Standards for Mathematical Practice – Grade 1

The Standards for Mathematical Practice describe the skills that mathematics educators should seek to develop in their students. The descriptions of the mathematical practices in this document provide examples of how student performance will change and grow as they engage with and master new and more advanced mathematical ideas across the grade levels.

MP.1 Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
In first grade, students realize that doing mathematics involves solving problems and discussing how they solved them. Students explain to themselves the meaning of a problem and look for ways to solve it. Younger students may use concrete objects or pictures to help them conceptualize and solve problems. They may check their thinking by asking themselves, "Does this make sense?" They are willing to try other approaches.

MP.2 Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
Younger students recognize that a number represents a specific quantity. They connect the quantity to written symbols. Quantitative reasoning entails creating a representation of a problem while attending to the meanings of the quantities.

In first grade students make sense of quantities and relationships while solving tasks. They represent situations by decontextualizing tasks into numbers and symbols. For example, "There are 60 children on the playground and some children go line up. If there are 20 children still playing, how many children lined up?" Students translate the situation into the equation: $60 - 20 = \square$ and then solve the task. Students also contextualize situations during the problem solving process. For example, students refer to the context of the task to determine they need to subtract 20 from 60 because the total number of children on the playground is the total number less the 20 that are still playing. Students might also reason about ways to partition two-dimensional geometric figures into halves and fourths.

MP.3 Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
First graders construct arguments using concrete referents, such as objects, pictures, drawings, and actions. They also practice their mathematical communication skills as they participate in mathematical discussions involving questions like "How did you get that?", "Explain your thinking.", and "Why is that true?" They not only explain their own thinking, but listen to others' explanations. They decide if the explanations make sense and ask questions. For example, "There are 15 books on the shelf. If you take some books off the shelf and there are now 7 left, how many books did you take off the shelf?" Students might use a variety of strategies to solve the task and then share and discuss their problem solving strategies with their classmates.

MP.4 Model with mathematics.
In early grades, students experiment with representing problem situations in multiple ways including numbers, words (mathematical language), drawing pictures, using objects, acting out, making a chart or list, creating equations, etc. Students need opportunities to connect the different representations and explain the connections. They should be able to use all of these representations as needed.

First grade students model real-life mathematical situations with a number sentence or an equation and check to make sure equations accurately match the problem context. Students use concrete models and

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MP.4 Model with mathematics (continued).
pictorial representations while solving tasks and also write an equation to model problem situations. For example, to solve the problem, "There are 11 bananas on the counter. If you eat 4 bananas, how many are left?" students could write the equation $11 - 4 = 7$. Students also create a story context for an equation such as $13 - 7 = 6$.

MP.5 Use appropriate tools strategically.
In first grade, students begin to consider the available tools (including estimation) when solving a mathematical problem and decide when certain tools might be helpful. For instance, first graders decide it might be best to use colored chips to model an addition problem.

In first grade students use tools such as counters, place value (base ten) blocks, hundreds number boards, number lines, concrete geometric shapes (e.g., pattern blocks, 3-dimensional solids), and virtual representations to support conceptual understanding and mathematical thinking. Students determine which tools are the most appropriate to use. For example, when solving $12 + 8 = \square$, students explain why place value blocks are more appropriate than counters.

MP.6 Attend to precision.
As young children begin to develop their mathematical communication skills, they try to use clear and precise language in their discussions with others and when they explain their own reasoning. In grade one, students use precise communication, calculation, and measurement skills. Students are able to describe their solutions strategies to mathematical tasks using grade-level appropriate vocabulary, precise explanations, and mathematical reasoning. When students measure objects iteratively (repetitively), they check to make sure there are no gaps or overlaps. Students regularly check their work to ensure the accuracy and reasonableness of solutions.

MP.7 Look for and make use of structure.
First graders begin to discern a pattern or structure. For instance, if students recognize $12 + 3 = 15$, then they also know $3 + 12 = 15$. (Commutative property of addition.) To add 4 + 6 + 4, the first two numbers can be added to make a ten, so $4 + 6 + 4 = 10 + 4 = 14$.

While solving addition problems, students begin to recognize the commutative property, for example $7 + 4 = 11$, and $4 + 7 = 11$. While decomposing two-digit numbers, students realize that any two-digit number can be broken up into tens and ones, e.g. 35 = 30 + 5, 76 = 70 + 6. Grade one students make use of structure when they work with subtraction as a missing addend problem, such as $13 - 7 = \square$ can be written as $7 + \square = 13$ and can be thought of as how much more do I need to add to 7 to get to 13?

MP.8 Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.
Grade one students begin to look for regularity in problem structures when solving mathematical tasks. For example, students add three one-digit numbers by using strategies such as "make a ten" or doubles. Students recognize when and how to use strategies to solve similar problems. For example, when evaluating 8 + 7 + 2, a student may say, "I know that 8 and 2 equals 10, then I add 7 to get to 17. It helps if I can make a 10 out of two numbers when I start." Students use repeated reasoning while solving a task with multiple correct answers. For example, solve the problem, "There are 12 crayons in the box. Some are red and some are blue. How many of each could there be?" Students use repeated reasoning to find pairs of numbers that add up to 12 (e.g., the 12 crayons could include 6 of each color $(6 + 6 = 12)$, 7 of one color and 5 of another $(7 + 5 = 12)$, etc.)

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