

English Language Arts Elementary Course Focus Areas by Strand

Strand: Communication and Multimodal Literacies

K-2 Focus

At the kindergarten level, students will develop their understanding of language and enhance their ability to communicate effectively. Emphasis will be placed on having students build and use listening and speaking vocabularies through participation in oral language activities employing poems, rhymes, songs, and stories. Students will learn rules for conversation, skills for participation in discussions, and strategies for working respectfully with others. Teachers will encourage the development of interpersonal skills that are foundational to effective communication and collaboration. These skills are essential for success in future postsecondary education and workplace environments.

First graders will further develop their understanding of language and enhance their ability to communicate effectively. Students will use listening and speaking skills to participate in classroom discussions and work respectfully with others. They will also begin to use oral language skills to gain and explain information. Students will build and use listening and speaking vocabularies to tell and retell stories and participate in choral speaking, recitation, and creative dramatics.

Students in grade 2 will develop an understanding of language structure and enhance their ability to communicate effectively. Students will use listening and speaking skills to participate in classroom discussions, work respectfully with others, and develop simple presentations using multimodal tools. Students will create oral stories and participate in choral speaking, recitation, and creative dramatics. Students will take turns in different roles during collaborative activities. Teachers will encourage the development of interpersonal skills that are foundational to effective communication and collaboration. These skills are essential for success in future postsecondary education and workplace environments.

Strand: Reading

K-2 Focus

In kindergarten, students will be immersed in a text-rich environment to develop phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, comprehension, and an appreciation for reading. The exposure to fiction and nonfiction texts will enable students to develop an awareness of reading materials as sources of information and enjoyment. Students will learn to identify and name the capital and lowercase letters of the alphabet, understand that letters represent sounds, and identify initial and final consonant sounds in one-syllable words. Kindergarten students will expand listening and speaking vocabularies. They will learn to comprehend and think creatively as they relate stories through drama, retelling, drawing, and their own writing. Teachers will encourage the development of reading skills that are foundational to effective

comprehension and critical thinking. These skills are essential for success in future postsecondary education and workplace environments.

First grade students will be immersed in a text-rich environment to develop phonological awareness, phonetic skills, vocabulary, comprehension, and to use reading materials as sources of information and enjoyment. Having developed a concept of word and letter-sound correspondence, students will concentrate on learning and integrating basic phonetic principles, decoding words in isolation and in context, using meaning clues, and employing language and sentence structure to read and substantially increase sight-word vocabulary. Students will use a variety of strategies to read new words and will read familiar selections with fluency, accuracy, and expression. Students will continue to develop an understanding of fiction and nonfiction texts and respond to readings through group discussions and writing. Students will increase vocabulary and comprehension strategies through cross-content reading. Teachers will encourage the development of reading skills that are foundational to effective comprehension and critical thinking. These skills are essential for success in future postsecondary education and workplace environments.

Developing literacy skills continues to be a priority in the second grade. Students will be immersed in an environment filled with fiction and nonfiction texts, which relate to all content areas and personal interests. Students will expand vocabulary, use a combination of strategies when reading, and read familiar selections with fluency, accuracy, and expression. Students will identify story elements including plot, characters, setting, theme, conflict, and resolution. Students will demonstrate comprehension skills by identifying main ideas, making and confirming predictions, questioning, summarizing, and drawing conclusions. Students will learn and apply comprehension strategies while reading cross-content materials. Teachers will encourage the development of reading skills that are foundational to effective comprehension and critical thinking. These skills are essential for success in future postsecondary education and workplace environments.

Strand: Writing

K-2 Focus

At the kindergarten level, students will begin to build a connection between oral and written language. Awareness that spoken language can be written and written language can be read is a fundamental concept in communicating ideas. Students will learn to print the capital and lowercase letters of the alphabet as well as their first and last names. Kindergarten writing reflects the students' oral language, and students will communicate their ideas through pictures and writing. Teachers will encourage the development of writing skills that are foundational to effective written communication and critical thinking. These skills are essential for success in future postsecondary education and workplace environments.

In first grade, reading and writing will develop together. Students will be given daily opportunities to write and read their writing. Students will write in a variety of forms to communicate ideas. As

their knowledge of letter-sound correspondence and their sight-word vocabulary increases, they will be able to use these skills to put their ideas and thoughts on paper. With teacher guidance and support, they will also begin to revise and edit selected pieces of their writing for a specific audience. Teachers will encourage the development of writing skills that are foundational to effective written communication and critical thinking. These skills are necessary for success in future postsecondary education and workplace environments.

At the second grade level, students will continue to develop reading and writing together. They will be given daily opportunities to write and will be expected to revise selected pieces and share them with others. Students will begin to make the transition to cursive handwriting. Students will understand writing as a process and will write in a variety of forms. Students will organize writing according to type and purpose and will elaborate to provide support and detail. They will also begin to apply written communication skills across all content areas. Teachers will encourage the development of writing skills that are foundational to effective written communication and critical thinking. These skills are necessary for success in future postsecondary and workplace environments.

Strand: Research K-2 Focus

Students in kindergarten will be introduced to the research process by asking investigative questions, which will be used to solve problems. Research in kindergarten prepares students for more formalized research in subsequent grades.

First graders will continue to research to answer questions and solve problems by using available resources. Teachers will encourage the development of research skills that are foundational to effective critical thinking and responsible use of information. These skills are necessary for success in future postsecondary education and workplace environments.

