

LANGUAGE ARTS CONTENT STANDARDS GRADE 4

READING

Students understand the basic features of reading. They select letter patterns and know how to translate them into spoken language by using phonics, syllabication, and word parts. They apply this knowledge to achieve fluent oral and silent reading. Students read and understand grade-level appropriate material. They draw upon a variety of comprehension strategies as needed (e.g., generating and responding to essential questions, making predictions, comparing information from several sources). In addition to their regular school reading, students read one-half million words annually, including a good representation of grade-level-appropriate narrative and expository text. Students read and respond to a wide variety of significant works of children's literature. They distinguish between the structural features of the text and the literary terms or elements (e.g., theme, setting, plot, characters).

WORD ANALYSIS, FLUENCY, AND SYSTEMATIC VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT: The standards for word analysis, fluency, and systematic vocabulary development are a key part of development in fourth through sixth grades. Skillful and fluent decoding is of fundamental importance to reading comprehension. A primary focus in these grades is having students learn words and concepts. Students study the origins, derivations, and use of words over time and in different types of text. Although extensive independent reading is the primary means of increasing vocabulary knowledge, children continue to need direct instruction in word-learning strategies to develop their vocabularies and enhance their ability to learn new words while reading.

Vocabulary knowledge is a direct result of how much a student reads. The more a student reads, the more the vocabulary knowledge increases. For example, students who read one-half million to one million words of running text generally learn approximately 3,000 words per year.

Word Recognition

- **Read narrative and expository text aloud with grade-appropriate fluency and accuracy and with appropriate pacing, intonation, and expression.**

Vocabulary and Concept Development

- **Apply knowledge of word origins, derivations, synonyms, antonyms and idioms to determine the meaning of words and phrases.**
- Use knowledge of root words to determine the meaning of unknown words within a passage.
- Know common Greek- and Latin-derived roots and affixes and use this knowledge to analyze the meaning of complex words (e.g., international).
- Use a thesaurus to determine related words and concepts.
- **Distinguish and interpret multiple meaning words.**

READING COMPREHENSION: In the upper elementary grades the standards focus primarily on the structural features of informational text. In fourth grade students learn to look at text patterns such as compare and contrast; central focus or theme; and use of facts, details, and examples. These fundamentals are then incorporated across other grade levels.

Structural Features of Informational Materials

- **Identify structural patterns found in informational text (e.g., compare and contrast, cause and effect, sequential-chronological order, proposition and support) to strengthen comprehension.**

Comprehension and Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

- **Use appropriate strategies when reading for different purposes (e.g., full comprehension, locating information, personal enjoyment).**
- Make and confirm predictions about text by using prior knowledge and ideas presented in text itself, including illustrations, titles, topic sentences, key words, and foreshadowing clues.
- **Evaluate new information and hypotheses by testing them against known information and ideas.**
- Compare and contrast information on the same topic after reading several passages or articles.
- **Distinguish between cause and effect and between fact and opinion in expository text.**
- Follow multiple-step instructions from a basic technical manual (e.g., how to use computer commands or video games).

LITERARY RESPONSE AND ANALYSIS: Students continue to learn about fundamental elements of literature that will allow them to appreciate the rich quality and complexity of materials they read. Through the upper elementary grades students identify and analyze a wide variety of literary forms such as poetry, drama, myths and fables. Students learn to understand the complex elements of plot and evaluate patterns and literary techniques that influence the readers' perspectives.

Structural Features of Literature

- Describe the structural differences of various imaginative forms of literature, including fantasies, fables, myths, legends, and fairy tales.

Narrative Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

- **Identify the main events of the plot, their causes, and how each influences future action(s).**
- Use knowledge of the situation and setting and of a character's traits and motivations to determine the causes for that character's actions.
- Compare and contrast tales from different cultures by tracing the exploits of one character type and develop theories to account for similar tales in diverse cultures (e.g., trickster tales).
- **Define figurative language (e.g., simile, metaphor, hyperbole, personification) and identify its use in literary works.**

WRITING

Students write clear and coherent sentences and paragraphs that develop a central idea. Their writing considers audience and purpose. They successfully use the stages of the writing process (i.e., pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing successive versions). Students write compositions that describe and explain familiar objects, events, and experiences. Student writing demonstrates a command of standard American English and the drafting, research, and organizational strategies outlined in Writing Standard 1.0.

WRITING STRATEGIES AND APPLICATIONS: Students continue to use all stages of the writing process, but the standards specifically address revising and editing. They are expected to create multiple-paragraph narrative and expository compositions and use traditional structures (e.g., chronological order, cause and effect, etc.) for conveying information. It also assumes that students can select a focus, organizational structure, and point of view based on purpose, audience, and format. The standards begin to make use of the research process and a variety of learning resources and technologies in the school library, classrooms, the community, and the home as tools and strategies for preparing various types of documents, reports, and presentations. Writing applications are extended in a full range of text structures, including biographies, short stories, responses to literature, research reports, and persuasive compositions.

WRITING STRATEGIES:

Organization and Focus

- **Select a focus, an organizational structure, and a point of view based upon purpose, audience, length, and format requirements.**
- **Create multiple-paragraph compositions:**
 - a. Provide an introductory paragraph.
 - b. Establish and support a central idea with a topic sentence at or near the beginning of the first paragraph.
 - c. Include supporting paragraphs with simple facts, details, and explanations.
 - d. Conclude with a paragraph that summarizes the points.
 - e. Use correct indention.
- Use traditional structures for conveying information (e.g., chronological order, cause and effect, similarity and difference, and posing and answering a question).

