Grade 4 Reading Standards

Grade 4 Reading Standards for Literature [RL]

The following standards offer a focus for instruction each year and help ensure that students gain adequate exposure to a range of texts and tasks. Rigor is also infused through the requirement that students read increasingly complex texts through the grades. *Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.*

Key Ideas and Details

1. Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text states explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

   For example, students read Natalie Babbitt's novel* Tuck Everlasting *and select paragraphs and sentences in the novel in which the reader is given hints about the mysterious qualities of the spring water that has given eternal life to the members of the Tuck family. They pay particular attention to how Babbitt's use of metaphors and images gives richness to the text. (RL.4.1, RL.4.2, RL.4.4, L.4.5)
2. Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize a text.
3. 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).

Craft and Structure

4. 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*); explain how figurative language (e.g., simile, metaphor) enriches a text. (See grade 4 Language Standards 4–6 on applying knowledge of vocabulary to reading.)
5. Explain major differences among prose, poetry, and drama and refer to the structural elements of each (e.g., paragraphs and chapters for prose; stanza and verse for poetry; scene, stage directions, cast of characters for drama) when writing or speaking about a text.
6. Compare and contrast the points of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Make connections between a written story or drama and its visual or oral presentation, identifying where the presentation reflects specific descriptions and directions in the written text.
8. (Not applicable. For expectations regarding themes in literary texts, see RL.2.)
9. 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.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. Independently and proficiently read and comprehend literary texts representing a variety of genres, cultures, and perspectives and exhibiting complexity appropriate for at least grade 4. (See more on qualitative and quantitative dimensions of text complexity.)

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Grade 4 Reading Standards for Informational Text [RI]

Key Ideas and Details

1. Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text states explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
2. Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize a text.

   For example, students read parts of* I, Columbus, a retelling of entries from Columbus's journal of 1492-93 *by Peter and Connie Roop. In pairs, they summarize important facts about Columbus's voyage, arrival, search for gold, failure to understand the treasures on the islands, and return to Spain. They use what they have learned to write reports, which they display in the library. (RI.4.2, W.4.2, W.4.4)
3. Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, mathematical, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

Craft and Structure

4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a *grade 4 topic or subject area*. (See grade 4 Language Standards 4–6 on applying knowledge of vocabulary to reading.)
5. 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.
6. Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describe the differences in focus and the information provided.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, timelines, animations, or interactive elements on webpages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

   Connections to the Standards for Mathematical Practice

   2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.

   6. Attend to precision.

   See the pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework or the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics.

   For example, as they are learning about fractions in math, students view an episode of the PBS math series Cyberchase. Characters in the episode must use their knowledge of equivalent fractions to sort through crystals to find the one that contains the most orange. After students view the video, they explain what the characters did to solve the problem, and how the visual models in the animation clarified what equivalent fractions are.
8. Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.
9. Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak knowledgeably about the subject.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. Independently and proficiently read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, mathematical, and technical texts, exhibiting complexity appropriate for at least

    grade 4. (See more on qualitative and quantitative dimensions of text complexity.)

Grade 4 Reading Standards for Foundational Skills [RF]

These standards are directed toward fostering students' understanding and working knowledge of concepts of print, the alphabetic principle, and other basic conventions of the English writing system. A research- and evidence-based scope and sequence for phonological and phonics development and the complete range of foundational skills are not ends in and of themselves. They are necessary and important components of an effective, comprehensive reading curriculum designed to develop proficient readers with the capacity to comprehend texts across a range of types and disciplines. Instruction should be differentiated: as students become skilled readers, they will need much less practice with these concepts. Struggling readers may need more or different kinds of practice. The point is to teach students what they need to learn and not what they already know—to discern when particular children or activities warrant more or less attention.
Note: RF.1 and RF.2, on print concepts and phonological awareness, apply only to pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and grade 1.

Phonics and Word Recognition

3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
- **a.** 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.

Fluency

4. Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
- **a.** Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding.
- **b.** Read grade-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings.
- **c.** Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.

Grade 4 Writing Standards [W]

The following standards offer a focus for instruction each year to help ensure that students gain adequate mastery of a range of skills and applications. Each year in their writing, students should demonstrate increasing sophistication in all aspects of language use, from vocabulary and syntax to the development and organization of ideas, and they should address increasingly demanding content and sources. *Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.* The expected growth in student writing ability is reflected both in the standards themselves and in the collections of annotated student writing samples in Appendix C of the *Common Core State Standards* and the Massachusetts Writing Standards in Action Project.

