

Setting the Standard

Language Arts

5-8 Standards Guide

for Parents and
Community Members



Student's Name



Setting the Standard, Expecting the Best

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Your child deserves the best — in education and in life. At Cincinnati Public Schools, we want to provide our students with the best opportunities to learn. That includes giving you the tools you need to nurture your child's growth at home.

As adults, we know that we can work harder, and smarter, when we know what's expected of us. This booklet outlines our expectations for what students need to know about English language arts, from 5th through 8th grade. These are not only district but statewide standards, developed by a dedicated group of teachers, parents and school administrators from across Ohio. Together, they provide a guide for the knowledge of language arts that successful students need to master.

You won't find a crash course in English literature here, though we have included a glossary to help explain some language arts terms. Instead, you'll read about the many strategies your child will learn to become better readers, writers and communicators while progressing through school. In addition, we've included tips on how you can support your child's learning.

We hope you'll keep this booklet handy to chart your child's progress through the end of 8th grade and that you will use it as you talk with teachers about your child's skills and knowledge.

As we work together to help your child, we encourage you to find out more about our district's academic standards, either online or at your child's school. You also can visit the CPS Web site at www.cps-k12.org to see a comprehensive explanation of all the standards (click the Standards button on the home page). The back of this booklet contains additional Internet and other language arts resources to help you support your child's education.

In the end, these learning goals do more than provide expectations on important language arts skills and strategies. They also help us communicate how much confidence we have in your child's ability to learn and grow. Through our standards, we want to make it clear that we expect great things from every CPS student in every one of our schools. And we look forward to working as a partner with you to achieve academic excellence — and a bright future — for your child.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alton Frailey".

Alton Frailey
Superintendent
Cincinnati Public Schools

About Language Arts Standards

The Cincinnati Public School District's 5-8 language arts content standards are designed to prepare all students for success in school, college and the workplace. They are the same high standards adopted by the State Board of Education in December 2001. The Ohio Department of Education will use these standards in developing new statewide tests to measure student performance.

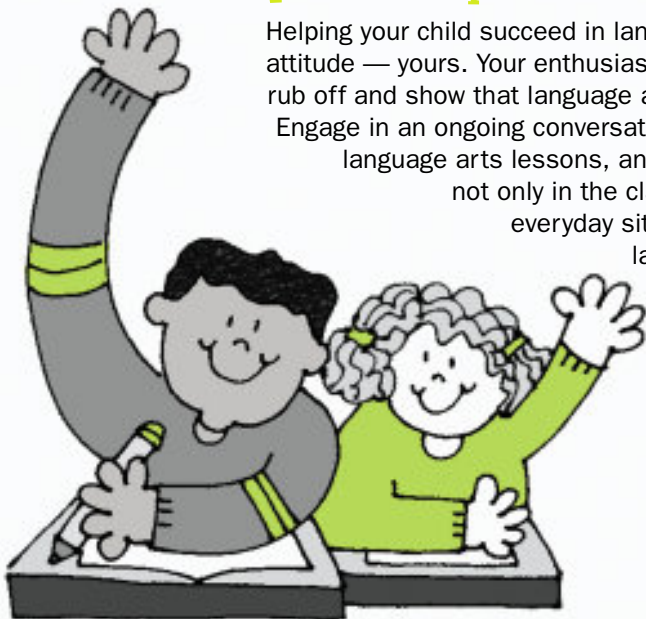
Before drafting the standards, advisory groups reviewed world-class standards from the United States and other countries. The standards-writing teams included teachers, parents, school administrators and business and college representatives. Before the standards were final, English language arts experts and the public reviewed them and added their feedback.

Described as "clear and rigorous," the ten standards represent a research-based approach to developing literacy skills, promoting proficiency in the writing process and becoming effective communicators.

Parent Tip

Helping your child succeed in language arts begins with a positive attitude — yours. Your enthusiasm about your child's learning will rub off and show that language arts is both important and fun.

Engage in an ongoing conversation with your child about language arts lessons, and you'll set the stage for success not only in the classroom and on tests, but in everyday situations that require a solid language arts background, such as talking on the phone and writing a letter.



How to use this Guide

Relax.

This guide covers a lot of ground, but you don't have to. You'll find general, "big picture" overviews. You'll also find grade-specific requirements, known as **indicators**, on pages 4-23. Work with the level and amount of information that fit your family's needs.

Get familiar.

On page 3, you'll find a list of the district's ten language arts standards along with an explanation of what each one of them means to your child.

Skim and scan.

Each grade-level summary begins with a brief overview that describes how standards fit into your child's overall learning. If you want to know more, you can then read more detailed learning goals. A glossary is included with the definitions for many of the language arts terms used in the grade-level indicators. Words defined in the glossary are written in **bold** type.

Stay involved.

Whether you're helping with homework or preparing for teacher conferences, taking an active role in your child's language arts education makes a difference. Use the information in this booklet to work closely with teachers and help chart your child's progress. Use pages 30-34 to jot down homework and conference notes.

Explore more.

On page 29, you'll find a list of language arts education and literacy resources — Web sites and books that can help you build your child's literacy skills. And at every grade level, you'll see a bit of "homework" for you — tips to help build your child's confidence, as well as skills.



