



ELA Skills BrushUp with Kids Academy: Transitioning from Grade 1 to Grade 2

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After being in the classroom for many years, I have seen how the leap from 1st grade to 2nd grade can feel big. After this year students will transition from learning how to read to reading so they can learn. But I have noticed the leap can feel a lot smaller for kids who've had plenty of practice with the skills they learned in 1st grade.

When your child is moving into the 2nd grade, the summer time is great to revisit those foundational skills, like decoding, writing complete sentences, and building comprehension. The goal is comfort and confidence not perfection. Students who enter the year already comfortable with these tools are ready for more complex stories and writing tasks. And just like with math, combining online time and hands on activities makes for the most effective progress.

REVIEWING 1ST GRADE ELA SKILLS

1. Decoding with Phonics

What it is: Sounding out difficult words by recognizing letter patterns like blends, digraphs, and vowel teams.

Why it matters: Students interact with more complex words in 2nd grade. I've watched kids struggle to read words like "snowflake" or "train" because they didn't know how to sound them out, not because they didn't know the meaning. When they've had lots of practice with common patterns, reading becomes easier.

Try These:

- Video: [Blends](#)



Watch on [YouTube](#)

• Lesson: [Review Blends](#)

Estimated classroom time: 14 min

Chapter: Phonological Awareness

Unit: Foundational Reading Skills

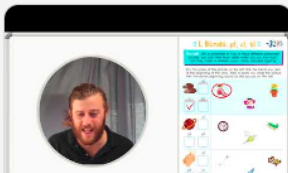
Click on any activity below to start learning.

1st 4:00 min

2nd 3:00 min

3rd 3:00 min

4th 4:00 min



Consonant Blends: "pl", "cl", "sl"

Video



L Blends: "Pl", "Cl" and "Sl" Printable

Worksheet



Let's Look for Blends Worksheet

Worksheet



Consonant Blends with l and r

Quiz

• Worksheet: [Missing Digraph](#)

Missing Digraph.

Part 1



Check the digraph that is missing at the end of the words.



Ear_____



mo_____



ba_____

sh

☐

wh

☐

th

☐

ch

☐

- Additional practice: Check out [this catalog for more decoding activities](#)

Off-Screen Fun: Time to go on a “sound hunt.” At the grocery store or in the car, you find and shout out words with the “ee” or “th” sound. At home, you can grab magnetic letters and build a “word wall” on the fridge or let your child create a “Book of Sounds” with drawings and silly examples. A sound hunt was a great way to pass time in between transitions in the classroom

2. Reading Fluency

What it is: Reading out loud smoothly, with the right pace and expression with little to none errors.

Why it matters: Second graders will be expected to read longer texts more fluently, with accuracy and proper phrasing to better support understanding. Fluency builds both confidence and comprehension. While in the classroom, I have had students read the same short poem every day for a week. By the end of the week, they were reading with stronger voices, smoother, and they seemed to be genuinely having fun reading.

Try These:

- Worksheet: [How the Moon Became Beautiful](#)



How the Moon Became Beautiful

"How the Moon Became Beautiful" is a Chinese Fable. Read the story and check the correct Chinese symbol.

月
moon

星
star

花
flower

The moon was not always beautiful. It was too dark and gloomy to light up the sky. One day it said, "I do not like being a _____. I wish that I was a bright star or a pretty flower."

The _____ said, "I cannot help you. My job is to light up the sky. Sorry, moon."

The _____ said, "Oh what a shame, moon. I am too busy blooming in the garden."

One day the moon met Tseh-N'io, the most beautiful girl in the world. The moon said, "If you come with me forever, I will be beautiful."

Tseh-N'io went away to live on the moon. She shared her beauty with the night sky. That is how the moon became beautiful.

月 花
☐ ☐

花 星
☐ ☐

月 花
☐ ☐

1234567

X

 One of the books below is a fantasy and the other one is a mystery. Choose the **fantasy** book.





Confirm



- Additional practice: Check out [this catalog of stories to read to enhance fluency skills](#).

Off-Screen Fun: Try reading your favorite book or poem aloud together everyday. Let your child read it back to you using funny voices or pretending to be a robot. You can even record their reading and play it back so they can hear their progress out loud. I have had students use monster, or character voices to make it more entertaining for them.

