learn at school. Most U.S. states have voluntarily adopted the standards. Teachers, principals, and administrators in these states use the standards as a blueprint for classroom lessons, district curriculum, and statewide tests. The standards were developed by a state-led collaboration between the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association (NGA).

The Common Core Standards set high expectations for your child's learning. They are up-to-date with 21st century technology and draw on the best practices of excellent schools around the world. They focus on important skills in reading, language arts, and math. Common Core State Standards aim to ensure that your child will be college and career ready by the end of high school and able to compete in our global world.



What Are the Common Core State Standards for My Second Grade Student?

Common Core State Standards for your second grader are designed to build a solid foundation for reading, literacy, and mathematical understanding. On practice pages in this book, you will find references to specific Common Core Standards that teachers will expect your child to know by the end of the year. Completing activities on these pages will help your child master essential skills for success in second grade.

A Sample of Common Core Language Arts Skills for Grade 2

- Read a fable or folktale and determine the moral of the story.
- Make connections between ideas in a nonfiction article about history, science, or technology.
- Think about the reasons an author gives to back up points.
- Know how to spell words with short vowel and long vowel sounds.
- Write to give opinions, provide information, and tell stories.
- Capitalize names of people, places, and things.
- Use a dictionary to find word meanings and spellings.

A Sample of Common Core Math Skills for Grade 2

- Distinguish between odd and even numbers.
- Use addition and subtraction to solve word problems within 100.
- Skip-count by 5s, 10s, and 100s.
- Mentally add 10 or 100 to a given number.
- Estimate lengths in inches, feet, centimeters, and meters.
- Solve word problems about money amounts.
- Work with picture graphs and bar graphs.

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How to Use This Book

In this book, you will find a complete **Common Core State Standards Overview** for second grade English Language Arts (pages 6–9) and Math (pages 64–67). Read these pages to learn more about the Common Core Standards and what you can expect your child to learn at school this year.

Then, choose **Practice Pages** that best address your child's needs for building skills that meet specific standards. Help your child complete practice pages and check the answers.



At the bottom of each practice page, you will find a **Helping at Home** tip that provides fun and creative ideas for additional practice with the skill at home.

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts*

The following parent-friendly explanations of second grade Common Core English language arts standards are provided to help you understand what your child will learn in school this year. Practice pages listed will help your child master each skill.

Complete Common Core State Standards may be found here: www.corestandards.org.

RL/RI.2 Reading Standards for Literature and Informational Text

Key Ideas and Details

(Standards: RL.2.1, RL.2.2, RL.2.3, RI.2.1, RI.2.2, RI.2.3)

After reading a story or information article, your child will ask and answer who, what, where, when, why, and how questions about details from the text.

• Practice pages: 10, 11, 15, 16, 20, 23–26, 28–30

After reading a story, your child will describe the message or moral of the story. After reading an information article, your child will describe its main topic.

• Practice pages: 12, 21–24

Your child will discuss events that happen in a story and think about how the characters respond. For example, your child will think about the events that lead Jack to sell his cow for magic beans in “Jack and the Beanstalk.”

• Practice page: 13

When reading nonfiction articles, your child will make connections between historical events, scientific ideas, or steps in a process. For example, he or she might describe how each step leads to the next when reading about the water cycle.

• Practice page: 22

Craft and Structure

(Standards: RL.2.4, RL.2.5, RL.2.6, RI.2.4, RI.2.5, RI.2.6)

When reading stories, poems, and song lyrics, your child will point out words and phrases that create repetition, rhythm, and rhyme.

• Practice page: 14

When your child comes to an unknown word, he or she will search the surrounding text for clues to its meaning.

• Practice pages: 23, 24, 59

Your child will think about the basic structure of a story and understand that the action is introduced during a story’s beginning and concludes during a story’s ending.

• Practice page: 15

Your child will learn the habit of using features such as bold type, headings, and menus to locate information.

