Big Brothers Big Sisters of NYC

Academic Resource Packet

Elementary School
Dear Bigs,

Thank you for serving as a volunteer mentor at Big Brothers Big Sisters of New York City! The time and friendship that you give makes a difference in the life of a child, and we are honored that you have chosen to be an integral part of our BBBS of NYC family.

Like you, we are committed to helping your Little achieve success in life and we are confident that by working together, we can make great strides towards that vision. We both know that a critical component to that work lies in our ability to meet the academic needs of the young person you are mentoring. This may sound like a daunting task, but I assure you that you are not alone in this. Big Brothers Big Sisters of NYC prides itself in being a mentoring organization with a strong education focus, and we will provide you with all the guidance and resources needed.

We provide academic programming in several ways. Our Education Initiative offers extensive college readiness programming for Littles. We introduced SMART goals to ensure that all matches have specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound goals around academic achievement, self-confidence, relationship building, and resiliency. We also recently launched the Bigs Education Council, an affinity group devoted to raising scholarship money for graduating seniors, enhancing and supporting our education programming, and spreading the word about the Education Initiative to other Bigs.

We understand that the New York City education system can be difficult to navigate and there is a tremendous amount of information that can often be confusing or overwhelming. Because you are among the biggest advocates and strongest champions for our Littles, we strive to empower you with the information you need to understand what it takes to be academically successful in the nation’s largest school district.

This Academic Resource Packet includes valuable information that we hope you will find helpful in your efforts to support your Little on their journey to becoming college aware and ready. It includes a profile for a college ready student, elements of the new English Language Arts (ELA) Common Core standards, behavioral and cognitive developmental markers for students within your Little’s age group, a yearly academic timeline, and suggested academic outings. Just as mentoring is a powerful tool in making an impact on the overall wellbeing of your Little, this packet will show you how mentoring can also be a powerful tool in making an impact on the academic performance of your Little.

We welcome your feedback on this packet and on our overall academic support efforts. I invite you to learn more about our Education Initiative on our website at www.bigsnyc.org/littles.

Sincerely,

Hector Batista, CEO
Big Brothers Big Sisters of NYC
Big Tips: Putting It Into Practice

Bigs, throughout this packet we offer mentoring pointers to help you on your journey to supporting your Little’s academic performance in your match relationship. You’ll find that many of the tips connect to one another. Take your time reading through them. We hope you find it beneficial. Please provide feedback so we can improve on our support.

New To Your Match?

Don’t force academic conversations so quickly. Our SMART goals will help make them more obvious factors in your match relationship but your Little will struggle with sharing if they are not doing so well in school. They might not want to talk about academic barriers or obstacles. If you bring it up, and they do not respond so positively, either through body language or verbal cues, don’t force it. Instead, focus on celebrating the small successes they do share. The more you celebrate the good things and build rapport, the more room you will have to check-in around academic obstacles.

Sample Everyday Teaching Moments.

Sometimes making it strictly about academics is overwhelming. It is okay to sneak in learning through every day match outings. Make learning cool.

**EXAMPLES:**

**Math Teachable Moment(s)** —
A Little and Big go to the grocery store. The Big hands the cashier a $10 dollar bill for an item that cost $2.99. The Big can ask the Little, “How much change should I get back?”
Have your Little calculate the tip on a bill.
Take your Little to a cooking class that involves loads of measurements. Have them calculate the measurements and measure a cup of water in a measuring cup the proper way.

**Literacy/Math Teachable Moment** —
A Little and Big love basketball. Pull up the basketball stats from all of last week’s games. Talk about them in depth. Have your Little analyze the stats. Get your Little to understand more than the plays. Encourage your Little to think about strategy.

**Science Teachable Moment** —
Go to Coney Island and collect seashells and rocks. Have a conversation about nature and the rocks and seashell as it relates to density and other types rocks. (Then go have some fun at the Coney Island Amusement Park!)

**Social Studies Teachable Moment** —
Go visit historical sites. Do a scavenger hunt: try to find several key elements to different sites and design an awesome end-of-the-day picture collage with your Little. Put the pictures together and send it your Little and Program Manager. While you’re at it, if you’re feeling silly, record reenactment videos with you and your Little at the different sites. Make it fun!

*For more tips on match outings, see our suggested match outings handout.

**Demonstrate genuine curiosity.**

Learn more about your Little’s struggles, interests, life and even their celebrations. If your Little is academically struggling, help them to identify their particular roadblocks in a non-judgmental way by being curious in tone and by asking open ended questions. There could be a range of reasons as to why your Little is not doing well and they may or may not feel ashamed for not being able to achieve academic success. When judgement is placed in the context of asking, it can feel judgmental, that is risky to do especially in a new match relationship. It is also important to make sure your line of questioning does not read or feel like an interview. All of this can make your Little shut down and retreat. Sometimes, Littles will suggest they are doing “good” academically. Good can mean many things. Ask clarifying questions to get a better understanding of what they mean by good.

**EXAMPLE:**
Big: Gail, what does good mean? A 65, 75 or an 80?

**Dreaming Big.**

Help your Little dream BIG by helping them think about what’s possible in the future. Ask them to visualize what’s possible and then talk about it. Have them act it out. Get playful and silly. The more you do this, the more space you give them to dream bigger.