3. Comprehension and Story Retelling

What it is: Understanding what was read and being able to explain using your own words.

Why it matters: Students move from recalling what happened to explaining why things happened and how characters feel in 2nd grade. I used to ask, "What happened in the story?" and get a blank stare back. Once students realized they could retell the events, they enjoyed the story more. Strong retelling skills now help them later when they start to summarize, infer, and make deeper connections across texts.

Try These:

- Worksheet: [Skunks](#)

Skunks



Read the story.
Circle the
answers to the
questions below.

A male
skunk
is called
a buck.

All skunks can spray. When they do, it
stinks! Skunks have black and white stripes.
A female skunk is a doe. She has 4 to 8
babies at once.

1. What is a
male skunk
called?

buck

doe

2. What is a
female skunk
called?

buck

doe

- Lesson: [Summarizing a Text](#)

Estimated classroom time: 10 min

Chapter: Literature


Unit: Comprehension

Click on any activity below to start learning.


1st ⌚ 4:00 min ▶

2nd ⌚ 3:00 min ▶

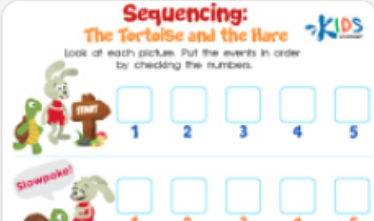
3rd ⌚ 3:00 min



Cinderella | Fairytale
Video



Cinderella: Beginning, Middle and End
Worksheet



Sequencing: The Tortoise and the Hare
Worksheet

- Additional practice: Check out [this lesson for more comprehension activities](#).

Off-Screen Fun: Story dice and puppets are a big hit in the classroom. At home, after a movie or bedtime story, ask your child to act out the beginning, middle and end using toys, drawings, or even dress up clothes.

4. Writing Complete Sentences

What it is: Writing full thoughts using a subject, verb, and punctuation.

Why it matters: Students in 2nd grade start writing multiple sentences in a row. If sentence basics aren't strong, they get overwhelmed. I've had students say "I don't know what to write" when really, they just needed help starting. Sentence writing is essential in 2nd grade as students begin creating short paragraphs, responses to reading, and stories with beginnings, middles, and ends.

Try These:

- Lesson: [Types of Sentences](#)

i

2/3 Well done! Add more activities or press "Start Classroom" to get your Classroom code.

Subjects

Grade 1

ENGLISH

START CLASSROOM

8:00 min

1st

4:00 min

2nd

4:00 min

3rd

0:00

Video

shoes blue are My

Confirm

Quiz

+

- Worksheet: [Noun Search](#)



Noun Search



Underline the nouns in the sentences below.
There can be more than one noun in a sentence.