• Practice pages: 23–26

When reading a story, your child will think about different points of view and use a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud. • Practice pages: 12, 15, 16

When reading, your child will think about the author's purpose. He or she will ask, "What is this author trying to answer, explain, or describe?" • Practice page: 27

Integration of Knowledge and Skills (Standards: **RL.2.7, RL.2.9, RI.2.7, RI.2.8, RI.2.9**)

Your child will look at illustrations, charts, and diagrams and ask, "How does this help me understand what I am reading?" • Practice pages: 19, 25, 26

When reading a nonfiction article, your child will look for reasons and evidence an author uses to back up points. • Practice page: 28

Your child will read two similar stories or two nonfiction articles about the same topic and think about how they are alike and different. • Practice pages: 17, 18, 29, 30

RF.2 Reading Standards: Foundational Skills

Phonics and Word Recognition (Standards: **RF.2.3a, RF.2.3b, RF.2.3c, RF.2.3d, RF.2.3e, RF.2.3f**)

When reading simple words such as cap and cape, your child will tell which have short vowel sounds (as in cap) and which have long vowel sounds (as in cape). He or she will tell which letters spell the vowel sound in each word. • Practice pages: 31, 32, 35

Your child will learn that combinations of vowel letters, or "vowel teams," are often used in words such as boat, wait, coin, and feet to spell long vowel sounds. • Practice pages: 33, 34

Your child will count syllables in longer words he or she is reading and recognize that each syllable contains a vowel sound. • Practice page: 35

Your child will read words with prefixes such as re- (as in redo) and suffixes such as -ing (as in walking) and understand how they change the meanings of words. • Practice page: 36

Your child will learn to spell words that have irregular, unexpected, or confusing spellings. For example, words like would and wood sound alike but have different spellings. In words like bird, the letter r changes the vowel sound. • Practice pages: 37, 38

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts*

W.2 Writing Standards

Text Types and Purposes (Standards: W.2.1, W.2.2, W.2.3)

Your child will state an opinion in writing, giving reasons to support the opinion.

• Practice pages: 39, 40

Your child will write to provide facts and information about a topic. • Practice pages: 41–44

Your child will write stories that describe actions, thoughts, and feelings. Your child's stories should use time-order words such as first, then, and later. • Practice pages: 45–47

Production and Distribution of Writing (Standards: W.2.5, W.2.6)

Your child will revise and edit writing to make sure it is correct, to make it more interesting, and to answer questions from readers. • Practice pages: 48, 49

Your child will write on a computer and print out his or her work to share with others.

• Practice page: 49

Research to Build and Present Knowledge (Standards: W.2.7, W.2.8)

Your child will gather ideas for writing by researching and by thinking about his or her own experiences. • Practice pages: 41–44

L.2 Language Standards

Conventions of Standard English (Standards: L.2.1a, L.2.1b, L.2.1c, L.2.1d, L.2.1e, L.2.1f, L.2.2a, L.2.2b, L.2.2c, L.2.2d, L.2.2e)

Your child will learn to use collective nouns such as team, family, class, and herd to name groups of people, animals, and things. • Practice page: 50

Your child will learn that some words have unexpected or irregular plurals. For example, the plural of hero is heroes (not heros). • Practice page: 51

Your child will learn to use reflexive pronouns that refer back to the subject of a sentence and end with –self or –selves. For example, herself is a reflexive pronoun in this sentence: Maya looked at herself in the mirror. • Practice page: 52

Your child will learn that some verbs have unexpected or irregular past tense forms. For example, the past tense of tell is told (not telled). • Practice pages: 10, 11

Your child will use adjectives such as blue, noisy, and soft to describe nouns. Your child will use adverbs such as loudly and quickly to describe verbs. • Practice pages: 43, 44, 62

Your child will rearrange and rewrite sentences to make them shorter, longer, more detailed, or more precise. • Practice page: 53

Your child will learn that proper nouns, including the names of specific places, holidays, and products, should always be capitalized. • Practice page: 54

Your child will learn to use a comma at the end of greetings (example: Dear Grandma,) and closings (example: Your friend,). • Practice page: 55

Your child will learn to use apostrophes when writing possessives like Matt's and contractions like can't. • Practice page: 56

Your child will learn that certain letter combinations appear in many words. For example, the words baby, lady, and lazy all end with the long e sound spelled y. • Practice page: 57