**Metaphors.**

Use metaphors to help turn lessons into new knowledge and make experiences relatable and digestible.

**Success is relative.**

Manage your expectations. Your definition of success may not be to what your Little is accustomed. Remember to meet your Little where they are. This does not mean you do not hold your Little to high expectations. It just means you recognize that everyone may not have the same experiences. What is common for you, might not be common for your Little.

**EXAMPLE:**
Your Little constantly gets a 55 in math. Their SMART goal was to pass math class. You check-in at the 2 month mark and they tell you they got a 60, 5 points away from passing. This is something to celebrate. Celebrate it in a fun or even silly way.

Then follow-up with these questions:

What did you do this time to get a 60? What worked for you? Did you try your hardest? What could we add to what you already did to get you to a 65? If your Little can honestly say they tried their best, then you might need to help your Little figure out if the material is just not understandable. It may be that they need tutoring. If your Little states that they did not try their hardest, then you can ask, “What would your best look like?”.

This follow-up question allows your Little to describe tangible action items they can work on while forcing them to visualize a better version of themselves. They then set higher expectations for themselves.
Hold Your Little Accountable.

We all need accountability buddies sometimes. Create clear accountability structures so your Little can really move to the next level.

**EXAMPLE:**

Tell me more about it (the situation or challenge).

What role did you play in getting the outcome you received? (Ask them to be honest, as their honesty will only help the both of you develop real solutions that work.)

What can you do differently to achieve success?

Have them develop 3 tangible action items they can implement.

How will I know? (How will the Little communicate the implementation of their action plan to you?)

When can I check-in with you around this goal?

(You want to hold them to a clear roll out date and a clear check-in date. You can't push back as much.)

What can I do to support you on your journey to success?

(Only commit to something that you can realistically do.)

Or, how do you celebrate your success?

(Fold a celebration into a match outing. Have your Little tell you how they want to celebrate. You can negotiate the celebration to make sense for you as well but make sure they set the initial parameters.)

*With accountability, it is important that even if your Little does not keep their word, that you do. Consistency on your part helps build trust. That trust will eventually yield loyalty and support the foundation of your match relationship.

Buy-In.

It is important to get your Little’s buy-in on anything related to their goals and academic progress. If someone else creates it, they are not going to be as moved to do it. The latter approach makes holding them accountable much more difficult.

Celebrations.

Celebrate the small victories as well as the large ones. Make a fun scene. Don’t be afraid to even be a little embarrassing. High five them. Send them a power punch emoji text message celebrating them. Also find ways to fold celebrations into your match outings when Littles accomplish Big goals. Do this while recognizing and understanding if your Little does not respond well to grandiose verbal gestures. However, even the quiet ones like to feel celebrated. It makes them feel seen.

Bullying Prevention Tips.

The DOE has great sources on how to handle bullying, how to prevent it, and how to avoid it. Visit schools.nyc.gov and browse documents like: “Bullying Prevention and Intervention Tips,” the Anti-Defamation League, and “Common views and Myths About Bullying.”

Reading With Your Little.

Bigs, read the Little’s required school text with them. This is a great way to meet your Little where they are and to help them develop their reflection skills on the text. Spend 10 – 30 minutes on a match outing talking about the book. Get them to share their thoughts and engage in a regular dialogue about it. Maybe even send them a text message highlighting an exciting part of the book and gently assert your excitement about the book in everyday conversations.

Contacting Your Little’s School.

Sometimes, the best way to find out about the assigned reading list and major school calendar dates not found on the general Department of Education calendar is by calling the school directly. Let your Little’s parent know you are going to call the school and tell them why. Schools will not release individual student information unless someone is the guardian but at least the parent knows you are going to call. You should ask the school for a generic reading list:

Here is a sample phone script you can use to get some information from the school about what your Little is learning:

Hi ___________________, I am a mentor with Big Brothers Big Sisters of NYC and __________________ is my mentee and __________________ (guardian’s name), their parent, informed me that I could call to learn more about what the ___ grade is learning in English Language Arts class. Is it possible to get a copy of the reading list or maybe even a syllabus/course outline so I can read the assigned books along with my mentee? I am eager to support their learning.

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Suggested Academic Outings for Elementary Littles

When planning match activities for you and your Little, try to find activities that help your Little work towards their SMART goals. Find activities that get them one step closer to improving their Academics, Behavior, Relationships and Self-confidence.

Take advantage of this time with your Little to really identify their academic needs. Have a goal of teaching your Little something at each of your match outings.

And remember, always be sure to have your Little’s parent’s permission before taking them to any activity.

**Attend a Library Book reading with your Little.**
Introducing your Little to this environment early on is a great opportunity to get them comfortable with the world of books and reading. Take the time to emphasize the importance of reading to your Little, and encourage them to challenge themselves. During the reading, have your Little write down words they didn’t recognize or understand. After the reading, use the multiple resources in the library to look up the definitions to build on their vocabulary. Also, encourage your Little to express what they did or didn’t like about the book. This will help you find books that are more suited to their preferences. This activity underscores the reading and listening Common Core literacy learning standards.