Second grade students will conduct research by generating topics of interest, asking questions, identifying sources, and finding and organizing information. Students will complete an oral, written, or visual research product collaboratively or individually. Teachers will encourage the development of research skills that are foundational to effective critical thinking and responsible use of information. These skills are necessary for success in future postsecondary education and workplace environments.

Strand: Communication and Multimodal Literacies 3-5 Focus

Students in grade 3 will use communication skills to participate in classroom discussions, work respectfully with others in a variety of situations, and develop presentations using multimodal tools. Students will develop specific skills for organizing, expressing, and presenting ideas or

information. Teachers will encourage the development of interpersonal skills that are foundational to effective communication and collaboration. These skills are essential for success in future postsecondary education and workplace environments.

At the fourth-grade level, students will continue to increase communication and collaboration skills by working in diverse teams. To be contributing participants in discussions, students will apply skills to effectively communicate ideas and opinions, while showing value for others' contributions. Students will deliver interactive, multimodal presentations and begin to examine media messages. Teachers will encourage the development of effective, interpersonal communication and collaboration skills that are essential for success in future postsecondary education and workplace environments.

In grade 5, students will demonstrate the ability to collaborate with diverse teams by working respectfully with others, using active listening skills, and showing value for individual contributions. Students will create and deliver interactive multimodal presentations. Students will compare/contrast a variety of techniques used in media messaging. Teachers will encourage the development of effective interpersonal communication and collaboration skills that are essential for success in future postsecondary education and workplace environments.

Strand: Reading

3-5 Focus

Third grade students will read a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts, which relate to all content areas and personal interests. Students will continue to develop strategic reading skills, such as word analysis and construction of meaning from text. Students will continue to use comprehension strategies to compare and contrast story elements and differentiate between fiction and nonfiction. Teachers will encourage the development of reading skills that are foundational to effective comprehension and critical thinking. These skills are essential for success in future postsecondary education and workplace environments.

In fourth grade, there is an increased emphasis on reading comprehension by comparing fiction and nonfiction texts, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, and differentiating between fact and opinion. Students will expand vocabulary using knowledge of roots, affixes, synonyms, antonyms, and homophones. Teachers will encourage the development of reading skills that are foundational to effective comprehension and critical thinking. These skills are essential for success in future postsecondary education and workplace environments.

Students will continue to expand vocabulary using knowledge of roots, affixes, synonyms, antonyms, and homophones. In fifth grade, there is an emphasis on reading comprehension by comparing fiction and nonfiction texts. In fiction texts, students will explain plot development and conflict resolution and differentiate between first and third person points of view. Fifth grade instruction emphasizes nonfiction reading; students will identify authors' organizational patterns and use texts to support opinions and conclusions. Teachers will encourage the development of

reading skills that are foundational to effective comprehension and critical thinking. These skills are essential for success in future postsecondary education and workplace environments.

Strand: Writing

3-5 Focus

At the third-grade level, students will continue to develop reading and writing together. Students will use the writing process to plan, draft, revise, and edit writing in a variety of forms. Student writing will become more complex, and students will learn to select details to elaborate on the main idea of a paragraph. They will use written communication skills across content areas. Students also will write legibly in cursive. Teachers will encourage the development of writing skills that are foundational to effective written communication and critical thinking. These skills are necessary for success in future postsecondary and workplace environments.

At the fourth-grade level, students will develop and build their reading and writing skills together. Students will use the writing process to plan, draft, revise, and edit writing in a variety of forms to include narrative, descriptive, opinion, and expository. They will select and narrow a topic, develop a plan for writing, and organize information into several paragraphs with a central idea and supporting details. The instructional focus will include an emphasis on composing and written expression. Revising writing for clarity and editing for usage and mechanics will continue to be important at this grade level. Teachers will encourage the development of writing skills that are foundational to effective written communication and critical thinking. These skills are necessary for success in future postsecondary and workplace environments.

At the fifth grade level, students will continue to develop as readers and writers as they write in a variety of forms including narrative, descriptive, expository, and persuasive. Students will write multi paragraph compositions including evidence to inform or persuade an audience. Precise and descriptive vocabulary and varied sentence structure will become important tools for creating tone and voice within a text. Students will be expected to have greater control over the conventions of writing. Teachers will encourage the development of writing skills that are foundational to effective written communication and critical thinking. These skills are necessary for success in future postsecondary education and workplace environments.

Strand: Research

3-5 Focus

In grade 3, students will continue to identify and use appropriate resources to complete a research product. Students will understand plagiarism and will report information using their own words. Teachers will encourage the development of research skills that are foundational to effective critical thinking and responsible use of information. These skills are necessary for success in future postsecondary education and workplace environments.

Fourth grade students will demonstrate comprehension of the research process by evaluating the relevance and reliability of information collected to create a research product. Additionally, students will integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism. Teachers will encourage the

development of research skills that are foundational to effective critical thinking and responsible use of information. These skills are necessary for success in future postsecondary education and workplace environments.

Fifth graders will demonstrate comprehension of the research process by evaluating the relevance, reliability, and credibility of information collected. Students will learn to evaluate and synthesize information to use in their oral, visual, written, or multimodal research product. Students will understand there are consequences of plagiarism. Teachers will encourage the development of research skills that are foundational to effective critical thinking and responsible use of information. These skills are necessary for success in future postsecondary education and workplace environments.