Text Types and Purposes

Note: The intent of Writing Standards 1–3 is to ensure flexibility, not rigidity, in student writing. Many effective pieces of writing blend elements of more than one text type in service of a single purpose: for example, an argument may rely on anecdotal evidence, a short story may function to explain some phenomenon, or a literary analysis may use explication to develop an argument. In addition, each of the three types of writing is itself a broad category encompassing a variety of texts: for example, narrative poems, short stories, and memoirs represent three distinct forms of narrative writing. Finally, although

the bulk of writing assigned in school should address the purposes described below, other forms of writing—for example, lists and notes, descriptive letters, personal reflections—should have a place in the classroom as well. To develop flexibility and nuance in their own writing, students need to engage with a wide range of complex model texts (see Reading Literature Standard 10 and Reading Informational Text Standard 10) and study authors who have written successfully across genres (see Appendix B: A Literary Heritage).

1. Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
    a. Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped in paragraphs and sections to support the writer's purpose.
    b. Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details.
    c. Link opinion and reasons using words and phrases (e.g., *for instance, in order to, in addition*).
    d. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.

    Is outdoor recess a necessity for elementary school students? A writer provides a clear opinion with reasons as well as acknowledgment of counterarguments. Massachusetts Writing Standards in Action. (W.4.1, W.4.4, L.4.1, L.4.2, L.4.3)

    In math, instead of writing opinions, students write or draw solutions to math word problems and present arguments to explain their thinking.

    Connections to the Standards for Mathematical Practice

    2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.

    3. Construct viable arguments and respond to the reasoning of others.

    See the pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework or the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics.
2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
    a. Introduce a topic clearly and group related information in paragraphs and sections; include text features (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
    b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.
    c. Link ideas within categories of information using words and phrases (e.g., *another, for example, also, because*).
    d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
    e. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.

    A student writes a first-person newspaper article reflecting on the challenges of living with Asperger's syndrome. See "Living with Asperger's," Massachusetts Writing Standards in Action. (W.4.2, W.4.3, W.4.5, L.4.2, L.4.3)
3. Write narratives in prose or poem form to develop experiences or events using effective literary techniques, descriptive details, and clear sequences.
    a. Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a speaker, narrator, and/or characters; organize an appropriate narrative sequence.
    b. Use dialogue and description to develop experiences or events or show responses to situations.
    c. Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage sequence.
    d. Use concrete words and phrases, figurative language such as similes and metaphors, and sensory details to convey experiences or events precisely.

e. Provide a sense of closure appropriate to the narrated experiences or events.

f. For poems, use patterns of sound (e.g., rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, consonance) and visual patterns (e.g., line length, grouped lines as stanzas or verses) to create works that are distinctly different in form from prose narratives. (See grade 4 Reading Literature Standard 5.)

A writer creates a vivid picture of a bowling match in "The Comeback," a personal narrative that includes just enough information on the sport for a reader unfamiliar with the terms. Massachusetts Writing Standards in Action. (W.4.3, W.4.2, W.4.4, W.4.5, L.4.2, L.4.3)

Production and Distribution of Writing

4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.

a. Demonstrate command of standard English conventions (as described in Language Standards 1–3 up to and including grade 4).

b. Demonstrate the ability to use general academic and domain-specific vocabulary appropriately (as described in Language Standards 4–6 up to and including grade 4).

Connections to the Standards for Mathematical Practice

6. Attend to precision.

See the pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework or the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics.

6. Use technology, including current web-based communication platforms, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of one page in a single sitting.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

7. Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

8. 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.

9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support written analysis, reflection, and research, applying one or more grade 4 standards for Reading Literature or Reading Informational Text as needed.

Range of Writing

10. 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.

Grade 4 Speaking and Listening Standards [SL]

The following standards offer a focus for instruction each year to help ensure that students gain adequate mastery of a range of skills and applications. *Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.*

Comprehension and Collaboration

1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 4 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
    a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion. (See grade 4 Reading Literature Standard 1 and Reading Informational Text Standard 1 for specific expectations regarding the use of textual evidence.)
    b. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles.
    c. Pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information, and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to the remarks of others.
    d. Review the key ideas expressed and explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.

    For example, in literature discussion groups, individual students take on the roles of leader, scribe, and reporter as they discuss questions about theme they have generated in preparation for a report to the class. (RL.4.2, SL.4.1)

    Connections to the Standards for Mathematical Practice

    2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.

