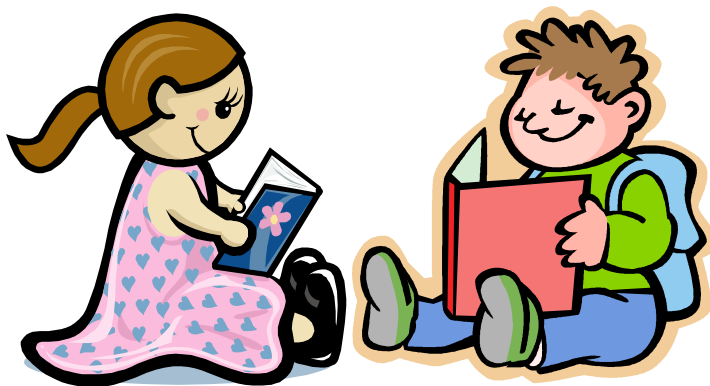


Hamilton Township School District
Language Arts Literacy Curriculum



Language Arts Literacy Curriculum Committee

Teachers of Hamilton Township School District
Joseph C. Shaner Elementary School
George Hess Educational Complex
William Davies Middle School

Board of Education Approved: November 11, 2008

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I. INTRODUCTION

Philosophy

It is the goal of the Hamilton Township School District Language Arts Literacy Curriculum to help students achieve mastery of language arts literacy through a balanced literacy approach which is rooted in the belief that students achieve proficiency in the language arts by actively constructing meaning for themselves through the authentic use and exploration of language in social contexts. The curriculum promotes instructional supports necessary for students to engage in reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing in increasingly complex formats within a rich literacy environment that encourages critical thinking, strategic application of skills, and creative use of language. We hope to see in every classroom, as outlined in the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards:

- Differentiated instructional strategies to address individual learning styles and diverse student needs;
- Exposure to and experience with many literary genres through reaction, reflection, and introspection;
- Instructional skills and strategies, including direct and explicit instruction; modeling of skills/strategies for students, and opportunities for students to be a teacher to others; that ready students to become competent readers, writers, speakers, listeners, and viewers;
- Instruction delivered in meaningful contexts so that students preserve the learning for future use or transfer to other learning;
- “Active learning” in which students are engaged in active questioning, active listening, authentic activities, and the learning process;
- Explicit teaching of skills as a means of supporting mastery of standard English conventions, comprehension strategies, and communication skills;
- Acquisition of reading and literacy skills in all content areas to support learning;
- Development of self-help strategies that are practiced across all disciplines;

- Connections to prior knowledge as a necessary component of new learning and retention;
- Immersion in reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing standards that leads to deeper and wider understanding;
- Use of textual resources, especially those linked to current technologies, as an integral part of a language arts literacy program;
- Experiences using technology as a tool for learning, especially as it applies to research and data retrieval;
- Time to practice learned skills and reflect on one's work as an important part of the learning process;
- Activities encouraging problem-solving and inquiry skills as critical attributes to learning; and
- Explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary development.

Overview

The New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards

The New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards include five Language Arts Literacy standards, each of which has a number of strands followed by cumulative progress indicators for each grade level in grades K-8, as well as a combined cluster for grades 9-12. The standards and their associated strands are as follows:

3.1 Reading:

- A. Concepts About Print*
- B. Phonological Awareness*
- C. Decoding and Word Recognition*
- E. Fluency*
- F. Reading Strategies (Before, During, After)*
- G. Comprehension Skills and Response to Text*
- H. Inquiry and Research*

3.2 Writing

- A. Writing as a Process*
- B. Writing as a Product*
- C. Mechanics, Spelling, and Handwriting*
- D. Writing Forms, Audiences, and Purposes*

3.3 Speaking

- A. Discussion*
- B. Questioning (Inquiry) and Contributing*
- C. Word Choice*
- D. Oral Presentation*

3.4 Listening

- A. Active Listening*
- B. Listening Comprehension*

3.5 Viewing and Media Literacy

- A. Constructing Meaning*
- B. Visual and Verbal Messages*
- C. Living With Media*

The Language Arts Literacy Performance Indicator Matrix

Performance indicators were created for each of the standards by combining cumulative progress indicators from the various strands that could be wrapped together into measureable performance outcomes at each grade level. A comprehensive matrix indicating the grade levels at which each performance indicator is addressed was created to show the developmental continuum of language arts literacy skills taught from grades kindergarten through grade eight. Since the language arts are not simply a discrete set of literacy skills but rather interdependent processes that reinforce and inform each other, the performance indicators were then organized into units of study incorporating performance indicators from the various standards and supported by curricular maps, unit plans, and common assessments. This integrative approach provides opportunities for students to explore language and to communicate interactively for authentic purposes.

**II. LANGUAGE ARTS
LITERACY
PERFORMANCE
INDICATOR MATRIX K-8**