**Keep this booklet
handy until your
child completes
8th grade.**

Grades 5-8

Language Arts Standards



Phonemic Awareness, Word Recognition and Fluency

What it means to your child: Reading well, from sounding out words to recognizing them by sight, and reading aloud fluently.

Acquisition of Vocabulary

What it means to your child: Using a variety of skills — including reading, asking questions, listening and educated reasoning — to build vocabulary.

Reading Process: Concepts of Print, Comprehension Strategies and Self-Monitoring Strategies

What it means to your child: Understanding the basic concepts of print materials as well as analyzing and understanding the meaning of texts, inside and outside school.

Reading Applications: Informational, Technical and Persuasive Text

What it means to your child: Reading, understanding, explaining and critiquing different types of written materials, from magazines and essays to maps and Internet sites.

Reading Applications: Literary Text

What it means to your child: Reading, understanding, explaining and critiquing different forms of literary works, from fables and poetry to novels and drama.

Writing Process

What it means to your child: Regularly using the steps of prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing different types of writing.

Writing Applications

What it means to your child: Learning about, using and choosing appropriate vocabulary for different types of writing, from letters to scientific reports, and for different audiences.

Writing Conventions

What it means to your child: Understanding and applying punctuation, grammar and spelling rules.

Research

What it means to your child: Investigating topics in all subject areas using various types of reference material and communicating relevant findings.

Communication: Oral and Visual

What it means to your child: Delivering effective presentations on topics in all subject areas for different types of audiences.

Fifth-Grade Standards



For fifth-graders, building on literacy basics allows students to understand the richness of a wide variety of texts. As their vocabulary grows, they can track down the meanings of new words and understand more types of figurative language in literature. They not only distinguish between fact and opinion, they learn how they can influence an audience and create mood, setting and interesting characters in their writing. Their written work becomes more sophisticated as they understand a growing number of grammar rules. They analyze different types of research and develop compelling reports that both inform and entertain. They explore ways of making their written work, as well as presentations, more effective.

By the end of fifth grade, students should be able to:

Phonemic Awareness, Word Recognition and Fluency

- Read aloud at a nearly conversational pace.
- Read increasingly complex texts with greater ease.
- Read silently faster than reading aloud.

Acquisition of Vocabulary

- Determine the meaning as well as the emotional associations of new words using word, sentence and paragraph clues (including when authors' restate ideas or provide examples). Also build vocabulary through reference books, computers, footnotes and strategies such as knowledge of patterns, roots, word origins, prefixes and suffixes.
- Use context clues to understand the meaning of **synonyms** (words with similar meanings), **antonyms** (words with opposite meanings), **homophones** (words that sound alike but have different meanings) and **homographs** (words with the same spelling that are pronounced differently according to use).
- Understand and use words in new ways, such as **similes** (comparisons using "like" or "as") and **metaphors** (describing one thing as if it were another).
- Identify the meanings of abbreviations.

Reading Process

- Establish and adjust purposes for reading, such as learning about a topic, interpreting events, solving problems and finding enjoyment.

*Reading Process
Fifth-Grade Standards (cont.)*



- Make and support predictions and general ideas about texts using specific examples.
- Compare similarities and differences across different texts.
- Summarize the important ideas in texts and find details to support them.
- Draw and use diagrams to organize information from texts.
- Ask and answer different types of questions about books and other written media. *For example, “Why did the main character say that?” and “How effective was the author’s argument and why?”*
- Improve comprehension by adjusting their reading speed — skimming, scanning, reviewing or summarizing texts.
- Explore the meaning of texts by listing questions and looking for answers within it.
- Choose materials for independent reading based on personal interests and/or recommendations.

Reading Applications: Informational, Technical and Persuasive Text

- Find information in texts based on titles, tables of contents, chapter names, maps, charts and other graphic elements.
- Identify, explain and tell the difference between examples of cause and effect.
- Collect and compare relevant information about a topic from a variety of print sources (*books, magazines, newspapers, Web sites*), and summarize main ideas and supporting details, noting points that might confuse readers.
- Make clearer a set of instructions or description of procedures.
- Analyze the difference between fact and opinion, and understand an author’s purpose for writing.

Reading Applications: Literary Text

- Describe how characters’ thoughts, words and interactions reveal their motivation, including whether the story is written in first or third person.

Reading Applications
Fifth-Grade Standards (cont.)

- Discuss how the setting influences a specific story and how the author's choice of words appeals to the senses and creates mood.
- Pick out the main elements in a story's **plot** and how they influence future action.
- Summarize a story's directly stated or implied **themes**.
- Explain the unique elements of different writing **genres**, including stories, poems, plays, fairy tales, **fables**, fiction and non-fiction.
- Understand and identify **figurative language** (use of comparisons, figures of speech, etc.).

Writing Process

- Base ideas for writing on work with groups and information from written works and keep a list of writing ideas. Prepare for writing by interviewing or surveying subjects when necessary.
- Develop a main idea for writing and determine its purpose and audience.
- Plan writing by brainstorming, making outlines or lists, or drawing diagrams.
- Maintain a consistent focus through multiple paragraphs, each of which contains a **topic sentence** and supporting details.
- Vary the use of simple, **compound** and **complex sentences** in writing.
- Vary language and writing style based on audience and purpose, and use resources such as dictionaries to enhance choice of words.
- Write by hand or type on computers.

