

**Setting  
the  
Standard**

# *Language Arts*

## **9-12 Standards Guide**

for Parents and  
Community Members



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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 9th through 12<sup>th</sup> 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 12th 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](http://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 for families.

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 9-12 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 are 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.*

# LANGUAGE

## How to Use this Guide

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### 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 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.

Keep this booklet  
handy until your  
child completes  
12<sup>th</sup> grade.

### Explore more.

On page 29, you'll find a list of language arts education and literacy resources — Web sites 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.

# AGE ARTS

## 9-12 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.

# Ninth-Grade Standards

## LANGUAGE ARTS

For ninth-graders, language arts study helps in refining reading, writing and speaking. It also continues to shape how they view their world. As they read more difficult texts and literature, they understand universal themes and patterns authors use to make strong arguments that stand the test of time. Their writing becomes increasingly sophisticated as they use standard literary devices as well as persuasive techniques to communicate their ideas. At the same time, they gain more experience analyzing messages in the world around them — from television commercials to billboards. They conduct research projects with the skills to create comprehensive, thoughtful presentations and reports that showcase their growing base of knowledge.

By the end of ninth 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**, **idioms** and **puns**.
- Discuss how history has influenced English.

*Ninth-Grade Standards (cont.)*■ **Reading Process**

- Read purposefully and automatically, increasing their 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, 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**

- Understand how the organization of texts and techniques that authors use relate to their purposes and audiences.
- 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.
- Analyze an author’s purposes for writing and the way he or she develops key points.

**Parent Tip**

*Check in with your child’s teachers to be sure that language arts lessons are both challenging and practical. Take this booklet with you and ask how standards have been incorporated into the curriculum.*

*Reading Applications: Informational Text*  
*Ninth-Grade Standards (cont.)*

- Explain the key elements of and difference between writing for consumers (*warranties, instructions*), writing for employees (*memos, job descriptions*) and public information (*speeches, editorials*).

■ **Reading Applications: Literary Text**

- Discuss how an author develops characters and how characters are revealed, including through **dialogue, dialect, dramatic monologues** and **soliloquies**.
- Analyze and assess the meaning and importance of **genre**, setting, word choice, **figurative language** and **point of view** in literature.
- 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 conflicts.
- Explain the impact of **foreshadowing** and **flashback**.
- Identify and define types of **irony** and **sound devices**.

■ **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, audience and writing strategies.
- Plan writing by brainstorming, making outlines or notes, 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** of different lengths in writing.
- Use more vivid language to express a personal style and **voice**, and use resources such as dictionaries to enhance word choice.
- Write by hand or type on computers.

Writing Process  
Ninth-Grade Standards (cont.)

- Reread their writing, then add and/or delete details and rearrange words, sentences or paragraphs to maintain a sense of **voice** and make writing focus more clearly and effectively on a central idea and purpose.
- Proofread their writing to eliminate inappropriate language, 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 well-structured stories with engaging plots that include appropriate literary devices (**metaphors, similes, etc.**) and descriptive details.
- Write responses to texts organized around specific ideas that are supported with references to the texts, other texts and prior knowledge.
- 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 clauses 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 questions

Research  
Ninth-Grade Standards (cont.)



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**. Use 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**

- 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 arguments (*using authority or appealing to emotion*) and **persuasive techniques** used in oral and visual messages, and discuss how a speaker's choice of language and style influences 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 balanced with opinion, uses techniques to win listeners' trust and attention, and addresses potential arguments.

# Tenth-Grade Standards

## LANGUAGE ARTS

10<sup>th</sup>

For tenth-graders, deepening skills in language arts allow them to expand their vocabulary and learn important communication tools. Their knowledge of English serves them in every subject and at home, in tasks as diverse as solving a mathematical word problem and judging the validity of a television commercial. Their exposure to literature from around the world helps them find their own writing “voice” — a personal style that gives them the power to develop compelling essays, presentations and reports. At the same time, they improve their listening skills and ability to analyze written and visual messages. As they build on the reading and writing skills they’ve mastered through the years, they become better prepared for the world of work outside their classrooms.

By the end of tenth 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**, **idioms** and **puns**.
- Discuss how history has influenced English.



### ■ Reading Process

- Read purposefully and automatically, increasing their 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, reviewing, taking notes or summarizing texts.
- Choose materials for independent reading based on personal interests, experiences and recommendations.