Your child will learn to use a dictionary to find correct spellings of words. • Practice page: 58

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

(Standards: L.2.4a, L.2.4d, L.2.4e, L.2.5a, L.2.5b)

Your child will work with compound words such as bedtime and realize that if you know the meanings of bed and time, you know the meaning of bedtime. • Practice page: 60

Your child will learn the meanings of new words by using context clues or by looking them up in a dictionary. • Practice pages: 59, 61

Your child will think about word meanings and how they relate to familiar experiences. He or she will distinguish between words that have very similar meanings, such as sip, drink, and gulp. • Practice pages: 62, 63

Understanding Details

Read the story.

The Ants and the Cookie

One day, two ants went exploring. They came across two giant cookies.

"These cookies are huge!" said the first ant.

"One of these cookies would feed my whole family for a month," said the second ant. "But, how can little ants like us carry such big cookies like these?"

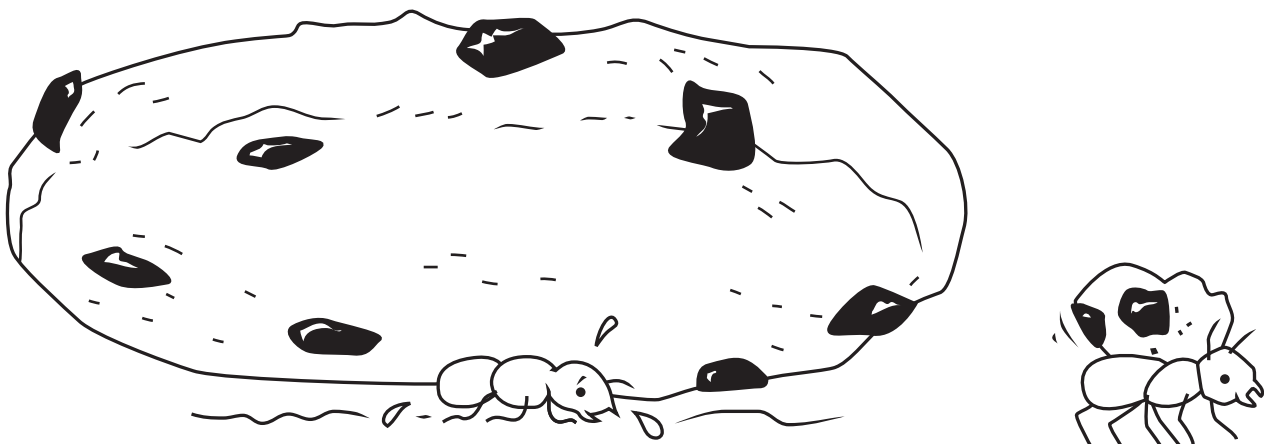
"It seems impossible!" said the first ant. "But, I must try."

So, the first ant started to tug and pull at one cookie. Suddenly, a tiny piece broke off.

"I am going to take this piece back to my family," said the first ant.

"You go ahead," said the second ant. "I'm not going to waste my time on such a small piece of cookie. I will find a way to take the whole cookie back to my family."

So, the first ant went home with her small piece of cookie. Soon, the first ant returned. She found the second ant still pushing and shoving the other cookie, but he was unable to move it. Again, the first ant broke off a small piece of cookie and took it back home. This went on for most of the day. The first ant kept carrying small pieces of cookie back to her family until she had moved the entire cookie. The second ant finally tired of trying to complete a task that seemed too big to do. She went home with nothing.



Understanding Details

Answer the questions.

1. How did the first ant carry the cookie home?
 - A. She dragged it.
 - B. She carried a little bit at a time.
 - C. She ate most of it first.
2. What happened to the second ant?
 - A. She got tired of trying and quit.
 - B. She carried the cookie home.
 - C. She ate the cookie.

Write the past tense of each verb (action word).