Parent Tip

Visit your child's classroom and find out how you can help out — either in school or at home — with any reading or communications projects your teacher has planned.



- Reread their writing, then add and/or delete details and rearrange words, sentences or paragraphs to make it focus more clearly and effectively on a central idea.
- Proofread their writing to eliminate fragment and run-on sentences and improve grammar, spelling, punctuation and capitalization. Then use other methods (*feedback from others, assignment checklists, etc.*) to improve the quality of their writing.
- Rewrite and illustrate writing samples, including graphics and computer-generated materials when appropriate, to display and share.

Writing Applications

- Write stories with a distinctive **point of view** that include descriptive details and **dialogue** to develop characters and settings.
- Write responses to texts organized around specific ideas that are supported with references to the texts.
- Write letters with specific purposes, use the correct format for business letters and make informal writings (*journals, notes, messages, etc.*).
- Write well-organized informational reports that include facts, examples and relevant details.

Writing Conventions

- Correctly spell often-used words, contractions, root words, suffixes and prefixes.
- Correctly use capitalization, periods, question marks, exclamation marks, quotation marks, commas and apostrophes.
- Correctly use regular and irregular nouns, pronouns and verb tenses.
- Correctly use different forms of pronouns, adverbs, conjunctions, interjections, prepositions and prepositional phrases.



Research

- Develop a research topic and gather information about it from multiple sources (*classroom books, school and public libraries, Web sites, CD-ROMs, etc.*).
- Compare and contrast information, then identify and summarize important findings and sort them into categories, using charts, tables and graphs when appropriate.
- Create a list of sources and understand what **plagiarism** means.
- Create oral, visual, written or multimedia reports to present important information.

Communication: Oral and Visual

- Practice active listening, including making eye contact and asking focused questions.
- Identify main ideas, supporting details and speakers' purposes — as well as the difference between facts and opinions and how they shape opinions — in oral and visual presentations.
- Select language appropriate to specific audiences and speak clearly and correctly. Adjust content, volume and tempo to stress important ideas.
- Present a report that shows an understanding of the topic and includes a clear focus and logical organization, relevant facts and details and appropriate audio-visual aids (*charts, pictures, etc.*). Identify multiple sources.
- Tell a story that recalls a personal experience and includes relevant, descriptive details.
- Present an organized, persuasive report that establishes a position, then backs it up with evidence and addresses listeners' concerns.

Sixth-Grade

Standards

6th

For sixth-graders, language arts continue to provide opportunities to build vocabulary and improve reading comprehension. Across all subjects, these tools give students the ability to grasp new concepts and explain them effectively. As their knowledge of literature grows, they can make connections between words written on a page and themes that remain constant across different cultures and centuries. They not only know how to tell fact from opinion, they become aware of the way their own opinions can be shaped by media messages. They also create more comprehensive reports on a variety of topics. To do this, they analyze different types of texts and sort through information in books and online. They begin to sort out the most updated, valid information and present it in an organized, effective way.

By the end of sixth grade, students should be able to:

Phonemic Awareness, Word Recognition and Fluency

- Read aloud at a nearly conversational pace.
- Read increasingly complex texts with greater ease.
- Read silently faster than reading aloud.

Acquisition of Vocabulary

- Determine the meaning of new words using word, sentence and paragraph clues (including when authors' restate ideas or provide examples), reference books, computers and footnotes. Build vocabulary through knowledge of patterns, roots, word origins, word relationships, strict dictionary definitions and more emotional definitions, prefixes and suffixes.
- Interpret the use of **figurative language**, such as **similes** (comparisons using "like" or "as") and **metaphors** (describing one thing as if it were another).
- Use words from other languages that have been adopted into the English language.
- Identify the meanings of symbols and acronyms. *For example, NASA stands for National Aeronautics and Space Administration.*

Reading Process

- Establish and adjust purposes for reading, such as learning about a topic, interpreting events, solving problems and finding enjoyment.
- Make and support predictions about texts using specific examples.
- Compare similarities and differences in style and content across different texts.
- Summarize the important ideas in texts and find details to support them. Identify contradictions or missing information.
- Draw and use diagrams to organize information from texts.
- Ask and answer different types of questions about books and other written media. *For example, “Why did the main character say that?” and “Why was one author’s argument more effective than another’s?”*
- Improve comprehension by adjusting their reading speed, skimming, scanning, reading, reviewing, taking notes or summarizing texts.
- Explore the meaning of texts by listing questions and looking for answers within it.
- Choose materials for independent reading based on personal interests, prior knowledge and recommendations.

Reading Applications: Informational, Technical and Persuasive Text

- Find information in texts based on titles, tables of contents, chapter names, online search engines, maps, charts and other graphic elements.
- Analyze examples of cause and effect, and the difference between fact and opinion.
- Collect and compare relevant information about a topic from a variety of print sources (*books, magazines, newspapers, Web sites*). Gauge the effectiveness of a summary of main ideas and supporting details.
- Understand an author’s purpose for writing and analyze the effectiveness of the author’s argument.
- Summarize information from a text, including how a topic is treated, its scope and organization.

Reading Applications: Literary Text

- Analyze how an author develops characters, including **point of view**, and features of the setting. Explain how those elements impact the **plot**.
- Describe how an author creates mood and meaning through word choice and **figurative language**.
- Pick out the main elements in a story's **plot** and how they influence future action.
- Identify common **themes**, patterns and **symbols** in literature from different cultures and eras.
- Explain the unique elements of different writing **genres**, including stories, poems, plays, fairy tales, **fables**, fiction and non-fiction.