**Get a Library Card with your Little.**
Make this event a big deal for your Little. Get them excited about the prospect of having access to hundreds of books. Try to connect with them and show them one of your favorite books from when you were young. Or you could choose a book to read together. During your phone conversations or meetings, follow up on your Little’s progress with the book (you can choose from the recommended reading list on the “Profiles for a Successful College Ready Student”). If you’re looking for a way to engage your Little with more reading, have them join the Summer Reading Challenge! Learn more at www.nypl.org. This activity underscores foundational reading Common Core literacy learning standards.

**Visit a NYC landmark and discuss its significance with your Little.**
Before going out on the trip, research the landmark and have a few facts prepared to teach your Little. Ask your Little how it affect the local community and why? Options in NYC include Ellis Island, The Statue of Liberty, and the Empire State Building. This activity underscores the speaking and listening, and presentation of knowledge Common Core literacy learning standards.

**Take an art class at a local library with your Little.**
Take the opportunity to explain to your Little the behavioral benefits of art. Have them use this as a fun activity and an outlet for their happiness, sadness, or anger. Work on a piece together that the Little can take home and keep as a reminder of the lesson.

**Take your Little to a Museum.**
Explain to your Little the purpose of museums and their significance. Help your Little choose one interesting exhibit and research it more when he or she gets home. Follow up with them to see what they were able to find. Encourage them to continue to explore different areas of interest. NYC has multiple museums with free admissions. See www.timeout.com. This activity underscores the integration of knowledge and ideas and reading informational texts. Common Core literacy learning standards.

**Sign up for a Middle School Open House or visit the NYC Middle School Fair.**
Have your Little make a list of the characteristics they are looking for in their middle school of choice. Help them identify those characteristics during the school tour. Take the time to also talk about your own middle school experiences and advise your Little on what they should or shouldn’t do in order to have a successful middle school career. Help your Little narrow down their list of schools. This activity underscores the speaking and listening Common Core literacy learning standards.

**Volunteer with your Little.**
Teach your Little the importance of giving back to the community. Besides programs offered by the DOE, do small projects such as participating in a car drive or planting a tree. These are good skills to get them college ready. For more information on volunteer service days go to www.newyorkcares.org.

**Visit a zoo, and/or an aquarium with your Little.**
Choose topics or themes to discuss with your Little (ecology, biodiversity, conservation, etc.). Have them write down any animals they haven’t seen before. Encourage them to research them more when they get back home and learn further about these animals. This activity underscores the speaking and listening, and vocabulary acquisition and use Common Core literacy learning standards.

**Attend an author book launch and signing with your Little.**
Choose your favorite author or your Little’s favorite author. Discuss what it is you like about the author. Explain the writing process with your Little (i.e. how a book gets written, published and promoted). There are regular updates of these type of events on www.timeout.com. This activity underscores the speaking and listening, and foundational reading Common Core literacy learning standards.

**Attend a Comic Book Convention.**
Have a conversation with your Little about what they enjoy or dislike about comic books. Who is their favorite superhero? Why? What good characteristics of these superheroes could they emulate in their daily lives? This activity underscores the reading and knowledge of language Common Core literacy learning standards.
Important Notes

Your Little will fill out Middle School Applications to attend a Public (zoned), Charter or Boarding School.

Public Middle School: After submitting an application by December of the 5th grade school year, fifth grade students are matched to a program based on student preference, seat availability, specific admissions methods (talent test, interview, etc.), and schools admissions properties (priority based on zone). Results are released in May of the 5th grade school year. For more information on the public middle school application process visit http://schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/Middle/default.htm

Boarding School: Junior Boarding Schools are independent elementary and middle schools with a boarding program for middle school students. Junior Boarding schools are recommended for students who require teachers who work hand in hand with students and invest in their full potential. Boarding Schools are also well suited for students who excel academically, or in the arts, athletics and leadership but need more structure in their day to focus on developing academic potential.

For more information on boarding schools visit http://www.jbsa.org/

For more information on how to apply to junior boarding schools visit http://www.prepforprep.org/

Common Core Standards for English Language Arts (ELA)

In the following pages, you will find a profile of a successful college ready student for each grade level, along with the ELA Common Core Standards, also at each grade level. The Common Core is a set of high-quality academic standards accepted by forty-two states, including New York. These learning goals outline what a student should know and be able to do at the end of each grade. The standards were created to ensure that all students graduate from high school with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in college, career, and life.

Literacy skills are critical for all young people to develop. They are utilized in all core subjects. When they are properly developed and supported, literacy skills contribute greatly towards a child's ability to be successful.

For a more comprehensive list of all the Common Core standards for all of the subjects, please visit http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/common_core_standards/

Profile of a Successful College Ready Student

College and Career Readiness Standards

These standards apply to ALL NYC public school students.

**Attendance**

At least a 95% attendance rate (no more than 10 absences for the school year). Note: Excessive absences can affect a student’s grade so attendance must be taken seriously. When a student misses class, they miss out on important teaching and learning. Absences may be excused—but are not eliminated—for religious observance, illness, or other reasons defined at each school.

Research shows that missing 10 percent of school, or about 18 days in most school districts, negatively affects a student’s academic performance. That’s just two days a month and that’s known as chronic absenteeism.