    3. Construct viable arguments and respond to the reasoning of others.

    See the pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework or the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics.
2. Paraphrase portions of a written text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

    Connections to the Standards for Mathematical Practice

    2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.

    3. Construct viable arguments and respond to the reasoning of others.

    6. Attend to precision.

    See the pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework or the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics.
3. Identify the reasons and evidence a speaker provides to support particular points.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

4. Report on a topic, text, procedure, or solution to a mathematical problem, 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 and use appropriate vocabulary. (See grade 4 Language Standards 4–6 for specific expectations regarding vocabulary.)

    Connections to the Standards for Mathematical Practice

    2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.

    3. Construct viable arguments and respond to the reasoning of others.

    6. Attend to precision.

    See the pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework or the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics.
5. Add audio recordings and visual displays to presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.
6. Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting research findings) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion); use formal

English when appropriate to task and situation. (See grade 4 Language Standards 1 and 3 for specific expectations.)

Grade 4 Language Standards [L]

The following standards offer a focus for instruction each year to help ensure that students gain adequate mastery of a range of skills and applications. *Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades*. *For example, though sentence fragments may receive the most attention in grade 4, more nuanced discussions of the topic should develop throughout the later grades as students continue to analyze speakers' and authors' sentence structure, vary syntax for effect in their own speaking and writing, and more.*

Conventions of Standard English

1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking; retain and further develop language skills learned in previous grades. (See grade 4 Writing Standard 5 and Speaking and Listening Standard 6 on strengthening writing and presentations by applying knowledge of conventions.)
   Sentence Structure and Meaning
   - **a.** Produce complete sentences, using knowledge of subject and predicate to recognize and correct inappropriate sentence fragments and run-on sentences.[1]
   - **b.** Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., *their/there*).
   - **c.** Use helping verbs, also known as auxiliaries (e.g., *can, may, might, should*), to convey various conditions of possibility, likelihood, obligation, or permission, choosing among helping verbs depending on the overall meaning of the sentence.
   - **d.** Use relative pronouns and relative adverbs to add more information about a noun or verb used in a sentence.
   - **e.** Form and use prepositional phrases in sentences to add more information about qualities such as location, time, agency, and direction.

   Word Usage
   - **f.** Form and use progressive verb tenses.
2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
   - **a.** Write legibly and fluently by hand, using either printing or cursive handwriting; write their given name signature in cursive.
   - **b.** Use correct capitalization.
   - **c.** Use commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text.
   - **d.** Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.
   - **e.** Spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed.

Knowledge of Language

3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
   - **a.** Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.[2]
   - **b.** Choose punctuation for effect.

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[1] These skills are particularly likely to require continued attention in higher grades as they are applied to increasingly sophisticated writing and speaking. See the table in the pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework.

[2] These skills are particularly likely to require continued attention in higher grades as they are applied to increasingly sophisticated writing and speaking. See the table in the pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework.

c. Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting research findings) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion).

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 4 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

a. Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., *telegraph, photograph, autograph*).

c. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.

d. Recognize and use appropriately abbreviations related to grade-level content or common in everyday life (e.g., *hr., min., sec.*).

e. Recognize and use appropriately symbols related to grade-level content or common in everyday life (e.g., *&, #, **).

5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

a. Explain the meaning of simple similes and metaphors (e.g., *as pretty as a picture*) in context.

b. Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs.

c. Demonstrate understanding of words by relating them to their opposites (antonyms) and to words with similar but not identical meanings (synonyms).

For example, students collect common idioms, proverbs, and figurative phrases in English from their reading and from interviewing their family members. They research the terms and create an illustrated dictionary that explains the meaning of sentences such as:
It's raining cats and dogs.
This only happens once in a blue moon.
My dad is a couch potato.
My sister was cool as a cucumber when she gave her report.
Not all that glitters is gold.
Neither a borrower nor a lender be. (W.4.7, L.4.5)

6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., *quizzed, whined, stammered*) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., *wildlife, conservation,* and *endangered* when discussing animal preservation). (See grade 4 Reading Literature Standard 4 and Reading Informational Text Standard 4 on applying knowledge of vocabulary to reading; see grade 4 Writing Standard 5 and Speaking and Listening Standard 4 on strengthening writing and presentations by applying knowledge of vocabulary.)

Connections to the Standards for Mathematical Practice
6. Attend to precision.
See the pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework or the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics.