

4th Grade

English Language Arts

Key Instructional Activities

- Paying close attention to key features of informational books and articles: these include understanding the main and supporting ideas; being able to compare and contrast information; and explaining how the author uses facts, details, and evidence to support particular points
- Determining the theme or main idea of a story, play, or poem
- Drawing on information from multiple books, articles, or online sources to locate an answer or to solve a problem quickly
- Comparing ideas, characters, events, and settings in stories and myths from different cultures
- Writing summaries or opinions about topics supported with a set of well-organized facts, details, and examples
- Taking notes and organizing information from books, articles, and online sources to learn more about a topic
- Writing stories with dialogue and descriptions of character's actions, thoughts, and feelings
- Relating words that are common in reading to words with similar meanings (synonyms) and to their opposites (antonyms)
- Independently conducting short research projects on different aspects of a topic using evidence from books and the Internet
- Paraphrasing and responding to information presented in discussions, such as comparing and contrasting ideas and analyzing evidence that speakers use to support particular points
- Explaining how an author uses facts, details, and evidence to support their points •
- Reading and understanding information presented in charts, graphs, timelines, and other illustrations



HOUSTON COUNTY
BOARD OF EDUCATION
HIGH-ACHIEVING STUDENTS

By the end of 4th grade, all students are expected to:

- *Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words;*
- *Apply grade-appropriate language skills in writing;*
- *Self-select books, self-monitor to correct errors when reading and writing, and talk with and listen to peers about one's reading and writing to become lifelong readers and writers; and*
- *Use reading and writing to communicate through listening, speaking, and viewing.*

Building the stamina and skills to read challenging fiction, nonfiction, and other materials fundamental in 4th grade. Your student will continue to build vocabulary skills by reading complicated text. He or she also will make important strides in their ability to explain what says — both explicitly and what is implied from its details.

Helping Your Student in 4th Grade ELA

Learning does not end in the classroom. Students need help and support at home to succeed in their studies. Try to create a quiet place for your student to study, and carve out time every day when your student can concentrate on reading and writing uninterrupted by friends, brothers or sisters, or other distractions. Sit down with your student at least once a week for 15 to 30 minutes while he or she works on homework. This will keep you informed about what your student is working on, and it will help you be the first to know if your student needs help with specific topics. By taking these small steps, you will be helping your student become successful both in and outside the classroom.

- Read, read, read! The amount your student reads independently is directly connected to his or her success in school.
- Visit a library or bookstore together and ask the librarian or bookseller to recommend young adult books. To find popular young adult books for your student to read, visit <https://tinyurl.com/y3rjcelh>.
- Urge your child to use logical arguments to defend his or her opinion. If your child wants a raise in allowance, ask him or her to research commonsense allowance systems and, based on that research, explain reasons why, supported by facts and details.
- Practice determining meanings of unknown words when you encounter them in written texts, television shows, radio, etc.
- Talk about the news together. Pick one story in the news, read it together, and discuss with your child what it means.
- Provide time and space for your student to read independently. This time should be free from distractions such as television.
- Ask your student what he or she learned from reading. Have him or her read the most interesting or useful sections aloud, and discuss how that knowledge can be used in real life.
- Keep books, magazines, and newspapers at home. Make sure your child sees you reading.
- Visit museums, zoos, theaters, historical sites, aquariums, and other educational places to help increase your student's exposure to new knowledge and vocabulary.
- Use technology to help build your student's interest in reading. There are several websites where students can read books or articles online. The computer will help with words the student cannot read independently. Libraries also have computers students can use to access those sites. Feel free to ask a librarian or teacher for suggestions.



4th Grade ELA System Pacing Overview



This guide provides an overview of what your student will learn in his or her 4th Grade English Language Arts course. It focuses on the key skills your student will learn, which will build a strong foundation for success in the other subjects studied throughout elementary school. This guide is based on the state-adopted Georgia Standards of Excellence.