**Behavioral Expectations**

Students are expected to…

- Have no suspensions
- Not engage in verbally rude or disrespectful behavior
- Wear the dress code
- Have viable excuses for any lateness or absence (i.e. doctor’s note)
- Not bring prohibited equipment without permission (electronics, cell phones, etc.)

For more information on the New York City Department of Education Discipline Code please visit: www.schools.nyc.gov
Kindergarten ELA Common Core Standards

Literature
With prompting and support:
1. Ask and answer questions of key details in text
2. Retell familiar stories
3. Identify characters, settings, and major events in a story
4. Introduce author and illustrator of book
5. Define the role of author and illustrator of book
6. Recognize common types of texts
7. Describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear
8. Compare and contrast adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories
   a. Students will make cultural connections to text and themselves
9. Engage in reading activities with purpose and understanding
10. Make connections between self, text, and the world around them

Writing
Test Types and Purposes:
Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing:
1. To compose opinion pieces in which they tell a reader the topic and state an opinion or preference about the topic
2. To compose informative texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic

Production and Distribution of Writing:
1. Respond to questions and suggestions from peers and add details to strengthen writing as needed
2. Explore a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing; include collaboration of peers

Research to Build and Present Knowledge:
1. Participate in shared research and writing projects
2. Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer

Responding to Literature:
1. Create literature piece to respond to a particular author or theme studied with support needed

Speaking and Listening
Comprehension and Collaboration:
1. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussion
2. Continue a conversation through multiple exchanges
3. Seek to understand and communicate with individuals from different cultural backgrounds
4. Confirm understanding of a text read aloud by asking and answering questions about key details; request clarification if not understood
5. Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get info, or clarify something that is not understood

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:
1. Describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail
2. Add visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail
3. Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly

Language
Conventions of Standard English:
1. Print upper and lower case letters
2. Frequently use nouns and verbs
3. Form regular plural nouns orally by adding /s/ or /es/
4. Capitalize the first word in a sentence and the pronoun “I”
5. Recognize and name end punctuation
6. Write a letter or letters for most consonant and short vowel sounds (phonemes)

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use:
1. Identify new meaning for familiar words and apply them accurately
2. Use the most frequently occurring inflections and affixes as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word
3. Sort common objects into categories (e.g., shapes, foods) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent
4. Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts

Profile of a Successful College Ready Kindergarten Student

Recommended Reading List
- Bark, George by Jules Feiffer
- Where is the Green Sheep? by Mem Fox
- My Lucky Day by Keiko Kasza
- The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats
- Froggy Gets Dressed by Jonathan London
- How Rocket Learned to Read by Tod Hills
- Pecan Pie Baby by Jacqueline Woodson
- Curious George by H.A. Rey
- Dog and Bear by Laura Vaccaro Seeger
- Just a Minute by Yuyi Morales
- The Lion & the Mouse by Jerry Pinkney

Academic Expectations
By the end of your child’s Kindergarten year, he/she should be able to:
- English Language Arts: Learn and use new words in context, track printed words when read aloud, identify and use spoken words that rhyme, and talk for a variety of purposes (expressing thoughts, asking questions, discussing new information, etc.)
- Science: Use their senses to observe and describe different objects, sort objects based on their physical properties, observe and compare parts of a plants (roots, leaves, flowers, etc.)
- Social Studies: Understand how families, schools, and communities work, identify themselves as members of a community, show respect for others and work well with others
- Mathematics: Count out loud to 20, compare two groups and identify which is more or less, recognize basic shapes, and sort groups of items by size

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**Recommended Reading List**

- Miss Nelson is Missing! by Harry Allard
- Me…Jane by Patrick McDonnell
- Big Red Lollipop by Rukhsana Khan
- Fortunately by Remy Charlip
- The King’s Taster by Kenneth Oppel
- Chato and the Party Animals by Gary Soto
- What Animals Really Like by Fiona Robinson
- Strega Nona by Tomie de Paola
- Fortunately by Remy Charlip
- Wemberly Worried by Kevin Henkes
- My Magic Pet nons by Hal Friedman
- Miss Nelson is Missing!

**Academic Expectations**

By the end of your Little’s First grade year, he/she should be able to:

- **Science:** Recognize the different states of matter, describe an animal’s physical traits, and compare temperatures in different locations.
- **Mathematics:** Count to 100 by ones, count backward from 20, use punctuation marks, and discuss stores/topics in a small or large group setting.
- **English Language Arts:** Use their knowledge of root words, read common word families, write about what they have read, use illustrations, and discuss stories/topics in a small or large group setting.
- **Social Studies:** Know that families have their own histories, create simple maps of familiar places or areas, and know that laws can be made and changed by governments.

**First Grade ELA Common Core Standards**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comprehension and Collaboration:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Text Types and Purposes:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Conventions of Standard English:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussion</td>
<td>1. Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure.</td>
<td>1. English grammar and usage when writing or speaking: a. Use common, proper, and possessive nouns.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Build on others’ talk in conversations by responding to the comments of others through multiple exchanges</td>
<td>2. Write informative texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.</td>
<td>b. Use singular and plural nouns with matching verbs in basic sentences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Ask questions to clear up confusion about the texts discussed</td>
<td>3. Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events and provide closure.</td>
<td>c. Use personal, possessive, and indefinite pronouns.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Seek to understand and communicate with individuals from different cultural backgrounds</td>
<td>4. Write informative texts in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events and provide closure.</td>
<td>d. Capitalize dates and names of people.</td>
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<td>5. Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud</td>
<td>5. Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events and provide closure.</td>
<td>e. Use end punctuation for sentences.</td>
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<td>6. Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather information</td>
<td>6. Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events and provide closure.</td>
<td>f. Use commas in dates and to separate single words.</td>
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**Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:**

1. Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.
2. Add visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.
3. Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation.

**Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:**

1. Describe characters, settings, or events by using illustrations and details in book.
2. Compare and contrast adventures and experiences of characters in book.
3. Students will make cultural connections to text and self.

**Craft and Structure:**

1. Identify words and phrases in stories that suggest feelings.
2. Explain differences between story books and books that give information.
3. Identify which character is telling the story of various parts of the text.

**Literature:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Ideas and Details:</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Retell stories and demonstrate understanding of their central message.</td>
<td><strong>Production and Distribution of Writing:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Vocabulary Acquisition and Use:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. By using key details, describe major events, characters, and settings of the story.</td>
<td>1. Focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers, and add details to strengthen writing as needed.</td>
<td>1. Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.</td>
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<td>3. Identify which character is telling the story of various parts of the text.</td>
<td>2. Use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing.</td>
<td>b. Use frequently occurring root words and their inflectional forms.</td>
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**Craft and Structure:**

1. Identify words and phrases in stories that suggest feelings.
2. Explain differences between story books and books that give information.
3. Identify which character is telling the story of various parts of the text.

**Language:**

1. Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events and provide closure.
2. Focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers, and add details to strengthen writing as needed.
3. Use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing.

**Research to Build and Present Knowledge:**

1. Participate and share research and writing projects.

**Speaking and Listening:**

1. Participate and share research and writing projects.

**Vocabulary Acquisition and Use:**

1. Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
2. Use frequently occurring root words and their inflectional forms.
3. Sort words into categories.
4. Define words by category and by one or more key attributes.
5. Identify real-life connections between words and their use.
6. Distinguish shades of meaning among verbs differing in manner and adjectives differing in intensity.

7. Use words and phrases acquired through conversations
By the end of your Little’s Second grade year, he/she should be able to:

**Academic Expectations**

- **English Language Arts:** Compare and contrast similarities and differences amongst characters and events across stories, create imaginative stories and personal narratives using the writing process, and write sentences in logical order and use paragraphs to organize topics.
- **Mathematics:** Understand that decision is about separating objects into equal groups, just use symbols for less than and greater than, and use graphs to make conclusions or predictions.
- **Science:** Know that the force of gravity pulls objects towards the center of the earth, observe and describe the physical properties of rocks, and investigate the properties of different types of soil.
- **Social Studies:** Understand how different communities help meet people’s needs and wants, and develop an understanding of the people, traditions, and practices that make up different communities.

**Recommended Reading List**

- *Hill Fly Guy* by Tedd Arnold
- *The Bossy Gallito* by Lucia M. Gonzalez
- *Anansi and the Moss-covered Rock* by Eric A. Kimmel
- *The Story of Ferdinand* by Munro Leaf
- *Mabel the Clever* by Margaret Read MacDonald
- *George and Martha* by James Marshall
- *Precious and the Boo Hag* by Pat McKissack
- *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* by Jon Scieszka
- *Abracadabra! Magic with Mouse and Mole* by Ed Young
- *The Story of Ferdinand* by Munro Leaf
- *Anansi and the Moss-covered Rock* by Lucia M. Gonzalez
- *The Bossy Gallito* by Tedd Arnold

**Second Grade ELA Common Core Standards**

**Literature**

**Key Ideas and Details:**
1. Ask and answer questions about who, what, when, where, why, and how to demonstrate key details in text.
2. Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

**Craft and Structure:**
1. Describe the structure of the story. Describe how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action.
2. Acknowledge differences in the perspective of the characters; distinguish perspectives of characters by speaking differently for each character.

**Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:**
1. Use information from the illustrations and words to demonstrate understanding of the characters, setting, or the plot of the story.
2. Compare and contrast two or more versions of the same story.

**Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:**
1. Read and comprehend literature with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

**Responding to Literature:**
1. Make connections between self, text, and the world around them (media, social interaction).

**Speaking and Listening**

**Comprehension and Collaboration:**
1. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions.
2. Link student comments to the remarks of others.
3. Ask for clarification and further explanation as needed.
4. Seek to understand and communicate with individuals from different cultural backgrounds.
5. Recount key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
6. Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.

**Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:**
1. Tell a story with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.
2. Create audio recordings of stories; add visuals to stories of experiences when clarifying ideas, thoughts, and feelings.
3. Produce complete sentences to task and situation in order to provide requested detail.

**Writing**

**Text Types and Purposes:**
1. Write opinion pieces that introduce the topic, state an opinion, supply reasons that support that opinion, use linking words to connect opinion and reasons, and provide concluding statement.
2. Write informative texts in which they introduce the topic, use facts to develop points, and provide conclusion.
3. Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide closure.

**Production and Distribution of Writing:**
1. Focus on a topic and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing.
2. Use variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing.