Parent Tip

Surf the Internet with your child — at home, at school or at your neighborhood public library — to explore reading resources and online word games.

**Writing Process**

- Base ideas for writing on work with groups and information from written works and keep a list of writing ideas. Prepare for writing by interviewing or surveying subjects when necessary.
- Develop a **thesis statement** or writing plan, as appropriate, before writing. Determine the purpose and audience.
- Plan writing by brainstorming, making outlines or lists, or drawing diagrams.
- Organize writing including an introduction, body, resolution and summary of important ideas.
- Maintain a consistent focus through multiple paragraphs, each of which contains a **topic sentence** and supporting details.
- Vary the use of simple, **compound** and **complex sentences** in writing.
- Vary language and writing style based on audience and purpose. Use resources such as dictionaries to enhance choice of words.

Writing Process
Sixth-Grade Standards (cont.)



- Write by hand or type on computers.
- Reread their own writing, then add and/or delete details and rearrange words, sentences or paragraphs to make writing focus more clearly and effectively on a central idea.
- Proofread their writing to eliminate fragment and run-on sentences and improve grammar, spelling, punctuation and capitalization. Then use other methods (*feedback from others, assignment checklists, etc.*) to improve the quality of their writing.
- Rewrite and illustrate writing samples, including graphics and computer-generated materials when appropriate, to display and share.

Writing Applications

- Write stories with a distinctive **point of view** that include descriptive details and dialogue to develop plots, characters and settings.
- Write responses to texts organized around specific ideas that are supported with references to the texts.
- Write letters with specific purposes, use the correct format for business letters and make informal writings (*journals, notes, messages, etc.*).
- Write well-organized informational and persuasive reports or essays that include facts, examples and relevant details.

Writing Conventions

- Correctly spell frequently misspelled and often-used words.
- Correctly use capitalization and punctuation, including semicolons, colons, hyphens, dashes and brackets.
- Correctly use all eight parts of speech — nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, conjunctions, prepositions and interjections.
- Correctly use different forms of pronouns and verbs, and make all subjects and verbs agree.

Research

- Develop a research topic, then gather and judge the usefulness of information about it from multiple sources (*classroom books, school and public libraries, Web sites, CD-ROMs, etc.*).
- Compare and contrast information, then identify and summarize important findings. Sort findings into categories, using charts, tables and graphs when appropriate.
- Use quotations to support ideas.
- Create an appropriate list of sources, such as a **bibliography**, with a teacher's help.
- Create oral, visual, written or multimedia reports to present important information.

Communication: Oral and Visual

- Practice active listening, including making eye contact and asking focused questions.
- Identify main ideas and speakers' purposes and draw conclusions in oral and visual presentations.
- Identify different types of **persuasive techniques** used in oral and visual messages, including the media.
- Select language appropriate to specific audiences. Speak clearly and correctly, adjusting content, volume and tempo to stress important ideas.
- Present a report that shows an understanding of the topic and includes a clear focus and logical organization, relevant facts and details and appropriate audio-visual aids (*charts, pictures, etc.*). Identify multiple sources.
- Tell a story that recalls a personal experience and includes relevant, descriptive details.
- Present an organized, persuasive report that establishes a position, then backs it up with evidence and addresses listeners' concerns.

Seventh-Grade Standards

For seventh-graders, a growing sophistication in both reading and writing takes learning to higher levels. Now fluent in ways to define new words, they draw from their earlier lessons as well as historic languages such as Latin and Greek. They approach literature analytically and can thoughtfully evaluate a wide range of texts. Their writing comes alive with vivid images and precise descriptions. Finally, their ability to persuade audiences continues to expand, both in formal research projects and informal presentations.

By the end of seventh grade, students should be able to:

Phonemic Awareness, Word Recognition and Fluency

- Read aloud at a nearly conversational pace.
- Read increasingly complex texts with greater ease.
- Read silently faster than reading aloud.

Acquisition of Vocabulary

- Determine the meaning of new words by using:
 - word, sentence and paragraph clues, including when authors' restate ideas, compare and contrast information or provide examples
 - reference books, computers, footnotes, etc.
 - knowledge of patterns, roots, word origins, word relationships, strict dictionary definitions and more emotional definitions
 - prefixes and suffixes.
- Interpret the use of **figurative language**, such as similes and metaphors.
- Use words from other languages that have been adopted into English. Understand roots derived from Latin, Greek and Anglo-Saxon (Old English).
- Identify the meanings of symbols and acronyms. *For example, NASA stands for National Aeronautics and Space Administration.*

Reading Process

- Read to learn about a topic, understand and interpret events, solve problems and for fun.



- Make and support predictions about texts using specific examples.
- Compare similarities and differences in styles and content across different texts.
- Summarize the important ideas in texts and find details to support them. Identify contradictions or missing information.
- Use drawings and diagrams to organize information from texts.
- Ask and answer different types of questions about books and other written media. *For example, “Why did the main character say that?” and “Why was one author’s argument more effective than another’s?”*
- Improve comprehension by adjusting their reading speed — skimming, scanning, reviewing, taking notes or summarizing texts.
- Choose materials for independent reading based on personal interests, experiences and recommendations.