1. Mike lives in a big house.



2. Sarah has a smart dog.



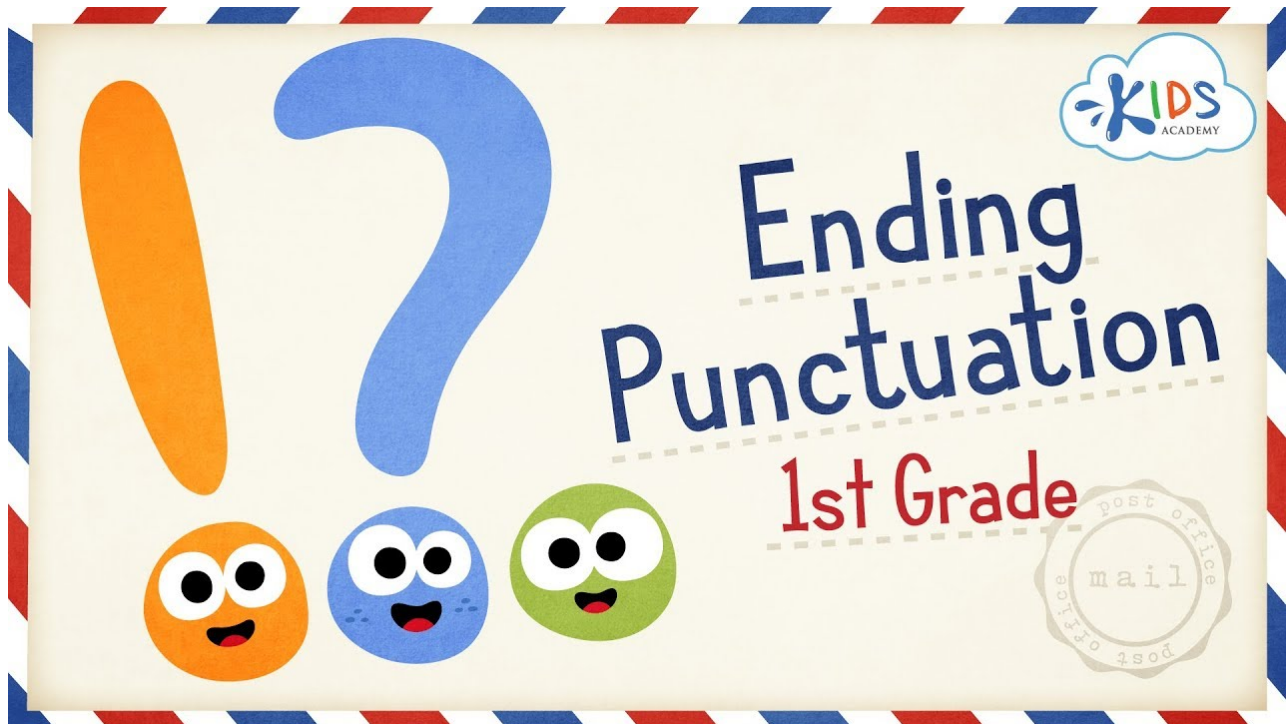
3. Tom is my brother.



4. James built a snowman.



- Videos: [Building Simple Sentences](#) , [Practice Verbs](#), [Ending Punctuation](#)



Watch on [YouTube](#)

- Additional practice: Check out [this catalog of more writing sentences practice](#)

Off-Screen Fun: Try using funny pictures to spark ideas. Give your child a silly photo or drawing and ask them to write one or two sentences. Read it like a newscast together for even more fun. Extend the fun and start a chain story where each family member adds a sentence. This was an often requested activity in the classroom.

PREVIEWING 2ND GRADE ELA SKILLS

Once you feel your child has a strong handle on 1st grade reading and writing skills, now is the perfect time to start exploring what's coming next. The following skills are a great sneak peak into what will be expected of them in 2nd grade. The transition will be much easier the more familiar these skills feel to them.

5. Reviewing Across Genres

What is it: Recognizing the differences between the types of texts fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and folktales. And understanding what makes each one unique.

Why it matters: In 2nd grade, students are expected to compare and contrast genres and identify text features. Students are expected to be able to talk about different kinds of stories, building their comprehension and setting the foundation for writing different formats. My students always have access to a mix of books which I would invite them to

Across Genres: Character Check

Check the picture that matches the sentence.

Rosa and Miguel walked to school.



Jack had magic beans.



Grasshopper played music and didn't work.



The ant collected food for winter.



- Additional practice: Check out [this catalog of more genre identification practice](#)

Off- Screen Fun: Grab your child's favorite book and help them identify the genre. Have them point off the features that helped them figure out what the genre was. Ask them what genre could they change it into and then have them draw it. I would have students draw genres from a bucket. They would change poems to fairy tales or an informational text into a fiction story.

TIPS TO MAKE SUMMER READING COUNT

- Make it part of the daily routine: Repetition helps build habits without feeling like a chore. You can easily add a short reading activity to breakfast, bedtime, or anytime you are in the car.
- Talk about reading and writing: Ask your child comprehension questions after reading like "What did you picture in your head while reading?" or "If you could change the ending how would you?" Talking helps build comprehension.
- Build off previous skills: Make sure you start with what your child already knows, then slowly build up. Phonics or writing, either way confidence grows when children feel like they're building on something they feel they have already mastered.

EXPLORE MORE

Explore full categories for more ELA practice:

- [Spelling](#)
- [Informational Text](#)
- [Reading Across Genres](#)

By keeping ELA skills fresh and fun over the summer, you're setting your child up for success. I've watched the difference it makes. Those who practice even a little feel more prepared, less anxious, and more ready to dive into second grade with confidence.