3. come _____

4. say _____

5. feed _____

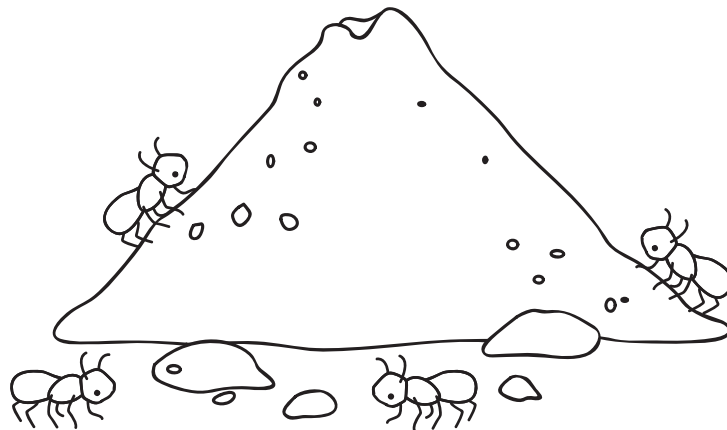
6. take _____

7. go _____

8. break _____

9. keep _____

10. bite _____



When your child tells you a story, put on your reporter's hat and interview your child, asking questions that begin with *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how*. Invite your child to ask questions about your stories, too.

Finding the Central Message

Read the story. Identify the lesson, or moral, of the story. Then, read each description. Decide if it describes the City Mouse, the Country Mouse, or both mice. Write an X in the correct box.

City Mouse, Country Mouse

Once upon a time, a city mouse went to visit her friend in the country. The country mouse had spent the day gathering grain and dried pieces of corn to greet her friend with a nice meal. The city mouse was surprised to find her poor friend living in a cold tree stump and eating such scraps. So, she invited the country mouse to visit her in the city. The country mouse agreed.

The country mouse could not believe her eyes when she arrived! Her friend lived in a warm hole behind the fireplace of a large home. She was even surprised to find all of the fine foods that were left behind after a party the night before. The country mouse wished that she could live in the city as well.

Suddenly, the family's cat ran in and chased the two mice away. He nearly caught the country mouse with his sharp claws. As the friends raced back to the mouse hole, the country mouse said, "I'm sorry, friend, but I would rather live a simple life eating grain and corn than live a fancy life in fear!" The country mouse went back home.

1. What is the moral of the story? _____
- _____
- _____

Description	City Mouse	Country Mouse
She feasted daily on fine foods.		
She would rather have a simple, safe life.		
She gathered grain and corn.		
She lived in a large house.		
She was surprised by all of the fine foods.		
She lived in a warm place.		



When your child watches an episode of a favorite TV show, ask him or her to state the main message of the show. Prompt your child by asking him or her to think about what the main character learned during the course of the story.

Thinking About Character Responses

Characters respond to major **events** and challenges in a story. They show action and emotion when they respond to events.

Read the story. Answer each question with a complete sentence.

No Broken Friendship

Matthew and Brandon have been best friends since kindergarten. One day, when Brandon was playing at Matthew's house, Brandon jumped from the swing set and landed in a strange way. "My arm!" he shouted. One look at Brandon's arm told Matthew that it was broken.

Brandon's parents took him to the hospital where the doctor took an X-ray of his arm. The doctor put a blue cast on his arm and told Brandon that his bones would grow back in place. He also reminded Brandon not to take any risks, such as playing too roughly, during the next eight weeks.

The next day, Brandon took his X-ray to school and told the class his story. They had many questions, and Brandon answered them as best as he could. Matthew asked, "Do you want to play tic-tac-toe instead of wall ball at recess today?"

"Great idea!" Brandon answered.

1. How did Brandon respond to his mishap? _____

2. How did the doctor respond? _____

3. How did Matthew respond? _____



Choose a story your child knows well, such as "Sleeping Beauty" or "Star Wars." Think of a new plot twist for the story, such as a big storm or someone getting lost. How might each of the characters respond to the event? Why?

Rhythmic Words

This poem has the rhythm of a swing going back and forth. Read the poem aloud to someone. Try to read it with the rhythm of a swing.

The Swing

How do you like to go up in a swing,
Up in the air so blue?
Oh, I do think it is the pleasantest thing
Ever a child could do!

