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Dear Family,

Fifth grade is an exciting year! Your child's brain is changing the way it grows and processes information. The differences between boys and girls, both physically and emotionally, start to become more distinct this year.

The great thing about that shift in brain development is that your fifth grader can read and write longer, tackle complex math problems, delve into research, and better handle planning for long-term projects.

Along this journey to independence, your child's friendships are becoming increasingly more important. Concerns about fitting in may be increasing as well. Be patient when it comes to social concerns. You'll need to help your child balance school expectations with friendships, after-school activities, and family.

Find out how your child's teacher likes to communicate. You'll want to stay in touch, especially if your child seems lonely or subject to teasing or bullying.





One last thought...

Your child may think he or she knows it all. Never fear—you will still be needed as a coach, guide, and hero. Fifth graders are a lot of fun!



Top 10

Things Your Fifth Grader Needs to Know

1. **Identify themes** in books and stories
2. **Describe character development** and identify the conflict, climax, and resolution in a story
3. **Decode words** using root words, prefixes, and suffixes
4. Add and subtract equivalent **fractions** and **decimals** to hundredths
5. **Use long division** to divide large numbers by multi-digit numbers
6. **Coordinate numbers and the coordinate system** (x - and y -axis)
7. **Three major domains of life** (bacteria, archaea, and eukaryota)
8. **Four states of matter** (solid, liquid, gas, and plasma)
9. **History of the United States** (American Indians, 13 colonies, American Revolution, and the Civil War)
10. **United States states and capitals**



Your Scientist at Work

Your fifth grader is ready to take on the same processes that scientists use: observation, investigation, and experimentation. The specific science curriculum varies, but this year your student will be immersed in life science (living things), physical science (energy and matter), and earth science (meteorology and geology).

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Consider launching your own investigations with some of these ideas.

Compost Center

Create a compost center at home and watch what happens as things rot.





Science Fair Experiments

Is a science fair coming up? Or, are you interested in experimenting on your own? Think about tackling one of these questions:

- Does the height of a ramp (or the material it's made of) affect the distance of how far a toy car will roll?
- Does the temperature of the water affect its evaporation rate?
- Does the amount of light (or temperature or moisture level) affect the distance that a mealworm travels?
- How much would you weigh on Mars, Jupiter, the moon, etc.?



One last thought...

Talk about how science can be used to better understand and predict natural events, such as storms and disasters.