#### Parent Tip

*Help ease pretest anxiety by making sure your child gets a good night’s sleep and a healthy breakfast before heading off to school. Be sure to provide time to unwind after tests.*

### ■ Reading Applications: Informational, Technical and Persuasive Text

- Understand how the organization of texts and techniques that authors use relate to their purposes and audiences.
- Analyze maps, charts, graphs, tables, diagrams and other graphic elements in texts.
- 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.
- Identify appeals to reason, authority and emotion, and analyze an author’s purposes for writing as well as the appropriateness of supporting details, **persuasive techniques** and examples of **bias**.
- Explain the key elements of and difference between writing for consumers (*warranties, instructions*), writing for employees (*memos, job descriptions*) and public information (*speeches, editorials*).

### ■ Reading Applications: Literary Text

- Discuss how an author develops characters and how characters are revealed, including through **dialogue, dialect, dramatic monologues** and **soliloquies**.

Reading Applications  
Tenth-Grade Standards (cont.)



- Analyze and assess the meaning and importance of **genre**, setting, word choice, mood, tone and **point of view** in literature.
- Identify and explain common **themes** 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 conflicts.
- Explain the impact of **foreshadowing** and **flashback**.
- Identify and explain the impact of **irony** and **sound devices** in literature.

■ 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, audience and writing strategies.
- Plan writing by brainstorming, making outlines or notes, 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** of different lengths in writing.
- Use vivid language to express a personal style and **voice**, and use resources such as dictionaries to enhance their choice of words.
- Write by hand or type on computers.
- Reread their writing, then add and/or delete details and rearrange words, sentences or paragraphs to maintain a sense of **voice** and make writing focus more clearly and effectively on a central idea and purpose.

Writing Process  
Tenth-Grade Standards (cont.)



- Proofread their writing to eliminate inappropriate language, 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 well-structured stories with engaging plots that include appropriate literary devices (**metaphors, similes, etc.**) and descriptive details.
- Write responses to texts organized around specific ideas that are supported with references to the texts, other texts and prior knowledge.
- Write well-organized, detailed business letters, letters to the editor and job applications with specific purposes and clear endings, and 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 clauses 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.

■ Research

- Develop a topic and open-ended questions for research. Refine 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**.

Research  
Tenth-Grade Standards (cont.)

- Compare and contrast information, then identify and summarize important findings into central ideas and themes. Use 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**

- 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 arguments and **persuasive techniques** used in oral and visual messages. Discuss how a speaker's choice of language and style influences 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 balanced with opinion, uses common speaking techniques to win listeners' trust and attention, and addresses potential arguments.

# Eleventh-Grade Standards

## LANGUAGE ARTS

For eleventh-graders, knowledge of language arts instills confidence as their thoughts turn to life after graduation. By now they are strong readers who can critically analyze how words are used, in everything from literature to office memos. They compare literature across generations and can create informational texts — such as instructions — that are easy to follow. They write in-depth, engaging and powerful reports based on literature, their own experiences and assigned topics. These good listeners also have become confident, well-organized and persuasive speakers.

By the end of eleventh 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

- Recognize how authors define words using sentence and paragraph clues, including restating ideas or comparing and contrasting information.
- 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."*
- Discuss how English has influenced world literature, communications and popular culture.

- 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, reviewing, taking notes or summarizing texts.
- Choose materials for independent reading based on personal interests, experiences and recommendations.

### Parent Tip

*Help your child develop strong study habits — create a quiet place to do homework, an open atmosphere for asking questions and the necessary supplies to stay organized and complete assignments on time.*

### ■ Reading Applications: Informational, Technical and Persuasive Text

- Analyze techniques used to make **persuasive arguments**, including those in newspaper editorials and speeches. Analyze their validity and effectiveness in appealing to specific audiences.
- Understand how the organization of texts and techniques that authors use relate to their purposes and audiences.
- Collect, compare and contrast relevant information about a topic from a variety of sources. Gauge the effectiveness of main ideas and supporting details.
- Analyze an author or speaker’s assumptions and beliefs, including a critical analysis of any supporting evidence, **bias**, faulty reasoning, etc.
- Analyze and critique standard workplace documents (*memos, manuals, schedules, etc.*), looking at their organization, readability, potential for misunderstandings, etc.

