



English Language Arts Course Descriptions K-8th Grade

Kindergarten Overview

This course is designed in a way to support the diverse population of kindergarten writers. Kindergarteners learn that writing carries meaning and the words they write convey thoughts, ideas and feelings. This course teaches children to become independent with the writing process (generating ideas, drafting, revising and editing) as well as the application of this process to their daily writing. This course takes this knowledge of the writing process and demonstrates how it can support writing across the three text types: narrative, informational and opinion writing.

Rationale

The Michigan Academic Standards (Common Core State Standards) emphasize that children should spend large amounts of time writing across the three text types: narrative, informational and opinion. In addition, as children progress through the grade levels they should be able to demonstrate an increase in sophistication with using language, vocabulary and syntax to develop and organize their ideas within the three text types. Children 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.

Scope and Sequence

Careful thought has been given to the order in which the kindergarten units are presented. The yearlong course is designed to build writing skills and strategies as well as habits of mind and experiences for future success in writing. As a result, certain scaffolds have been created based on this order and schools should take care in moving units from their intended placement in the curriculum. For example, the first unit Oral Language was designed to support children's oral language and generating of ideas. If you have a class that is strong with oral language this unit may be skipped. It is also important that Unit 3 and 4 stay in the recommended order. Unit 3 is meant to support hearing and recoding sounds and Unit 4 supports the building of letters and sounds to create words.

Alignment

This Kindergarten course is designed to meet the Michigan Academic Standards for Writing. The work done in this course is primarily designed to meet the Michigan Academic Standards in writing however, some of the speaking and listening standards as well as the foundational skills standards are delivered in this course. The work done throughout this kindergarten course not only aligns with the Michigan Academic Standards but is designed to prepare kindergarteners for the work ahead in first grade.

1st Grade Overview

The first grade language arts curriculum is centered on reading, writing, speaking and listening. Students continue to develop early reading strategies that include: building good reading habits, choosing just-right books, print strategies, text features, questioning, non-fiction reading strategies and characters study. Students continue to develop early writing strategies that include: convey their thoughts, ideas, and feelings written form. Students write narrative, non-fiction, and opinion pieces such as personal narratives, how to, personal expertise, and opinion writing. Grammar study and phonics are incorporated throughout the year.

2nd Grade ELA

The second grade language arts curriculum is centered on reading, writing, speaking and listening. Students continue to develop reading strategies that include: summarizing, identifying the main idea, sequencing, making predictions, reading for specific detail and drawing conclusions. Students continue to develop writing strategies that include: convey their thoughts, ideas, and feelings in written form. Students write narrative, non-fiction, and opinion pieces such as opinion, personal expertise, research and realistic fiction. Grammar study and phonics will be incorporated throughout the year.

3rd Grade

The third grade language arts curriculum is centered around units of study that continue to develop skills in vocabulary, comprehension, and writing. Students are actively participating in the process of reading, writing, speaking and listening. There are ample opportunities for reading and responding in a large group, small groups, or independently. Children practice comprehension strategies that include: retelling, identifying the main idea, questioning, reading for specific detail, etc. Children learn to listen to and retell stories and through reading are encouraged to form ideas, opinions and feelings about writing. Within the structure of writing workshop students learn to build habits and develop strategies that proficient writers use on a daily basis. Children are encouraged to express their ideas in written form, utilizing the writing process. Students learn about the crafting techniques that are common to narrative, informative, and opinion writing. They further develop and strengthen their writing by cycling through the process of planning, revising, editing, and publicly sharing their opinions with a real audience. Grammar, usage, mechanics and spelling and language usage are introduced and practiced within the context of daily writing activities. Children read and write in a variety of genres and curriculum areas.