August - September

Reading Focuses

Living a Reading Life and Sharing Your Thinking through Talking and Writing in Both Fiction and Nonfiction Texts

Writing Focus

Narrative

Performance Goal: Developing a narrative essay

Students start the year off learning ways to be a respectful member of the classroom community and get started with independent reading by finding out about good books and setting up good habits. They learn how to collect their thinking in a reader's notebook from the minilesson work. They learn to write letters to share their thinking about books whilst providing evidence for their thinking. They are tasked to respond to the teacher's questions when they write their next letters. The next series of lessons focuses around the study of memoir—point of view, turning point, message. They think about similarities and differences between fiction and nonfiction genres and carry these with them while analyzing author's craft.

Students will go beyond external character traits to develop their ideas about character's internal traits. What does he/she want? What is he/she afraid of? This helps student delve deeper into developing three-dimensional characters. Students will prepare pieces for audiences through more focused drafting, deep revision work, and editing.

- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.
- Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences in from the text.
- Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
- Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
- Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations.
- Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

- Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
 - ✓ Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
 - ✓ Use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.
 - ✓ Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events.
 - ✓ Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.
 - ✓ Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.
- With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

September - October

Reading Focuses: Book Clubs and Studying Author and Illustrator's Craft in Fiction and Nonfiction

Writing Focus: Opinion (Personal and Persuasive Essays)

Performance Goal: Developing a persuasive essay

Students take all of the **thinking** work with them as they delve into book clubs with their peers learning ways to prepare for **talking** and **writing** about their ideas. They learn how to self-reflect on their participation and set goals. The next set of lessons focus on studying illustrator's craft and they learn to sketch and analyze characters using what they learned and adding this learning into book club talk. Students learn to value and encourage diverse perspective and the skill of adding onto ideas to extend the thinking of the group.

This unit focuses on structure and elaboration of persuasive writing. They will learn to use the introduction to orient and engage the reader and the conclusion to provide final related thinking. They develop thesis statements, provide reasons to support their opinions, and collect and organize evidence to elaborate on these reasons.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. • Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required materials; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion. • Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension • Paraphrase portions of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and doormats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. • Use combined knowledge of all letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and morphology (e.g., roots and affixes) to read accurately unfamiliar multisyllabic words in context and out of context. • Explain how the author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text. • Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears. • Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text identifying similarities and differences. • Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions). • Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. • Review the key ideas expressed and explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Introduce a topic clearly and group related information in paragraphs and sections; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. ✓ Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic. ✓ Link ideas within categories of information using words and phrases. (e.g., another, for example, also, because). ✓ Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. ✓ Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented. • With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing. • Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. • Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
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November - December

<p>Reading Focuses: Understanding Plot and Character (feelings, motivations, intentions), Write About Reading (summary, recommendation, sketch, short write, storyboard), and learn Skills/Strategies for Tackling Difficult Text</p>	<p>Writing Focus: Narrative (Literary Essays: Writing about Fiction)</p>
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Performance Goal: Developing a literary essay

<p>Students develop an understanding that the plot is what happens in a story so they can understand how the story works as a whole, follow events, and think about cause and effect. When students learn to expect that stories have a beginning, a problem, a series of events, a high point, a solution to the problem, and an ending, they understand how stories are constructed and can attend to the individual parts. They learn to present their knowing of plot and individual parts by learning different forms for responding to reading (summary, recommendation, sketch, short write, and storyboard). They also further develop their understanding of character (and human nature) by studying feelings, motivations, and intentions. Lessons are embedded to support students in reading with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension as texts get more difficult.</p>	<p>To learn more about writing, students will also need to learn more about reading. Throughout the unit, students are taught the value of close reading of complex texts. They will notice what the author has done and fashion evidence-based theories about the text. Students will learn to write structured, compelling essays in which they make claims and analyze, unpack, and incorporate evidence.</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. • Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text. • Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text. • Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics and patterns of events in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures. • Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably. • Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. • Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace. • Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources. • Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions). • Explain major differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems and drama when writing or speaking about a text. • Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer’s purpose. ✓ Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details. ✓ Link opinion and reasons using words and phrases(e.g., for instance, in order to, in addition). • Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. • With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing. • Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Apply grade 4 Reading standardsto literature (e.g., “Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text [e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions].”). • Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations. • Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics (e.g., opposition of good and evil) and patterns of events (e.g., the quest) in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures. • Demonstrate understanding of words by relating them to their opposites (antonyms) and to words with similar but not identical meanings (synonyms). • Use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., telegraph, photograph, autograph). • Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words. • Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. 	
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January-February

