Second Grade

In 2nd grade, your child will build on last year's work and gain important new skills. One of the most important outcomes for this school year will be that your child will be addition and subtracting three digit numbers quickly and accurately (e.g., 125 + 65). This will require your child to have a good level of understanding for place value of digits up to 1000; where in each place represents amounts of thousands, hundreds, tens, or ones (e.g., 853 is 8 hundreds, 5 tens, 3 ones). Your child also will build expertise with solving addition and subtraction word problems. Mastering addition and subtraction at the 2nd grade level is important so that your child will not have to review and repeat this material in 3rd grade, when the study of multiplication, division, and fractions will be the main focus.

Skills Your Child Will Be Working On

- Solving challenging addition and subtraction word problems with one or two steps (e.g., a "one-step" problem would be: "Lucy has 23 fewer apples than Julie. Julie has 47 apples. How many apples does Lucy have?")
- Understanding what the digits mean in three-digit numbers (*place value*) (e.g., 853 is 8 hundreds, 5 tens, 3 ones)
- Working with equal groups of objects to gain a foundation for multiplication
- Continue to work with simple fractions to provide a strong foundation for 3rd grade

- Using understanding of *place value* to add and subtract three-digit numbers (e.g., 811 – 367); adding and subtracting two-digit numbers quickly and accurately (e.g., 77 – 28)
- Measuring and estimating length in standard units
- Solving addition and subtraction word problems involving length (e.g., "The pen is 2 cm longer than the pencil. If the pencil is 7 cm long, how long is the pen?")
- Building, drawing, and analyzing 2-D and 3-D shapes to develop foundations for area, volume, and geometry in later grades

Learning Activity to Use at Home

Introducing children to the concept of fractions—numbers that aren't whole numbers (such as 1/2, 1/3 and 1/4)—it is often a good idea to use objects that they can see and touch.

NOTE: Fractions can be a very difficult concept for children to learn and understand. This is an area where students will need support and repetition to master the concept of time. For example, children may reasonably want to say, for example, that 1/4 cup plus 1/4 cup makes 2/4 cups. Letting them work with measuring cups or other measuring devices can let them see that 2/4 is the same as 1/2.

Activity: Fraction Action

Invite your child to help you make popcorn for the family. Begin by having your child put a piece of masking tape from top to bottom on one side of a large container.
For younger children, use a 1/2 cup measure. For older children, use a 1/3 or 1/4 cup measure. Choose the unit of measure and fill the measuring cup with popcorn. Give the cup to your child and ask her questions such as the following:
- o   How many whole cups do you think the container will hold?
- o   How many 1/2 cups (or 1/3 cups or 1/4 cups) do you think it will hold?

Let your child pour the measured popcorn into the clear container. Continue to pour the same amount into the container until it is full. As your child pours each equal amount, have him/her mark the level on the container by drawing a line on the tape. Then have her write the fraction, corresponding to the unit of measure on the line. After the container is full, have your child count up the total number of cup increments (1/2, 1/3 or 1/4) and compare it to her estimate from above.
As you measure out the popcorn, ask your child to answer questions such as the following:
- o   How many 1/2 cups equal one cup? How many ½ cups equal two cups?
- o   How many 1/4 cups equal 1/2 cup? How many 1/4 equal a whole cup?

Work through different measurements and ask your child to give you a problem too. Most of all, enjoy eating your popcorn together!

Teacher and Parent Conferencing - Topics for ongoing conversations throughout the school year with your child's teacher.

When you talk to the teacher, do not worry about covering everything. Instead, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In second grade, these include:

- Adding and subtracting three digit numbers from 1000 or less.
- Understanding of *place value* of numbers, ones, tens, hundreds
- Beginning to use fractions

Ask to see a sample of your child's work. Ask the teacher questions such as: Is this piece of work satisfactory? How could it be better? Is my child on track? How can I help my child improve or excel in this area? If my child needs extra support or wants to learn more about a subject, are there resources to help his or her learning outside the classroom?