

End-of-School-Year Progress Report

Seyed-Mortaza Elahi

Homeschooled First Grader

June 16, 2021 – Braintree, MA

Prepared by Ehsan Elahi (father)

1-Overview

This is Seyed-Mortaza Elahi's end-of-school-year progress report after we started homeschooling him during his first grade in school year 2020-2021. Due to the pandemic, the school year started in the second half of September. Since we believed learning through online classes was very ineffective for Mortaza, we decided to homeschool him.



Although pandemic was the original reason that led us to this decision, after observing his asynchronous development of different academic skills, we realized that homeschooling was the right decision for him even without the limitations caused by the pandemic. Although the formal homeschooling started after the start of the school year, we had worked with him (in a milder fashion) throughout the summer 2020 too.

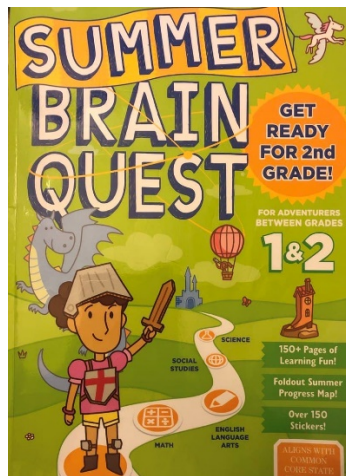
Mortaza's math and science skills and knowledge seems to be beyond what is expected of a first grader. Therefore, during our study hours, we mostly focused on English language arts, some social studies, and art (mostly drawing and craft). The image on the right shows his weekly study schedule. There has been some changes in this schedule during the school year. Below are the details about Mortaza's progress in each subject.

	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4
Sunday	Book Reading	Practice Book	Math	Art
Monday	Book Reading	Practice Book		
Tuesday	Book Reading	Practice Book	Math	Art
Wednesday	Book Reading	Practice Book	Science	P.E.
Thursday	Book Reading	Practice Book	Math	Art
Friday	Book Reading	Practice Book	Science	P.E.
Saturday	Book Reading	Practice Book	Math	Art/P.E.

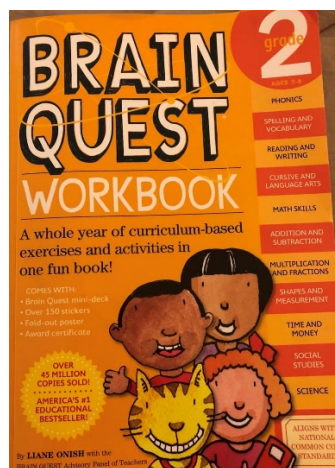
I have also recorded Mortaza's activities in a website (www.mortaza-elahi.com). In the rest of this report, I use links to the pages of this website for related details.

2-English Language Arts

Regarding the language arts, we mostly followed the topics in his practice books. We finished these two books by February 10, 2021. We did not cover the math and science sections.



After that, we started the following two books. We are now almost half-way through.



We also had book-reading hours every day, during which we asked Mortaza to read (with some help from us) pages of selected books. A list of these books can be found [here](#).

More details of Mortaza's progress in English Language Art are as follows:

- **Reading:** Mortaza can read almost all the words in the books written for his age. He can read all the frequency words.
- **Reading Comprehension:** He completely understands what he reads and can answer questions about it.
- **Writing:** Mortaza can write the answers in his practice books without difficulty.

- **Spelling:** He can spell simple words.
- **Language Concepts:** Mortaza has been introduced to the following concepts:
 - Synonym and antonym words
 - Rhyming words
 - Long and short sounds of vowels
 - Contracted form of words
 - Homophones
 - Word syllables
 - Sorting words alphabetically
 - Beginning, middle, and end of a story
 - Different types of words: nouns, verbs, adjectives
 - Role of words in a sentence: subjects, predicates
 - Question words: who, where, when, why
 - Different types of sentences: statement, question, exclamation
 - Cause and effect relationships
 - Poems