<p style="text-align: center;">Reading Focuses:</p> <p>FICTION: Character Traits and Development, Setting, Themes and Writing Summaries</p> <p>NONFICTION: Author/Illustrator Craft and Theme in Nonfiction and Informational Texts (Poetry, Scientific, & Technical Texts)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Writing Focus:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Informational</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Bringing History to Life: Informational Writing)</p>
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Performance Goal: Developing an informational essay

<p>Students dig deeper into the study of characters by looking closer at understanding their traits and how they develop as sometimes complex people/characters. Students then learn that as characters develop and deal with problems they change because of what they learn in the struggles. Next, students thinking about themes in both fiction and nonfiction books—themes that showcase what the book is really about and how themes typical relate to human challenges and social issues. Students take what they learned when learning about plot and the complexity of characters to summarizing in an organized way. Then next sets of lessons move into nonfiction/informational texts. Students learn how author/illustrator craft their texts to engage and help its readers gain clear information (e.g. connectives, text structures, and text features). They learn firsthand and secondhand accounts of topics, and learn how to summarize informational texts. And finally, the last set of lessons takes students into a study of poetry (fiction and nonfiction) where they learn to further enjoy author’s craft moves to help readers better understand topics, imagine settings, and enjoy the experience (verse, rhythm, and meter).</p>	<p>In this unit, students take on the challenge of researching history. They study multiple points of view, support a position with reasons and evidence, tackle complex texts, and learn strategies for using new domain-specific words.</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. • Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text. • Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text. • Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions). • Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics (e.g., opposition of good and evil) and patterns of events (e.g., the quest) in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures. • Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text. • Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text. • Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears. • Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly. • Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describe the differences in focus and the information provided. • Explain major differences between <u>poems</u>, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems and drama when writing or speaking about a text. • Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Introduce a topic clearly and group related information in paragraphs and sections; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. ✓ Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic. ✓ Link ideas within categories of information using words and phrases. (e.g., another, for example, also, because). ✓ Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. ✓ Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented. • Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. • With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. • Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.
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<p>Herculean).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening (e.g. choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely, choose punctuation for effect) • Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. 	
March - May	
<p>Reading Focuses: Studying Historical Fiction, Biography, Graphic Texts, Fairy Tales Read Like Writers: Analyzing Writer’s Craft, Purpose and Message</p>	<p>Writing Focus: Historical Fiction Writing or Writing Graphic Novels</p>
<p>Students spent time hearing and discussing a variety of historical fiction (those with diverse people, cultures, time periods, and circumstances) and biographies. These sets of minilessons help students to summarize the most important characteristics of the genres and review some of the important parts of story (structure, setting, problem, message, perspective/point of view, illustrations) and author’s craft (precise words, punctuation, techniques—e.g. similes and metaphors, humor).</p>	<p>In this unit, children take on the challenge of researching history. They study multiple points of view, support a position with reasons and evidence, tackle complex texts, and learn strategies for using new domain-specific words. They will write two research reports during the unit.</p>
Performance Goal: Developing a narrative or informational essay	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain major differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems and drama when writing or speaking about a text. • Determine the meaning of general academic language and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area. • Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. • Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text. • Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions). • Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean). • Differentiate between contexts that call for more formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion). • Choose words and phrases for effect. • Choose punctuation for effect. • Explain how the author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text. • Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text. • Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describe the differences in focus and the information provided. • Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text. • Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text identifying similarities and differences. • Identify reasons and evidence a speaker provides to support particular points. • Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably. • Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics (e.g., opposition of good and evil) and patterns of events (e.g., the quest) in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally. ✓ Use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations. ✓ Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events. ✓ Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely. ✓ Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events. • With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing. • Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. • Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.