Reading Applications: Informational, Technical and Persuasive Text

- Find information in texts based on titles, tables of contents, chapter names, online search engines, maps, charts and other graphic elements.
- Analyze examples of cause and effect, and the difference between fact and opinion.
- Collect, compare and contrast relevant information about a topic from a variety of sources (*books, magazines, newspapers, Web sites*). Gauge the effectiveness of a summary of main ideas and supporting details.
- Understand and explain an author’s purpose for writing and analyze the effectiveness of the author’s argument, including examples of **bias** or stereotyping.
- Summarize information from a text, including how a topic is treated, its scope and organization.

Reading Applications: Literary Text

- Explain the ways major and minor literary characters interact and how that impacts the **plot**, including any conflicts.
- Analyze and assess the meaning and importance of setting, word choice, **figurative language** and **point of view** in literature.

Reading Applications
Seventh-Grade Standards (cont.)

- Pick out the major and minor events in a story's **plot** and explain how they influence future action.
- Identify common **themes**, patterns and **symbols** in literature from different cultures and eras.
- Explain the unique elements of different writing **genres**, including poems, plays, **myths**, fairy tales, **fables**, **biographies**, **autobiographies**, fiction, science fiction and non-fiction.

Writing Process

- Work with groups and gather information from written works to develop writing topics. Keep a list of writing ideas and prepare for writing by interviewing subjects when necessary.
- Develop a **thesis statement** or writing plan, as appropriate, before writing, and determine the purpose and audience.
- Plan writing by brainstorming, making outlines or lists, or drawing diagrams.
- Organize compositions with effective introductions, bodies and conclusions that elaborate on main ideas.
- Maintain a consistent focus through multiple paragraphs, each of which contains a topic sentence and supporting details.
- Vary simple, **compound** and **complex sentences** in writing.
- Use more vivid language in engaging and sophisticated ways, and use resources such as dictionaries to enhance word choice.
- Write by hand or type on computers.
- Reread their writing, then add and/or delete details and rearrange words, sentences or paragraphs to make it focus more clearly and effectively on a central idea and purpose.
- Proofread their writing to eliminate fragment and run-on sentences and improve grammar, spelling, punctuation and capitalization. Then use other methods (*feedback from others, assignment checklists, etc.*) to improve the quality of their writing.

- Rewrite and illustrate writing samples to display and share, using graphics and computer-generated materials when appropriate.

Writing Applications

- Write stories with a distinctive **point of view** that include descriptive details and dialogue to develop plots, characters and settings.
- Write responses to texts organized around specific ideas that are supported with references to the texts.
- Write business letters with specific purposes, and make informal writings (*journals, notes, messages, etc.*).
- Write well-organized informational and persuasive reports or essays that include facts, examples and relevant details from multiple sources.

Writing Conventions

- Correctly spell often-used words.
- Correctly use capitalization and punctuation, including semicolons, colons, hyphens, dashes and brackets.
- Correctly use all eight parts of speech — nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, conjunctions, prepositions and interjections — and different types of clauses.
- Correctly use all different forms and tenses of pronouns and verbs, and make all subjects and verbs agree.

Research

- Develop a topic and open-ended questions for research. Gather information and judge its validity using multiple sources (*classroom books, school and public libraries, Web sites, CD-ROMs, etc.*).
- Compare and contrast information. Identify and summarize important findings and sort them into categories, using charts, tables and graphs when appropriate.
- Use quotations and citations appropriately.

Research
Seventh-Grade Standards (cont.)

- Create an appropriate list of sources, such as a **bibliography**, with a teacher's help.
- Create oral, visual, written or multimedia reports to present clear positions supported with relevant details in organized ways.

Communication: Oral and Visual

- Practice active listening, including making eye contact and asking focused questions.
- Identify main ideas and speakers' purposes; draw conclusions about oral and visual presentations.

- Identify different types of **persuasive techniques** used in oral and visual messages, including the media.
- Select language appropriate to specific audiences. Speak clearly and correctly, adjusting content, volume and tempo to stress important ideas.
- Present a report that shows an understanding of the topic and includes a clear focus and logical organization, relevant facts and details and appropriate audio-visual aids (*charts, pictures, etc.*). Identify multiple sources.

Parent Tip

While watching television, ask your child to analyze the persuasive techniques used in commercials and tell why — or why not — they are effective.



- Tell a story, in a formal or informal presentation, that includes relevant, descriptive details.
- Present an organized, persuasive report that establishes a position, then backs it up with evidence and addresses potential arguments.

Eighth-Grade Standards



For eighth-graders, language arts knowledge continues to help refine learning in every class. They explore the changing landscape of accepted English and how it is influenced by the rest of the world. They gain practice with word definitions by completing statements such as, “Hot is to cold as earth is to sky.” They discover the power of word choices and meaning as they evaluate the effectiveness of product warranties, memos and messages in the media. In addition, they grow more comfortable writing letters with specific purposes, adjusting their styles to fit their purposes. Their stories come to life with more vivid language and intriguing plot lines. They analyze the presentations of others and find ways to make their own arguments more successful.

By the end of eighth grade, students should be able to:

Phonemic Awareness, Word Recognition and Fluency

- Read aloud at a nearly conversational pace.
- Read increasingly complex texts with greater ease.
- Read silently faster than reading aloud.