### ■ Reading Applications: Literary Text

- Use specific references to compare and contrast different literary characters’ motivations and how they reacted to similar conflicts.

*Reading Applications*  
*Eleventh-Grade Standards (cont.)*



- Analyze the historical, social and cultural significance of the setting.
- Explain the impact of **voice**, the **narrator** and **point of view** and their effect on characterization, **plot** and believability.
- Analyze variations of common **themes** and **symbols** in literature.
- Recognize and explain the impact of an author's choice to write in **subgenres** such as **satire**, **parody** and **allegory**.
- Analyze literature from different time periods and explore common characteristics as well as major issues and how they influenced writers.
- Use specific examples from literature to explain how authors develop **point of view** and style, including imagery, tone, **symbolism**, **diction**, **irony** and **sound devices**.

■ **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 or surveying subjects when necessary.
- Develop a **thesis statement** or writing plan, as appropriate, before writing, and determine the purpose, audience and writing strategies.
- Plan writing by brainstorming, making outlines or notes, 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** of different lengths in writing.
- Use vivid language to express a personal style and **voice**. Use resources such as dictionaries to enhance their choice of words.
- Write by hand or type on computers.

- Reread their writing, then add and/or delete details and rearrange words, sentences or paragraphs to maintain a sense of **voice** and make writing focus more clearly and effectively on a central idea and purpose.
- Proofread their writing to eliminate inappropriate language, 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. Use graphics and computer-generated materials when appropriate.

#### ■ Writing Applications

- Write thoughtful, balanced papers that use personal experiences as a way to reflect on a life issue. Use specific events to draw abstract conclusions about life.
- Write thoughtful responses to literature that interpret, analyze, evaluate or reflect upon its meaning. Include supporting details from the literature or other works, an overview of the author's style, potential points of confusion, alternative interpretations and a clear ending.
- Write well-organized, practical documents — including resumes, proposals and complaint letters — that are reader-friendly and easy-to-understand. Make informal writings (*journals, notes, messages, etc.*).
- Write well-organized informational and persuasive reports or essays that interest readers with intriguing questions, well-developed structures, clear perspectives, facts, examples and relevant details from primary and secondary sources.

#### ■ Writing Conventions

- Use accepted spelling rules.
- Correctly use capitalization and punctuation.
- Correctly use grammar, including verb tenses, types of pronouns and sense of overall structure.
- Construct effective sentences, including putting descriptive words where they belong and writing items in lists that parallel or compare items.

## ■ Research

- Develop a topic and open-ended questions for research. Refine 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**. Use 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

- Practice active listening, including aspects such as noting changes in a speaker's reading speed.
- Discuss how believable and effective a speaker has been, based on any **bias** or slanted opinions. Recognize those same elements in media messages.
- Analyze and critique different types of arguments and types of persuasive techniques in oral and visual messages. Discuss how a speaker's choice of language and style influences 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.

# Twelfth-Grade Standards

## LANGUAGE ARTS

12<sup>th</sup>

For twelfth-graders, continued practice in reading, writing and making presentations helps prepare them for life after graduation. They are strong, confident readers and can write effective letters, essays and research papers. They continue to expand their vocabularies and understand more complex literary themes and practical documents — all of which helps set the stage for success in the workplace. They are adept at analyzing both written and multimedia presentations and have learned strategies to create their own compelling arguments. After years of work in journals and sorting through books in every subject, they have acquired the necessary tools to communicate information, ideas, hopes and dreams effectively.

By the end of twelfth 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

- Recognize how authors define words using sentence and paragraph clues, including restating ideas or comparing and contrasting information.
- Define new words using reference books, computers, footnotes, and Greek, Latin and Anglo-Saxon (Old English) roots.
- 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.”*
- Discuss how English has influenced world literature, communications and popular culture.

### ■ Reading Process

- Read purposefully and automatically, increasing their understanding by making predictions, comparing and contrasting information, recalling and summarizing events, and making logical guesses and conclusions about texts.

Reading Process  
Twelfth-Grade Standards (cont.)