Penmanship

- Write fluidly and legibly in cursive or joined italic, easily transcribing manuscript into cursive and vice-versa.

Research and Technology

- **Quote or paraphrase information sources, citing them appropriately.**
- Locate information in reference texts by using organizational features (e.g., prefaces, appendices).
- **Use various reference materials as an aid to writing (e.g., dictionary, thesaurus, card catalog, encyclopedia, on-line information).**

- Understand the structure and organization of (and use) almanacs, newspapers, and periodicals.
- **Demonstrate basic keyboarding skills and familiarity with the vocabulary of technology (e.g., cursor, software, memory, disk drive, hard drive).**

Revising and Evaluating Strategies

- **Edit and revise selected drafts to improve coherence and progression by adding, deleting, consolidating, and rearranging text.**

WRITING APPLICATIONS (GENRES AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS):

Using the writing strategies of grade four outlined in Writing Standard 1.0, students:

- **Write narratives:**
 - a. Relate ideas, observations, or recollections of an event or experience.
 - b. Provide a context to enable the reader to imagine the world of the event or experience.
 - c. Use concrete sensory details.
 - d. Provide insight into why the selected event or experience is memorable.
- **Write responses to literature:**
 - a. Demonstrate an understanding of the literary work.
 - b. Support judgments through references to both the text and prior knowledge.
- **Write information reports:**
 - a. Frame a central question about an issue or situation.
 - b. Include facts and details for focus.
 - c. Draw from more than one source of information (e.g., speakers, books, newspapers, other media sources).
- **Write summaries that contain the main ideas of the reading selection and the most significant details.**

WRITTEN AND ORAL ENGLISH-LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS

Students write and speak with a command of standard English conventions that are appropriate to this grade level.

WRITTEN AND ORAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS: Students are expected to have a command of the English-language conventions, including sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

Sentence Structure

- Use simple and compound sentences in writing and speaking.
- Combine short, related sentences with appositives, participle phrases, adjectives, adverbs, and prepositional phrases.

Grammar

- Identify and use regular and irregular verbs, adverbs, prepositions and coordinating conjunctions in writing and speaking.

Punctuation

- Use parentheses, commas in direct quotations, and apostrophes in the possessive case of nouns and in contractions.
- Use underlining, quotation marks, or italics to identify titles of documents.

Capitalization

- Capitalize names of magazines, newspapers, works of art, musical compositions, organizations, and the first word in quotations when appropriate.

Spelling

- Spell correctly roots, inflections, suffixes and prefixes, and syllable constructions.

LISTENING AND SPEAKING

Students listen and respond critically to oral communication. They speak in a manner that guides the listener to understand important ideas by using proper phrasing, pitch, and modulation. Students deliver brief recitations and oral presentations about familiar experiences or interests that are organized around a coherent thesis statement. Student speaking demonstrates a command of standard American English and the organization and delivery strategies outlined in Listening and Speaking Standard 1.

LISTENING AND SPEAKING STRATEGIES: In the upper elementary grades, listening strategies require that students ask thoughtful questions, summarize major ideas, use supporting evidence to substantiate conclusions, and identify how language usages reflect regional and cultural differences. During their delivery of oral communications, students are expected to present effective introductions and conclusions; use traditional structures for conveying information. They are expected to analyze news media with increasing sophistication and ability.

Comprehension

- **Ask thoughtful questions and respond to relevant questions with appropriate elaboration in oral settings.**
- **Summarize major ideas and supporting evidence presented in spoken messages and formal presentations.**
- Identify how language (e.g., sayings, expressions, usages) reflects regions and cultures
- Give precise directions and instructions.

Organization and Delivery of Oral Communication

- Present effective introductions and conclusions that guide and inform the listener's understanding of key ideas and evidence.
- Use traditional structures for conveying information (e.g., cause and effect, similarity and difference, and posing and answering a question).
- Emphasize points in ways that assist the listener/viewer in following key ideas and concepts.
- Use details, examples, anecdotes, or experiences to explain or clarify information.
- Use volume, pitch, phrasing, pace, modulation, and gestures appropriately to enhance meaning.

Analysis and Evaluation of Oral Media Communication

- **Evaluate the role of the media in focusing attention on events and in forming opinions on issues.**

SPEAKING APPLICATIONS (GENRES AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS): Students are expected to use speaking strategies to deliver narrative and informative presentations. They should demonstrate their ability to relate ideas, frame a key question, establish a controlling idea or topic, and summarize. They should use clear diction, tempo, volume and phrasing.

Using the Grade 4 speaking strategies outlined in Listening and Speaking Standard 1.0, students:

- **Make narrative presentations:**
 - a. Relate ideas, observations, or recollections about an event or experience.
 - b. Provide a context that enables the listener to imagine the circumstances of the event or experience.
 - c. Provide insight into why the selected event or experience is memorable.
- **Make informational presentations:**
 - a. Frame a key question.
 - b. Include facts and details that help listeners to focus.
 - c. Incorporate more than one source of information (e.g., speakers, books, newspapers, television or radio reports).
- **Deliver oral summaries of articles and books that contain the main ideas of the event or article and the most significant details.**
- **Recite brief poems (i.e., two or three stanzas), soliloquies, or dramatic dialogues, using clear diction, tempo, volume, and phrasing.**