Acquisition of Vocabulary

- Determine the meaning of new words by using:
 - word, sentence and paragraph clues, including when authors’ restate ideas, compare and contrast information or provide examples
 - reference books, computers, footnotes, etc.
 - knowledge of patterns, roots, word origins, word relationships, strict dictionary definitions and more emotional definitions
 - prefixes and suffixes.
- Answer questions about statements comparing word meanings. *For example, “hot is to cold as wet is to dry” or “wet is to damp what hot is to warm.”*
- Interpret the use of **figurative language**, such as **similes** and **metaphors**.
- Discuss how world events and cultures influence English.
- Use knowledge of word roots from Latin, Greek, and Anglo-Saxon (Old English) to define new terms in different subjects, such as science and math.

Reading Process

- Read purposefully and automatically, increasing understanding by making predictions, comparing and contrasting information, recalling and summarizing events, and making logical guesses and conclusions about texts.
- Ask and answer different types of questions about books and other written media. *For example, “Why did the main character say that?” and “Why was one author’s argument more effective than another’s?”*
- Improve comprehension by adjusting their reading speed, skimming, scanning, reading, reviewing, taking notes or summarizing texts.
- Choose materials for independent reading based on personal interests, experiences and/or recommendations.

Reading Applications: Informational, Technical and Persuasive Text

- Compare and contrast texts based on titles, tables of contents, chapter names and other graphic elements.
- Analyze maps, charts, graphs, tables, diagrams and other graphic elements in texts.
- Evaluate texts based on how they are organized. *For example, note if facts are related in chronological order, as causes and effects, or in terms of problems and solutions.*
- Analyze examples of cause and effect, and the difference between fact and opinion.
- Collect, compare and contrast relevant information about a topic from a variety of sources (*books, magazines, newspapers, Web sites*), and gauge the effectiveness of main ideas and supporting details.
- Understand and explain an author’s purpose for writing. Analyze the effectiveness of his/her argument, including examples of **bias** or stereotyping and how he/she uses facts to imply conclusions and express opinions.
- Explain the difference between writing for consumers (*warranties, instructions*), writing for employees (*memos, job descriptions*) and public information (*speeches, editorials*).

Reading Applications: Literary Text

- Discuss different types of literary characters and how their actions affect the **plot**.
- Analyze and assess the meaning and importance of **genre**, setting, word choice, **figurative language** and **point of view** in pieces of literature.
- Pick out the major and minor events in a story’s **plot** and explain how they influence future action.
- Identify and explain common **themes**, patterns and **symbols** in literature by the same and different authors.
- Explain how authors control the action in their writing by using **subplots**, **parallel episodes** and **climax**.
- Recognize **foreshadowing** and **flashback**.

Writing Process

- Work with groups and gather information from written works to develop writing topics. Keep a list of writing ideas and prepare for writing by interviewing subjects when necessary.
- Develop a **thesis statement** or writing plan, as appropriate, before writing, and determine the purpose and audience.
- Plan writing by brainstorming, making outlines or notes, or drawing diagrams.

Parent Tip

Create a family message center and ask your children to take messages when you can’t get to the phone. Encourage them to write “fun” messages, too — such as a poem to honor a family member’s birthday.



- Organize compositions with effective introductions, bodies and conclusions that elaborate on main ideas.
- Maintain a consistent focus through multiple paragraphs, each of which contains a **topic sentence** and supporting details.
- Vary simple, **compound** and **complex sentences** in writing.
- Use vivid language in engaging and sophisticated ways. Use resources such as dictionaries to enhance word choice.

Writing Process
Eighth-Grade Standards (cont.)



- Write by hand or type on computers.
- Reread their writing, then add and/or delete details and rearrange words, sentences or paragraphs to make it focus more clearly and effectively on a central idea and purpose.
- Proofread their writing to eliminate fragments and run-on sentences and improve grammar, spelling, punctuation and capitalization. Then use other methods (*feedback from others, assignment checklists, etc.*) to improve the quality of their writing.
- Rewrite and illustrate thoughtfully designed writing samples to display and share, using graphics and computer-generated materials when appropriate.

Writing Applications

- Write stories with engaging plots that include appropriate literary devices (**metaphors, similes**, etc.), descriptive details and complex characters in believable settings.
- Write responses to texts organized around specific ideas that are supported with references to the texts.
- Write well-organized, detailed business letters, letters to the editor and job applications with specific purposes and clear endings. Make informal writings (*journals, notes, messages, etc.*)
- Write well-organized informational and persuasive reports or essays that interest readers with intriguing questions, clear perspectives, facts, examples and relevant details from documented sources.

Writing Conventions

- Use accepted spelling rules.
- Correctly use capitalization and punctuation.
- Correctly use all eight parts of speech — nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, conjunctions, prepositions and interjections. Use different types of clauses, including main and subordinate (not essential to the main thought), and phrases, including **gerunds, infinitives** and **participials**.
- Construct effective sentences, including putting descriptive words where they belong and writing items in lists that parallel or compare items.

- Correctly use and explain the different forms of all verb tenses.