**Research to Build and Present Knowledge:**
1. Participate in shared research and writing projects.
2. Recall information from experiences or gather information from real-life connections between words and their use.

**Conventions of Standard English:**
1. Use collective nouns.
2. Form and use frequently occurring irregular plural nouns.
3. Use reflexive pronouns.
4. Form and use the past tense of frequently occurring irregular verbs.
5. Capitalize holidays, product names, and geographic names.
6. Use commas in greetings and closing of letters.

**Knowledge of Language:**
1. Compare formal and informal uses of English.

**Vocabulary Acquisition and Use:**
1. Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or a phrase.
2. Identify real-life connections between words and their use.
Profile of a Successful College Ready 3rd Grade Student

College and Career Readiness Standards

Test Scores
- Achieve Level 3 or 4 on the English Language Arts and Math State Exams

Recommended Reading List
- Nikki and Deja by Karen English
- The Magical Ms. Plum by Ronny Becker
- Freckle Juice by Judy Blume
- The Twits by Roald Dahl
- Bink & Gollie by Kate DiCamillo
- The Stories Julian Tells by Ann Cameron
- Sadie and Ratz by Sonya Hartnett
- Henry’s Freedom Box by Ellen Levine
- Toys Go Out by Emily Jenkins
- Lunch Lady and the Cyborg Substitute by Jarrett Krosoczka
- Alvin Ho by Lenore Look
- Clementine by Sara Pennypacker
- Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters by John Steptoe
- Ellray Jakes is not a Chicken! by Sally Warner
- Hamster and Cheese by Colleen A. F.Venable

Academic Expectations
By the end of your Little’s Third grade year, he/she should be able to:

- English Language Arts: Write a clear, well-organized report using at least two sources of information, take notes to record data, facts, and ideas, and read and understand written directions
- Mathematics: Count to 1,000 by 25s, divide single digits fluently, and count coins and dollars
- Science: Observe, identify, and describe different forms of energy, observe and describe how friction affects the motion of an object, and collect and interpret information and data about objects and events
- Social Studies: Find the earth’s continents and oceans on a map or globe, form and explain opinions about current events, and understand that people in world communities form governments to develop rules and laws

Third Grade ELA Common Core Standards

Literature
- Key Ideas and Details:
  1. Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text
  2. Recount stories from diverse cultures; determine the central message and explain how it is conveyed through key details in text

- Craft and Structure:
  1. Refer to parts of stories when writing or speaking about a text; use terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections

- Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:
  1. Explain how specific aspects of a text’s illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story
  2. Compare and contrast themes, settings, and plots of stories written by the same author about the same or similar characters (e.g. Harry Potter)

- Comprehension and Collaboration:
  1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners
  2. Seek to understand and communicate with individuals from different cultural backgrounds.
  3. Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail

- Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:
  1. Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace
  2. Speak in complete sentences

Speaking and Listening

- Comprehension and Collaboration:
  1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners
  2. Seek to understand and communicate with individuals from different cultural backgrounds.
  3. Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail

- Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:
  1. Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace
  2. Speak in complete sentences

Language

- Conventions of Standard English:
  1. Explain the function of nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in general and their functions in particular sentences
  2. Capitalize appropriate words in titles
  3. Use spelling patterns and generalizations in writing words
  4. Consult reference materials, including beginning dictionaries, as needed to check and correct spellings

- Knowledge of Language:
  1. Choose words and phrases for effect

- Vocabulary Acquisition and Use:
  1. Use glossaries or beginning dictionaries, both print and digital, to determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases
  2. Distinguish shades of meaning among related words that describe states of mind or degrees of certainty
By the end of your Little’s Fourth grade year, he/she should be able to:

**Academic Expectations**

- **Achieve Level 3 or 4 on English Language Arts, Math, and Science State exams**

**Recommended Reading List**

- Giants Beware by Jorge Aguirre
- Mr. Popper’s Penguins by Richard Atwater
- Poppy by Avi
- Matilda by Roald Dahl
- Tales of A Fourth Grade Nothing by Judy Blume
- All-of-a-Kind Family by Sydney Taylor
- Robot Dreams by Sara Varon
- Charlotte’s Web by E.B. White
- Little House on the Prairie by Laura Ingalls Wilder

**Mathematics:**

- Read and write whole numbers through 10,000, understand that a decimal is part of a whole, find the perimeter of a polygon by adding lengths of sides, and use data to develop and make predictions.
- Consistency in verb tenses and review own writing to edit for grade level spelling, punctuations and set personal reading goals and reflect on changes in reading patterns.

**Science:**

- Explore how plants make food by using air, water, and energy from the sun, test objects to determine if they sink or float, and describe how erosion changes the surface of land.

**Social Studies:**

- Know and understand basic ideas of the nation, the events that led to the Revolutionary War and the location of New York City, New York State and the United States.
- Know and use correct capitalization.
- Use context as a clue to the meaning of a word or a phrase.
- Paraphrase text read aloud presented in diverse media, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

**Conventions of Standard English:**

- Use relative pronouns and relative adverbs.
- Use standard word order and avoid verb tenses.
- Use correct capitalization.
- Spell grade appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed.