Up in the air and over the wall,
Till I can see so wide,
Rivers and trees and cattle and all
Over the countryside—

Till I look down on the garden green,
Down on the roof so brown—
Up in the air I go flying again,
Up in the air and down!

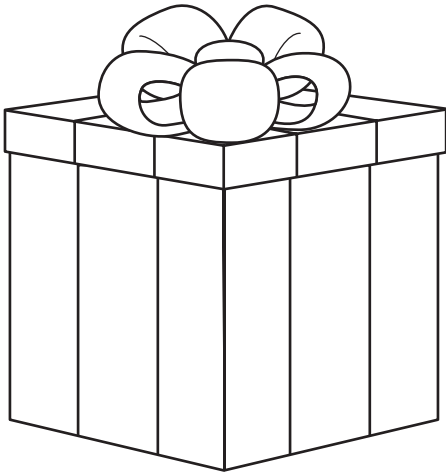
Robert Louis Stevenson



Look carefully at the words in the poem. Ask your child to circle rhyming words and underline words that repeat. Notice together that the poem's lines alternate between long and short. Read other poems together, observing similar patterns.

Story Events

Read the story. Answer each question with a complete sentence.



The Gift

“Happy Mother’s Day,” Nathan said. Nathan gave his mom a large box with a pretty bow.

“What is it?” his mother asked.

“You have to guess,” Nathan said. “I’ll give you a hint. It’s soft and blue.”

“Can I wear it?” his mother asked.

“Yes,” Nathan said.

“I think I know,” his mother said. She opened the box. “Thank you! It is just what I wanted,” she said.

Nathan’s mom took the gift out of the box. She put it on over her head. She put her arms in the sleeves. It fit just right. Nathan’s mother gave him a big hug.

1. How does the story begin? _____

2. How does the story end? _____

3. Who said, “It is just what I wanted”? _____

4. Who said, “I’ll give you a hint”? _____



Ask your child to tell you one thing that happened in the middle of the story. Ask other questions about the story, too. Ask, “Who are the characters in this story? On what day does the story take place?”

Reading Dialogue

A **skit** is a short play. It is a dialogue between characters.

Read the skit aloud with a partner. Read the words in quotes. Perform the words in italics.

Snow Fun

Joshua: "I think I see snowflakes!"

Manuel: (*surprised*) "Really? Let me take a look."
(*Manuel walks to the window.*)

Joshua: "Do you see them? They are really falling now!"

Manuel: "You are right. The snow makes me want to play outside!"

Joshua: (*smiles*) "I think we should get dressed and build something."

Manuel: "What should we build? A snowman?"

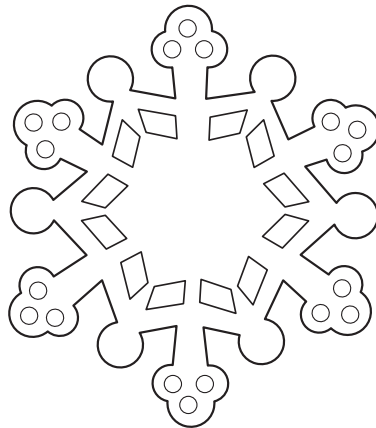
Joshua: "I know something better that we can build!"

Manuel: "What is it?"

Joshua: (*excited*) "Let's build a snow fort!"

Answer the questions.

1. Who prefers to build a snowman? _____
2. Who prefers to build a snow fort? _____



When you read aloud with your child, assign each character's dialogue to a different reader. Invent a unique voice to use for each character. At times, stop reading and ask your child what his or her character might think about what is happening.

Comparing Stories

People from many cultures write stories in different languages but with similar themes. Read the stories from two different cultures. Then, answer the questions.

Cinderella

Once upon a time, there was a girl named Cinderella who lived with her mean stepmother and two evil stepsisters. The three women made Cinderella do all of the chores, and she was not allowed to leave the house.

A royal ball was planned, and all of the women in the town were invited to meet the prince. Cinderella's stepmother locked her in a room so that she could not go to the ball. Cinderella's animal friends found the key and unlocked the door. But, Cinderella did not have a dress to wear. She ran outside and cried.