Research


- Develop a topic and open-ended questions for research. Refine research questions and judge the validity of information about topics from multiple sources (*classroom books, school and public libraries, Web sites, CD-ROMs, etc.*).
- Define **primary** and **secondary sources**.
- Compare and contrast information, then identify and summarize important findings into central ideas and **themes**, using charts, tables and graphs when appropriate.
- Use quotations and citations appropriately.
- Use a style guide, such as a **bibliography**, to create an appropriate list of sources.
- Create oral, visual, written or multimedia reports to present clear positions supported with relevant details in organized ways. Balance research with original ideas.

Communication: Oral and Visual

- Practice active listening, including aspects such as noting changes in a speaker's reading speed.
- Discuss how believable a speaker has been, based on any **bias** or opinions, and recognize those same elements in media messages.
- Identify different types of **persuasive techniques** used in oral and visual messages and discuss how a speaker's choice of language and style influence meaning.
- Select language appropriate to specific audiences. Speak clearly and correctly, adjusting content, volume and tempo to stress important ideas.
- Present a report that shows an understanding of the topic and includes a clear focus and logical organization, relevant facts and details, and appropriate audio-visual aids (*charts, pictures, etc.*). Identify primary and secondary sources.
- Tell a story, in a formal or informal presentation, that includes relevant, descriptive details.
- Present an organized, persuasive report that establishes a position, then backs it up with evidence and addresses potential arguments.

Language Arts

Glossary



Allegory: A symbolic story that represents meanings other than those on the surface. Characters embody moral qualities and are abstract rather than realistic. *Examples include the medieval morality play “Everyman,” John Bunyan’s “Pilgrim’s Progress” and Edmund Spenser’s epic poem “The Faerie Queene.”*

Antonym: A word opposite in meaning to another word. *For example, “good” and “bad.”*

Argument: Used to make points and/or sway opinion. Types include using authority, logic, cause-and-effect reasoning, drawing comparisons or appealing to emotions.

Autobiographies: Non-fiction works in which authors write their own life stories.

Bias: A slanted opinion.

Bibliography: A formatted list of works, including books, articles and stories.

Biography: A life story.

Climax: The high point, or turning point, in the action of a story.

Clause: A group of words that includes a subject and a verb but is not necessarily a complete sentence.

- Independent clauses can stand alone as sentences.
- Dependent clauses are not complete sentences but can serve as adjectives, adverbs or nouns.
- Relative clauses begin with “who, whom, which, that or whose” and can be either restrictive (“*The child **who is lost** lives there.*”) or non-restrictive (“*The child, **who wore a green coat**, left an hour ago.*”).

Complex sentence: Consists of one independent and one or more dependent clauses. *For example, “After I ate my lunch, I was happy.”*

Compound sentence: Consists of two or more independent clauses joined together. *For example, “I am happy, but she is not.”*

Connotation: The attitudes and feelings associated with a word as opposed to a word’s literal meaning.

Denotation: The literal or “dictionary” meaning of a word.

Dialect: Language specific to a particular group, region or social class.

Dialogue: Characters' speech in a story, play or other work.

Diction: Choice of words in speech and style of pronunciation.

Dramatic monologue: A poem or passage of speech written to be delivered dramatically by a single character and show insights into the character as well as a situation.

Fable: A short story that reveals a moral, in which animals often take the roles of humans.

Figurative language: Words used to add depth and meaning to writing, including metaphors, similes and other techniques.

Flashback: When an author or character remembers a past event in the context of a current event.

Foreshadowing: Words or actions that offer hints about future plot twists.

Genre: A specific type of writing work, such as a novel, short story, poem or play.

Gerund: Verbs that end in -ing and serve as nouns in sentences. *For example, "The little girl said that **dancing** was her favorite hobby."*

Homograph: A word with the same spelling as another word, whether or not the words are pronounced the same way. *For example, **pen** (writing tool) and **pen** (enclosure) and **bow** (used with arrow) and **bow** (of a ship).*

Homonym: A word with a different origin and meaning but the same oral or written form as another word or words. *For example, **bear** (an animal), **bear** (to support) and **bare** (exposed).* Homonyms include homographs and homophones.

Homophone: A word with a different origin and meaning but the same pronunciation as another word, whether or not they are spelled alike. *For example, **hair** and **hare**.*

Idiom: A figure of speech. *For example, "We'll **touch base** tomorrow."*

Infinitive: Verb preceded by the word "to" that follows other verbs. *For example, "I tried **to stop** her from falling."*

Glossary



Irony: When a word is meant to convey a meaning other than its usual meaning. Types include:

- Verbal irony: When a speaker says one thing but means another, including being sarcastic, overstating or understating what is really meant.
- Situational irony: When there is a difference between a logical outcome of a situation and what actually happens.
- Dramatic irony: When what the speaker understands about a situation differs from what some of the audience members understand.

Literary character: A character in a story can be developed in different ways, including:

- Flat character: Presented by an author as one-sided or unchanging.
- Round character: Presented by an author in some depth, with strengths and weaknesses and a range of human emotion.

Metaphor: A comparison describing one thing as if it were another. *For example, “The ocean of sky flowed on forever.”*

Myth: A traditional story that helps define a world view and involves ancestors, heroes and/or supernatural creatures.

Narrator: The person who tells the story.

Parallel episodes: Events involving the same or different characters in a story sharing key features.