**Language:**

- Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
- Refer to the structural elements of poems and drama when writing or speaking about a text.
- Convey ideas or themes with words that have similar but not identical meanings.

**Spoken and Listening:**

- Comprehension and Collaboration:
  - Pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information, and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to the remarks of others.
- Paraphrase text read aloud presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

- Presentations of Knowledge and Ideas:
  - Recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes.
  - Add audio recording and visual displays to presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.

**Literature:**

- Key Ideas and Details:
  - 1. Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says.
  - 2. Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story, draw on specific details in the text.

- Craft and Structure:
  - 1. Determine the meaning of words and phrases in text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology.
  - 2. Explain differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems and drama when writing or speaking about a text.

- Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:
  - 1. Make connections between the text of a story and an oral presentation of the text, identify where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text.
  - 2. Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics and patterns of events in stories from different cultures.

- Speaking and Listening:

  - Comprehension and Collaboration:
    - Pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information, and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to the remarks of others.
  - Paraphrase text read aloud presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

- Presentations of Knowledge and Ideas:
  - Recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes.
  - Add audio recording and visual displays to presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.

- Literature:

  - Key Ideas and Details:
    - 1. Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says.
    - 2. Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story, draw on specific details in the text.

  - Craft and Structure:
    - 1. Determine the meaning of words and phrases in text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology.
    - 2. Explain differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems and drama when writing or speaking about a text.

  - Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:
    - 1. Make connections between the text of a story and an oral presentation of the text, identify where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text.
    - 2. Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics and patterns of events in stories from different cultures.

  - Fourth Grade ELA Common Core Standards

- Writing:

  - Test Types and Purposes:
    - 1. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.
    - 2. Use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events.

  - Production and Distribution of Writing:
    - 1. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

  - Research to Build and Present Knowledge:
    - 1. Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

- Range of Writing:

  - 1. Write routinely over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of discipline specific tasks.

  - Responding to Literature:
    - 1. Create and present a literature review in response to a particular author or theme studied in class.

- Vocabulary Acquisition and Use:

  - 1. Use context as a clue to the meaning of a word or a phrase.
  - 2. Use punctuation for effect.

- Conventions of Standard English:

  - 1. Use relative pronouns and relative adverbs.
  - 2. Form and use progressive verb tenses.
  - 3. Use correct capitalization.
  - 4. Spell grade appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed.

- Knowledge of Language:

  - 1. Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.
  - 2. Choose punctuation for effect.

- Language:

  - 1. Use context as a clue to the meaning of a word or a phrase.
  - 2. Explain meaning of simple similes and metaphors in context.
  - 3. Demonstrate understanding of words by relating them to their opposite and to words with similar but not identical meanings.

- Text Types and Purposes:

  - 1. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.
  - 2. Use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events.

- Production and Distribution of Writing:

  - 1. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

- Research to Build and Present Knowledge:

  - 1. Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

- Range of Writing:

  - 1. Write routinely over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of discipline specific tasks.

- Responding to Literature:

  - 1. Create and present a literature review in response to a particular author or theme studied in class.
By the end of your Little's Fifth grade year, he/she should be able to:

**Academic Expectations**

**Recommended Reading List**

- The Strange Case of Origami Yoda by Tom Angleberger
- Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key by Jack Gantos
- The Birchbark House by Louise Erdrich
- Tall Story by Candy Gourlay
- Swindle by Gordon Korman
- Diary of A Wimpy Kid by Jeff Kinney
- Number the Stars by Lois Lowry
- 11 Birthdays by Wendy Mass
- The Invention of Hugo Cabret by Brian Selznick
- Locomotion by Jacqueline Woodson
- Maniac Magee by Jerry Spinelli
- 11: Birthdays by Wendy Mass
- The Strange Case of Origami Yoda by Tom Angleberger
- Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key by Jack Gantos
- The Birchbark House by Louise Erdrich
- Tall Story by Candy Gourlay
- Swindle by Gordon Korman
- Diary of A Wimpy Kid by Jeff Kinney
- Number the Stars by Lois Lowry
- The Invention of Hugo Cabret by Brian Selznick
- Locomotion by Jacqueline Woodson
- Maniac Magee by Jerry Spinelli

**Achieve Level 3 or 4 on the English Language Arts and Math State Exams**

**Test Scores**

**College and Career Readiness Standards**

**5th Grade ELA Common Core Standards**

- **Craft and Structure:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases, including figurative language
- **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:** Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text

**Literature**

- **Responding to Literature:** Recognize and illustrate social, historical, and cultural features in the presentation of literary texts

**Writing**

- **Range of Writing:** Write routinely over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences

**Speaking and Listening**

- **Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:** Summarize the points a speaker makes and explain how each claim is supported by reasons and evidence

**Language**

- **Vocabulary Acquisition and Use:** Expand, combine, and reduce sentences for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style

**Conventions of Standard English:**

- **Knowledge of Language:** Expand, combine, and reduce sentences for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style
- **Use underlining, quotation marks, or italics to indicate titles of works**

**Production and Distribution of Writing:**

- **Range of Writing:** Write routinely over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences

**Key Ideas and Details:**

- 1. Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says when drawing inferences from the text
- 2. Compare and contrast the varieties of English (e.g., dialects, registers) used in stories, dramas, or poems