A fairy godmother appeared. She magically gave Cinderella a dress and glass slippers. Cinderella looked beautiful! She rode to the ball in a carriage but could only stay until midnight. When she arrived, she was able to dance with the prince. Time went by quickly, and Cinderella had to leave. At midnight, her dress turned to rags! She ran and left a glass slipper on the stairs. The prince found it and kept it.

The prince's father, the king, sent his squire to every home in the town. He needed to find the woman whose foot fit into the slipper. He came to Cinderella's house, but Cinderella's stepmother had locked her in a room. Thankfully, her animal friends helped her again. Cinderella ran downstairs to the squire and tried on the shoe. It fit, and she left to meet the prince. They lived happily ever after.



Comparing Stories

Yeh-Shen

There once was a girl named Yeh-Shen who was raised by her mean stepmother. As Yeh-Shen grew older, her stepmother made her do chores. The other daughters did not have to do any work, but Yeh-Shen did.

There was a festival in town, and Yeh-Shen wanted to go. It was a special gathering where young people had fun. Yeh-Shen's stepmother and her daughters went to the festival. They told Yeh-Shen she had to stay home. Yeh-Shen secretly went to the festival after she used magic fish bones. The bones gave her a beautiful feathered dress and golden slippers. At the festival, the king saw Yeh-Shen. As he moved toward her, Yeh-Shen had to run. Her stepmother was nearby! She left behind a golden slipper, and the king picked it up.

The king ordered his soldiers to search the kingdom for the mysterious woman with the golden slipper. Many women tried on the slipper, but no one could fit in the tiny shoe. Yeh-Shen went to the king's pavilion in the night and asked to try on the slipper. It fit perfectly. The king soon married Yeh-Shen.

1. How are Yeh-Shen and Cinderella similar? Write two complete sentences.

2. How are Yeh-Shen and Cinderella different? Write two complete sentences.



Ask your child to compare his or her favorite movie with the favorite movie of a friend or sibling. What about the two stories is similar? What is different? How does the favorite movie of each person reflect his or her personality and interests?

Story Settings

The **setting** is the place and time in which a story takes place. As a story unfolds, the setting may change. The setting gives the reader information about where the story happens.

Read the text. Then, use the information given to draw the settings that are described.

In the fight to save his tribe's land, Chief Seattle spoke of his desire to preserve the American land. In the book *Brother Eagle, Sister Sky* by Susan Jeffers (Puffin, 2002), Chief Seattle begs us to care for Earth as we would our mothers. He also questions what will become of all people if we do not.

If people use the land wisely, Earth will always have beautiful forests, oceans, and deserts full of living plants and animals.

If our land becomes too polluted, we will lose natural beauty. Factories and electrical wires will replace the forests, oceans, and deserts.



Do an online search for images of paintings by the Dutch artist Jan Steen. Choose one to study with your child. Ask, "Who are the characters in the painting? Where are they? What are they doing? What happened before? What might happen next?"

Understanding Details

Read the passage. Answer each question with a complete sentence.

Night Navigators

Many people do not realize what bats do for us. Bats are some of our best nighttime insect exterminators. More than 850 kinds of bats exist in the world. Bats can be anywhere from 1.5 inches (1.3 cm) long to more than 15 inches (38 cm) long. Although most bats



eat just insects, some dine on fruit and the nectar of flowers. As the only flying mammals on Earth, bats should be recognized for their contributions to people.

Aside from controlling the insect population, bats are the main pollinators and seed spreaders for many tropical trees such as mango, guava, cashew, clove, and Brazil nut. Bats use their sonar-guided ears and mouths to enjoy a nightly dinner of millions of mosquitoes, mayflies, and moths.

1. How many different kinds of bats are in the world? _____

2. What do bats like to eat? _____

3. How long can some species of bats be? _____

4. What kinds of tropical trees depend on the bat for spreading their seeds? _____

5. What helps bats find mosquitoes, mayflies, and moths? _____



Choose a topic that interests your child such as dolphins or trains. Ask him or her to write five questions about it. Then, help your child find a book or Web site about the topic and read it. How many of your child's questions were answered?