Participial: A verb form that is used as an adjective, or as part of a describing phrase, and ends in “ing,” “ed,” or “en.” *For example, “The student **chosen** to represent the class had the best grades.”*

Parody: Writing that imitates one style of work or writer used to make fun of a serious subject.

Persuasive technique: A method used to influence opinions of others. Types include:

- Bandwagon: Argues that all of “us” believe a certain thing.
- Generalities: Argues using general accepted truths, obscuring unproved points.
- Testimonial: Argues using the influence of a noted expert.

Phrases: Can relate to nouns or verbs. See gerund, infinitive and participial.

Plagiarism: To steal and pass off the ideas or words of another as one's own or to use another's production without crediting the source.

Plot: The structure of a story, or what happens.

Point of view: The perspective from which a story is told.

Primary source: The original text about which a student conducts research or writes compositions.

Pun: A play on words. *For example, "Two companies that made shoelaces had common ties."*

Satire: A type of literature that uses irony and humor to make fun of human faults or weaknesses.

Secondary source: A work that presents ideas and opinions of scholars or others about a text that is the subject of a composition or research project.

Similes: Comparisons using the words "like" or "as." *For example, "The sky was blue like a robin's egg."*

Simple sentence: Consists of one independent clause. *For example, "I am happy."*

Soliloquy: When a character in a play talks to himself or herself. A way for the author to reveal the character's inner thoughts.

Sound device: A method used by an author to establish rhythm and mood. Examples include:

- Alliteration: When the beginning consonant sounds of a sequence of words are the same. *For example, "The **sad sailor saw sand.**"*
- Assonance: The repetition of vowel sounds in poems or prose. *For example, "The girl **took a turn for the worse.**"*
- Consonance: The repetition of consonant sounds, usually at the end of words. *For example, "The **speck fell on the black duck.**"*
- Onomatopoeia: When a word resembles the sound it represents. *For example, the "**meow**" of a cat or the "**quack**" of a duck.*

Glossary



Subgenre: A category of literature within a major category. *For example, contemporary romance or historical mystery.*

Subplot: Storyline that may or may not involve the main characters of a work or directly impact the main story.

Symbol: Something concrete — such as a person, place or object — that represents something more than itself, such as a concept or an idea. *For example, water can symbolize change.*

Synonym: One or more words in a language that have similar meanings. For example, **answer** and **respond**.

Theme: A recurring idea or main topic within a written work.

Thesis statement: A clear statement of the main idea of a composition.

Topic sentence: Provides the main thought for the paragraph.

Voice: The dominating tone of a piece of writing.

Language Arts Resources for Parents



<http://www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/spell.htm>

The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences hosts this fun Web site, which features an interactive spelling bee of science-related terms.

<http://www.m-w.com/>

The complete Merriam-Webster dictionary and thesaurus is available online, along with word games and an option for kids to build their own dictionaries.

http://www.indiana.edu/~eric_rec/www/indexfr.html

The ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English & Communication provides *Parents and Children Together* online, a magazine focused on family literacy. You can read original stories with your child and also learn about child development.

<http://www.rifreadingplanet.org/rif/>

The RIF (Reading is Fundamental) Reading Planet offers activities for young readers as well as tips to help you get all your family members excited about reading.

<http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/childlit.htm>

The Internet School Library Media Center features a host of Internet links to literature for children and young adults.

<http://www.eduplace.com>

Free K-8 resources from textbook publisher Houghton Mifflin, including a spelling site for students.

**Please be aware Internet resources are subject to change.*

Standards Notes for
(Student's Name)

Homework Notes

This is a good place for you to keep track of your child's homework assignments and how they connect to the standards. It's an opportunity to write down specific skills or concepts in which your child may need some extra help. Just as important, it's a place where you can note positive comments when your child does good work.

Date	Notes
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
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Date	Notes
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Date Notes

Date Notes

Extra pages are available through the school office or by logging on to the CPS Web site, www.cps-k12.org, and clicking the Standards button.

Standards Notes for
(Student's Name)

conference notes

This is a good place for you to list questions that you want to make sure you ask your child's teacher during conferences at progress-reporting periods. Consider sharing information that might be useful to your child's teacher about your child's personal strengths, challenges and most effective learning styles (coaching, small-group work, projects, individual study, etc.) Use it to take notes during teacher conferences.

Conference Questions/Comments for my Child's Teacher

Child's Grade Level _____

Date	Questions/Comments
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Date	Questions/Comments
_____	_____
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Date Questions/Comments

Date Questions/Comments

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Produced by the Departments of Public Affairs and Quality Improvement in partnership with the Cincinnati Federation of Teachers (CFT) and Cincinnati Parents for Public Schools (CPPS).

January 2003

The Cincinnati Public School District provides equal educational, vocational and employment opportunities for all people without regard to race, gender, ethnicity, color, age, disability, religion, national origin, creed, sexual orientation or affiliation with a union or professional organization. The district is in compliance with Title VI, Title IX and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act. For additional information, contact the Title IX Coordinator or Section 504 Student Coordinator at 475-7000. TDD #475-7030.

A decorative graphic consisting of a dark blue horizontal bar across the middle, a light green horizontal bar below it, and two vertical bars on the right side: a purple one and a light green one.

Cincinnati Public Schools

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www.cps-k12.org

Setting the Standard

Raising Academic Achievement

Language Arts

5-8 Standards Guide

for Parents and
Community Members



Student's Name