3-Social Studies

- **Time:** Mortaza learned how to tell time using a digital or analog clock.
- **Currency:** He know different types of coins, and how to count different amount of money.
- **Thanksgiving Day:** We reviewed the history and traditions of Thanksgiving Day.
- **Geography:** Mortaza is familiar with the map of the world and different continents and the location of Massachusetts in the US map.
- **Reading Maps:** Mortaza can find different locations in simple maps using its legend and find relative directions

4-Mathematics and Geometry

- **Addition:** Mortaza can calculate sum of multi-digit numbers

- **Subtraction:** He can calculate the difference of multi-digit numbers
- **Multiplication:** He knows the multiplication table and can calculate the the product of multi-digit numbers
- **Division:** He knows how to divide numbers. This is a recent skill and needs more practice
- **Divisibility:** He can identify whether a number is divisible by 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 9.
- **Squares:** Mortaza can calculate the squares of numbers smaller than 16 very easily. He uses his own algorithm to do it. Please see [here](#) for his ideas of how to calculate squares of numbers.
- **Equations:** He can solve very simple equations or systems of equations.
- **Prime Numbers and Prime Factors:** Mortaza understands what prime numbers are and can find the prime factors of not very large numbers.
- **Fraction and Decimal Numbers:** He understands the meaning of fraction and and decimal numbers and perform very simple operations on them.
- **Polygon:** Mortaza can draw polygons using a compass and a protractor.
- **Pythagorean Theorem:** Mortaza understands the Pythagorean Theorem.
- **Solids:** Mortaza has a deep understanding of 3-dimensional solids and their properties

On April 20, we started reading the "**Life of Fred**" book series. The focus of these books is teaching math through storytelling and humor. We started with its first book: Book of Apple. However, it was too easy for him. Therefore, we jumped to the intermediate level books. He just finished the book of "Kidney" and started the book of "Liver."

5-Science

Learning about science seems to be Mortaza's greatest passion. He shows great interest in all fields of science and particularly in Chemistry. He spends long hours watching science videos, spend time with his periodic table poster, or play with his science related games on his tablets. He enthusiastically asks us to listen to his explanation of what he has recently learnt or use them to make imaginary stories for himself, which he enacts them while walking and running around the house. The diversity of what he has learnt is such that I cannot possibly report them here. As an indication of what he watches and how much he has grasped, please see the "[Videos Watched](#)" and "[Activities and Stories](#)." Here are just two anecdotes out of what we have been observing on an almost daily basis.

- Once I took him to hiking in nearby woods. At some point, I told him we had to turn "right". To make sure he understood, I continued, "your right-hand is the one that you use to write." Then he went into a long explanation of how the genes that we inherited from our parents made us a right-handed or left-handed person.
- Another time, considering his great interest in chemistry, I decided to teach him about chemical reactions, and how to balance the related equation. Not being particularly good at chemistry, I went online and found a good example: the interaction between hydrogen and nitrogen. Then, I asked him if he knew what happened when these two elements interact. I expected to hear that he did not know and then I could triumphantly explain it to him. To my surprise, he told me, in the blink of an eye, that three molecules of Nitrogen combined with one molecule of Hydrogen to make two molecules of Ammonia.

6-Arts and Crafts

Mortaza shows great interest in arts and crafts as long as they are science or math related. Here are samples of his [drawings](#) and [crafts](#). However, he shows little interest when it comes to art in general. We therefore, made drawing general subjects part of his required study times. We also arranged for a private tutor to give him online lessons every other week (started in February 2021). I posted some of Mortaza's drawings in these lessons [here](#).

7-Direction for Moving Forward

Here are two observations that set our path for future schooling:

- Mortaza possesses an unbalanced set of skills and knowledge in different subjects. That is, his math and science level is more advanced than his art and English language. His understanding of social studies seems to be at a mid-level. To create a more balanced set of skills, we therefore keep emphasizing on art (mostly drawing) and English language arts.
- Mortaza does not receive the majority of his science education from formal channels, hence his knowledge in this subject (although more advanced than his age) is all over the place and does not follow a well-designed pattern. Moreover, there might be few

contradictions or misunderstandings in his learnings from the science videos he watches. To help him in this regard, we will continue our efforts to monitor the science videos he watches and guide him to the right directions when necessary.