

English/Language Arts Curriculum

Effective for the 2009-10 School Year

The English/Language Arts Curriculum Standards include the following: Eight Content Standards at each grade level for Kindergarten through Grade 12; Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) for Kindergarten through Grade 8; Checks for Understanding for Kindergarten through Grade 12; Course Level Expectations (CLEs) for Grades 9 through 12; and State Performance Indicators (SPIs) for Grades 3 through 11. The standards were developed to ensure that K-12 Tennessee students learn the reading and language skills needed to succeed in school, in the workplace, and in their lives, with the ultimate goal for students to become life-long learners.

Each grade level of the Language Arts Curriculum is comprised of the following eight comprehensive content standards: Language, Communication (Listening and Speaking), Writing, Research, Logic, Informational Text, Media, and Literature. These standards are the major Language Arts content area topics addressed in each grade level or course level

These eight standards should be taught in an integrated manner to develop well-rounded students who understand and use correct reading and language skills in all situations. The standards communicate the vision of literacy for Tennessee students by providing a basis for the teaching of all language arts content.

The Course Level Expectations (CLEs) and the Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) are the overarching goals for student learning in the Language Arts Curriculum. The GLEs and the CLEs are used by teachers as the principal guide for instructional planning.

The Checks for Understanding are the formative and summative assessment components of the standards. Formative assessment should be an ongoing and regularly scheduled procedure at all grade levels and in all areas of the curriculum. Formative assessment is used to inform instruction and guide the students toward mastery. Summative assessment is used to ensure that students have learned the overall concepts and are ready to move to the next instructional level.

State Performance Indicators (SPIs) are the basis for student accountability and are used by the state to prepare standardized test items aligned with corresponding Grade Level Expectations or Course Level Expectations.

According to the Tennessee State Board of Education's minimum requirements for Language Arts for kindergarten through eighth grade, the school's language arts program is required to be based on the state curriculum standards. Schools must provide developmentally appropriate instruction to their students, focusing on both receptive and expressive language skills. Students whose first language is not English and who are identified as limited English proficient are provided with English instruction especially designed for speakers of other languages.

For grades 9 through 12, four units of credit in English Language Arts are required for graduation. Literature must include cultural diversity. Courses in speech, journalism, competency English, and creative writing may be taken for elective credit, but they will not satisfy the four units of English Language Arts required for graduation. Students whose first language is not English and who are identified as limited English proficient students are provided with English instruction especially designed for

speakers of other languages. These limited English proficient courses may be used to satisfy the English language requirement for graduation, not to exceed two units.

The Language Arts Standards are designed to provide guidance and specificity in planning and implementing curriculum at the state, district, and school levels. The Language Arts Curriculum Standards are based on two important concepts. First, learning in English Language Arts is recursive. Students at every grade level apply similar language skills and concepts to increasingly complex materials. Students build upon and refine their knowledge, gaining sophistication and independence as they learn. Second, although represented separately in the curriculum standards, the content standards are interdependent. Each standard intertwines with and supports the others. Students might at any time read and write, view and discuss, or interpret and present to demonstrate mastery. Thus, at all grade levels, the Language Arts Curriculum Standards weave together skills and concepts from several standards and content areas to support student learning.