4th Grade

The fourth grade language arts curriculum is centered around units of study that continue to develop skills in vocabulary, comprehension, and writing. Students are actively participating in the process of reading, writing, speaking and listening. There are ample opportunities for reading and responding in a large group, small group, or independently. Children practice comprehension strategies that include: summarizing, identifying the main idea, sequencing, making predictions, reading for specific detail and drawing conclusions. Children learn to listen to and retell stories and through reading are encouraged to form ideas, opinions and feelings about writing. Within the structure of writing workshop students learn to build habits and develop strategies that proficient writers use on a daily basis. Children are encouraged to express their ideas in written form, utilizing the writing process. Students learn about the crafting techniques that are common to narrative, informative, and persuasive/ opinion writing. They further develop and strengthen their writing by cycling through the process of planning, revising, editing, and publicly sharing their opinions with a real audience. There will be integrated social studies/science informational texts to enhance the reading and writing units. (See Social Studies Grade 4 Unit 3 for correlation) Grammar, usage, mechanics and spelling and language usage are introduced and practiced within the context of daily writing activities. Children read and write in a variety of genres and curriculum areas.

5th Grade

The fifth grade language arts curriculum is centered on reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Students summarize and critique stories and informational texts and form ideas, opinions and feelings in response to reading in a variety of genres such as historical fiction and periodicals. Students write informative, narrative, and opinion pieces, such as literary essays and persuasive essays. Grammar study, such as the correct use of verb tense, and word study will be incorporated throughout the year.

6th Grade

Overview

These units provide sixth grade students with a critical foundation in reading and writing narrative, informational, and argument texts. Through analysis and production of texts in these three modes, students become more adept readers, thinkers, and writers. Across the year, they come to understand the distinctions between narrative, informational and argument texts by studying fiction and nonfiction in a variety of formats and developing a more thorough understanding of audience and purpose when both reading and writing. The use of a reader or writer's notebook for each unit encourages students to be independent, engaged, and empowered learners who value close reading, idea generation, drafting, and revision. The first two units facilitate the use of the notebook for close reading and generative writing of narrative in addition to developing the classroom writing community. The focus on understanding and using the elements of argument underpins three of the units (Argument Paragraph, Literary Essay, and Writing the Argument), supporting students in becoming more competent producers of argument in both written and spoken form. The informational reading and informational essay units steep students in how to critically read nonfiction, as well as analyze and use text structures, central ideas, and supporting details to craft an informational text.

Rationale

The ability to access, navigate, and evaluate information is a crucial skill of citizens in contemporary society. Through the study of these units, students learn strategies to be critical consumers of informational and literary texts. They explore the role nonfiction and fiction plays in their daily lives and identify and analyze text structures and features of text in print and digital formats.

Scope and Sequence

Careful thought has been given to the order in which the English 6 units are presented. The year-long course is designed to build rhetorical and 21st century skills, as well as habits of mind and experiences critical for success in later grades. Students continue to develop a learner identity and content knowledge that builds their level of persistence to engage in complex tasks that call upon strong analytical thinking and reasoning. As a result, certain scaffolds have been created based on this unit order. Schools should take care in moving units from their intended placement in the curriculum. For example, Launching the Writer's Notebook and Independent Reading units are designed to establish certain learner habits, strategies, and practices that help ramp students into later units of analyzing complex texts and writing well-reasoned arguments.

7th Grade

This course is designed to expand students' reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language skills. Students read and analyze a variety of fiction (narrative) and non-fiction (informational) texts. Major genres studied include research, myths, mystery, and memoirs. Students write a variety of narrative texts, informative texts, and argumentative essays and learn when to use informal versus formal, academic style. Grammar study and word study will be incorporated throughout the year. Students also have opportunities to improve their speaking, listening, and communication skills through small group and whole-class presentations.

8th Grade

This course is designed to expand students' reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language skills. Students read and analyze a variety of fiction (narrative) and non-fiction (informational) texts. Major genres studied include research, realistic fiction, science fiction, and historical fiction. Students write a variety of narrative texts, informative texts, and argumentative essays and continue to learn when to use informal versus formal, academic style. Grammar study and word study will be incorporated throughout the year. Students also have opportunities to improve their speaking, listening, and communication skills through small group and whole-class presentations.

