

## **Welcome to First Grade! We can't wait to meet you!**

Many parents inquire about how to prepare their child for the transition to full-day first grade. The list below provides a variety of skills and habits that we aim to develop as we apply the TCA core values at the first-grade level.

### **How can I help my first grader succeed at home?**

- Take time to enjoy your child and point out the things you love about him or her.
- Allow your child to make mistakes and learn from them. We call this a growth mindset.
- Provide opportunities for your child to assist with chores around the home to build responsibility (caring for a pet, folding laundry, packing lunch, vacuuming, dusting, etc.).
- Assure your child is able to tie his/her shoes independently. A little daily practice goes a long way and confidence in this skill helps us get to recess on time!
- Designate a quiet place for your child to complete homework each evening.
- Make time for character conversations in your home on a regular basis. TCA uses the VIA character traits as a guide. Find out more about these at: <https://www.viacharacter.org/>
- Share favorite poems, songs, and stories daily.
- Encourage outdoor play and exploration.
- Limit television watching and video games. This can be very difficult to reign in, so we encourage setting boundaries early on.
- Take your child to the library and check out books together.
- Go exploring to learn about plants, animals, and local geography.
- Build social skills by getting together with classmates for playdates, avoid talking negatively to your child about other families/children, and model how to handle conflict in appropriate ways.
- Make sure your child gets 8+ hours of sleep and begins the day with a healthy breakfast.

### **How can I help my first grader succeed at school?**

- Visit our TCA Central First Grade website: [http://tcatitans.org/schools/central\\_elementary/central\\_elementary\\_-\\_first\\_grade](http://tcatitans.org/schools/central_elementary/central_elementary_-_first_grade). Here you will find links to our weekly newsletter, spelling lists, monthly poetry, curriculum days, and other helpful resources.
- Expect that your child may feel exhausted as they adjust to a full-day of school. Limiting extra-curricular activities at the beginning of the school year may be helpful.
- Your child will have a green folder that goes to and from school each day. Please review any school communication and class work daily.
- Expect up to 30 minutes of homework each evening, in addition to reading. Homework will cover math, spelling, phonograms, and reading.

- Assure your child can buckle and unbuckle a belt. Wearing a belt each day is a uniform requirement for grades 1-6 (when wearing pants/shorts, but not with dresses/skirts).
- Non-uniform jackets may not be worn in class. Sending a lightweight cardigan or TCA sweatshirt (no hood) each day allows your child to bundle up in class if they are chilly.
- Discuss the expectations for using a school restroom (no peeking in stalls, voices are off, clean up after yourself, quickly take care of business and return to class). These are great skills to practice as you use public restrooms around town!
- Send two healthy snacks and a water bottle to school daily. Please try to purchase snack containers that your child can open independently. This helps greatly in the cafeteria!
- As we know, Colorado weather is unpredictable. Please send a jacket with your child even if the weather seems mild. Boots are helpful to send in a bag on snowy days as we often still go out to play and children are allowed in the snow if they have boots.
- Meet with your child's teachers for conferences (required in the fall, initiated by teachers in the spring).
- Do not send your child to school if he/she shows any signs of illness. Refer to the "illness guidelines" on the TCA website.

#### **Reading Tips:**

- Read to/with your child every day and allow your child to pursue his/her interests through book choice. This daily habit of spending time together around literature will help your child develop a love for books.
- Review sounds of phonograms 1-70. Students are expected to master these in first grade.
- Practice blending sounds to make words (b-e-d = bed, c-a-t = cat).
- Play games that encourage your child to find the beginning, ending, and middle sounds of words such as cat, bed, or run (ie. What sound does the word cat end with?).
- Take turns identifying rhyming words. This is especially easy to do on a short drive or while you wait for an appointment.
- Practice writing both upper and lowercase letters.
- After your child reads a book, ask him/her to identify the characters, setting, plot, main idea, and new information/lesson that was learned.

#### **Math Tips:**

- Practice addition and subtraction math facts within 20. These are expected to be mastered by the end of first grade.
- Count by ones, twos, fives, and tens.
- Identify coin values and practice counting coins in amounts up to a dollar.
- Name the months of the year and days of the week.
- Practice reading number words up to forty.
- Practice telling time to the hour, half-hour, and 5 minutes.