**Craft and Structure:**

- 1. Determine the meaning of words and phrases, including figurative language
- 2. Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide structure of a story

**Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:**

- 1. Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text
- 2. Compare and contrast stories in the same genre on their approaches to similar themes and topics

**Comprehension and Collaboration:**

- 1. Use their experience and their knowledge of language and logic, as well as culture, to think analytically, address problems creatively, and advocate persuasively
- 2. Summarize the points a speaker makes and explain how each claim is supported by reasons and evidence

**Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:**

- 1. Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes
- 2. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, using formal English when appropriate to task and situation

**Conventions of Standard English:**

- **Knowledge of Language:**
  - 1. Expand, combine, and reduce sentences for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style
  - 2. Use underlining, quotation marks, or italics to indicate titles of works

**Vocabulary Acquisition and Use:**

- **Use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes as clues to the meaning of a word**
- 1. 2. Use underlining, quotation marks, or italics to indicate titles of works

**Conventions of Standard English:**

- **Knowledge of Language:**
  - 1. Expand, combine, and reduce sentences for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style
  - 2. Use underlining, quotation marks, or italics to indicate titles of works

**Vocabulary Acquisition and Use:**

- **Use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes as clues to the meaning of a word**
- 1. 2. Interpret figurative language, including similes and metaphors, in context

**Language**

- **Conventions of Standard English:**
  - 1. Expand, combine, and reduce sentences for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style
  - 2. Use underlining, quotation marks, or italics to indicate titles of works

**Vocabulary Acquisition and Use:**

- **Use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes as clues to the meaning of a word**
- 1. 2. Interpret figurative language, including similes and metaphors, in context

**Speaking and Listening**

- **Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:** Summarize the points a speaker makes and explain how each claim is supported by reasons and evidence

**Language**

- **Conventions of Standard English:**
  - 1. Expand, combine, and reduce sentences for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style
  - 2. Use underlining, quotation marks, or italics to indicate titles of works

**Vocabulary Acquisition and Use:**

- **Use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes as clues to the meaning of a word**
- 1. 2. Interpret figurative language, including similes and metaphors, in context
### Are You on Track? Elementary School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>• First Day of School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>• 4th and 5th Graders Begin Attending Middle School Open Houses</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Parents &amp; Bigs education workshop at BBBS of NYC</td>
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<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>• 5th Graders Begin Middle School Application</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Parent Teacher Conferences</td>
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<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>• Middle School Applications Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>• Junior Boarding and Charter School Applications Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>• Junior Boarding Schools Financial Aid Applications Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>• Junior Boarding School Results Released</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>• Cornerstone Summer Program Enrollment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 3rd to 5th Grade NY State and English Language Arts and Math Exams</td>
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<td>• 4th Grade NY State Science Exam</td>
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<td>• Charter School Applications Closed</td>
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<td>• BBBS of NYC Academic Recognition Applications due</td>
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<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>• Middle School Results Distributed; Appeal Applications Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>• Summer Slide Launch at BBBS of NYC</td>
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<td>• Middle School Appeal Results Distributed</td>
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<td>• Last Day of School</td>
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<td>• BBBS of NYC Academic Recognition Ceremony</td>
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<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>• Summer School Begins</td>
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<td>• NYC Summer Quest Begins</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Beacon Youth Program</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Cornerstone Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>• Summer School Ends</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• NYC Summer Quest Ends</td>
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<td>• Beacon Youth Program</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Cornerstone Program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Summer Opportunities

**Help your Little avoid falling behind during the summer months:**

- Visit [www.MommyPoppins.com](http://www.MommyPoppins.com) for a list of free summer programs and camps in New York City.
- Join the [Summer Reading Challenge](http://www.scholastic.com/summer/) to keep your Little engaged during the summer.
- Check out the [Cornerstone Program](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dycd/html/home/home.shtml) for engaging, high-quality, year-round programs for adults and young people.
- Visit [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org) to learn about free programs at NYC Parks.
- Visit the [Beacon Youth Program](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/dycd/services/after-school/beacon.page) for after-school programs.
- Check out [NYC Summer Quest](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/dycd/services/after-school/beacon.page) for a free, five-week, full-day program.

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**Worried about your Little’s/child’s first day?**

Not sure what to expect?

See the [Profile of a Successful College Ready Student](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dycd/html/home/home.shtml) to plan out your Little’s/child’s schedule for the year!

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**Did you know?**

Over the summer, students can lose over 2/3 of what they learned over the year. That’s why summer programs are valuable.

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**Want to learn more about these summer options?**

- Visit [www.MommyPoppins.com](http://www.MommyPoppins.com) for a list of free summer programs and camps in New York City.
- Join the [Summer Reading Challenge](http://www.scholastic.com/summer/) to keep your Little engaged during the summer.
- Check out the [Cornerstone Program](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dycd/html/home/home.shtml) for engaging, high-quality, year-round programs for adults and young people.
- Visit [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org) to learn about free programs at NYC Parks.
- Visit the [Beacon Youth Program](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/dycd/services/after-school/beacon.page) for after-school programs.
- Check out [NYC Summer Quest](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/dycd/services/after-school/beacon.page) for a free, five-week, full-day program.

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**Make sure your Little/child has their school supplies ready.** School is around the corner!