- 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

- Analyze techniques used to make persuasive arguments, including those used in school policies, newspaper editorials and speeches. Analyze validity and effectiveness of **persuasive techniques** in appealing to specific audiences.
- Understand how the organization of texts and the stylistic techniques that authors use relate to their purposes and audiences.
- Collect, compare and contrast relevant information about a topic from a variety of sources. Gauge the effectiveness of arguments.
- Analyze an author or speaker’s assumptions and beliefs, including a critical analysis of any supporting evidence, **bias**, faulty reasoning, etc.
- Analyze and critique standard workplace documents (*memos, manuals, schedules, etc.*), looking at their organization, readability, potential for misunderstandings, etc.

■ Reading Applications: Literary Text

- Use specific references to compare and contrast different literary characters’ motivations and how they reacted to similar conflicts.
- Analyze the historical, social and cultural significance of the setting.
- Explain the impact of **voice**, the **narrator** and **point of view** and their effect on characterization, plot and believability.
- Analyze variations of common **themes** and **symbols** in literature.
- Recognize and explain the impact of an author’s choice to write in **subgenres** such as **satire, parody** and **allegory**.

Reading Applications  
Twelfth-Grade Standards (cont.)



- Analyze literature from America, Britain and other cultures, explore common characteristics and issues, and explain how they influence writers.
- Use specific examples from literature to explain how authors develop **point of view** and style, including imagery, tone, **symbolism, diction, irony** and **sound devices**.

■ 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, audience and writing strategies.
- Plan writing by brainstorming, making outlines or notes, 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** of different lengths in writing.

Parent Tip

*Encourage your child to set language arts learning goals for the year, and work with them to help them manage their time successfully. Help them develop and stick to realistic study schedules, and be sure they allow time for socializing and relaxing, especially after tests!*

- Use more vivid language to express a personal style and **voice**, 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 maintain a sense of **voice** and make writing focus more clearly and effectively on a central idea and purpose.

Writing Process  
Twelfth-Grade Standards (cont.)



- Proofread their writing to eliminate inappropriate language, 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. Use graphics and computer-generated materials when appropriate.

■ Writing Applications

- Write thoughtful, balanced papers that use personal experiences as a way to reflect on a life issue. Use specific events to draw abstract conclusions about life.
- Write thoughtful responses to literature that interpret, analyze, evaluate or reflect upon its meaning. Include supporting details from the literature or other works, an overview of the author's style, potential points of confusion, alternative interpretations and a clear ending.
- Write well-organized, accurate practical documents — including resumes, proposals and complaint letters — that are reader-friendly and easy to understand. Make informal writings (*journals, notes, messages, etc.*).
- Write well-organized informational and persuasive reports or essays that interest readers with intriguing questions, well-developed structures, clear perspectives, facts, different types of arguments and examples as well as relevant details from primary and secondary sources.

■ Writing Conventions

- Use accepted spelling rules.
- Correctly use capitalization and punctuation.
- Correctly use grammar.

■ Research

- Develop a topic and open-ended questions for research. Refine 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**.

Research  
Twelfth-Grade Standards (cont.)

- Compare and contrast information, then identify and summarize important findings into central ideas and themes. Use charts, tables and graphs when appropriate.
- Use quotations and citations appropriately.
- Use a style guide, such as a **bibliography** or footnotes, 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**

- Practice active listening, including aspects such as noting changes in a speaker's reading speed.
- Discuss how believable and effective a speaker has been, noting **bias** or opinions, types of arguments and key points.
- Evaluate how elements of style, including delivery, word choice and use of language, impact the overall effectiveness of presentations to audiences.
- 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 distinct focus and logical organization, relevant facts and details, and appropriate audio-visual aids (*charts, pictures, etc.*) Use and cite 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, backs it up with evidence balanced with opinion, uses common speaking techniques to win listeners' trust and attention, 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 him 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.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://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.sitesforteachers.com/resources\\_sharp/language\\_arts/languagearts.html](http://www.sitesforteachers.com/resources_sharp/language_arts/languagearts.html)

This Internet site features Web links to language arts lesson plans and activities. Although geared to teachers, many of the sites also are of interest to parents and secondary-school students.

For example, a site maintained by The New York Times —

<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/archive.html> — includes “Student Connections” and “Parent Connections” sections.

*\*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.

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Date      Notes


*Extra pages are available through the school office or by logging on to the CPS Web site, **[www.cps-k12.org](http://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 the end of 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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# Setting the Standard

Raising Academic Achievement

# Language Arts

## 9-12 Standards Guide

for Parents and  
Community Members



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Student's Name

