

Louisiana Believes.



Grade 4 English Language Arts

Transitional Curriculum
REVISED 2012

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

English Language Arts – Grade 3

Table of Contents

Unit 1: Read All About It.....	1-1
Unit 2: The Writing Process	2-1
Unit 3: Critical Thinking	3-1
Unit 4: Research	4-1
Unit 5: Poetry	5-1
Unit 6: Reading and Writing Nonfiction.....	6-1
Unit 7: Autobiographies and Biographies.....	7-1
Unit 8: Recommended By—Author Study.....	8-1

2012 Louisiana Transitional Comprehensive Curriculum Course Introduction

The Louisiana Department of Education issued the first version of the *Comprehensive Curriculum* in 2005. The 2012 Louisiana **Transitional Comprehensive Curriculum** is aligned with Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs) and *Common Core State Standards (CCSS)* as outlined in the 2012-13 and 2013-14 Curriculum and Assessment Summaries posted at <http://www.louisianaschools.net/topics/gle.html>. The Louisiana Transitional Comprehensive Curriculum is designed to assist with the transition from using GLEs to full implementation of the CCSS beginning the school year 2014-15.

Organizational Structure

The curriculum is organized into coherent, time-bound units with sample activities and classroom assessments to guide teaching and learning. Unless otherwise indicated, activities in the curriculum are to be taught in 2012-13 and continued through 2013-14. Activities labeled as 2013-14 align with new CCSS content that are to be implemented in 2013-14 and may be skipped in 2012-13 without interrupting the flow or sequence of the activities within a unit. New CCSS to be implemented in 2014-15 are not included in activities in this document.

Implementation of Activities in the Classroom

Incorporation of activities into lesson plans is critical to the successful implementation of the Louisiana Transitional Comprehensive Curriculum. Lesson plans should be designed to introduce students to one or more of the activities, to provide background information and follow-up, and to prepare students for success in mastering the CCSS associated with the activities. Lesson plans should address individual needs of students and should include processes for re-teaching concepts or skills for students who need additional instruction. Appropriate accommodations must be made for students with disabilities.

Features

Content Area Literacy Strategies are an integral part of approximately one-third of the activities. Strategy names are italicized. The link ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) opens a document containing detailed descriptions and examples of the literacy strategies. This document can also be accessed directly at <http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/11056.doc>.

Underlined standard numbers on the title line of an activity indicate that the content of the standards is a focus in the activity. Other standards listed are included, but not the primary content emphasis.

A *Materials List* is provided for each activity and *Blackline Masters (BLMs)* are provided to assist in the delivery of activities or to assess student learning. A separate Blackline Master document is provided for the course.

The *Access Guide to the Comprehensive Curriculum* is an online database of suggested strategies, accommodations, assistive technology, and assessment options that may provide greater access to the curriculum activities. This guide is currently being updated to align with the CCSS. Click on the *Access Guide* icon found on the first page of each unit or access the guide directly at <http://sda.doe.louisiana.gov/AccessGuide>.



Grade 4
English Language Arts
Unit 1: Read All About It

Time Frame: Approximately five weeks



Unit Description

This unit focuses on reading and responding to a variety of texts, including classical, historical, and contemporary fiction and nonfiction. Although nonfiction will be introduced, there is an emphasis on fiction in this unit. Nonfiction will be addressed further in unit six. This unit also emphasizes vocabulary development, word formation, grammar, and written composition skills. Read-alouds and shared, guided, and independent reading experiences facilitate the teaching of story elements (setting, plot, character, theme, and conflict) and the characteristics of reading genres.

Student Understandings

Students demonstrate comprehension when they describe and discuss literary elements and compare and contrast texts. They respond to various reading genres through oral discussion and writing projects.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students use graphic organizers to compare/contrast a variety of texts, including fiction and nonfiction?
2. Can students respond to texts by using prior knowledge and life experiences?
3. Can students identify the elements of various genres?
4. Can students describe a character's traits, actions, relationships, and motivation?
5. Can students use "pre reading" and "during reading" comprehension strategies as they read and respond to various genre?
6. Can students discuss texts with one another?

Unit 1 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs) and Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

Grade-Level Expectations	
GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
02.	Determine the meaning of unfamiliar words using knowledge of word origins and inflections (ELA-1-E1)
03.	Determine word meanings, word choices, and pronunciations using a broad variety of reference aids such as dictionaries, thesauruses, synonym finders, and reference software (ELA-1-E1)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
05a.	Identify a variety of story elements, including the impact of setting on character (ELA-1-E4)
05b.	Identify a variety of story elements, including multiple conflicts (ELA-1-E4)
05c.	Identify a variety of story elements, including first- and third-person points of view (ELA-1-E4)
05d.	Identify a variety of story elements, including development of theme (ELA-1-E4)
11.	Compare and contrast stories/tales from different cultures and explain the influence of culture on each tale in oral, written, and visual responses (ELA-6-E1)
12.	Identify a variety of types of literature, including poetry and short stories, in oral and written responses (ELA-6-E2)
13.	Identify and explain the defining characteristics of various types of literature, including the myth and the legend (ELA-6-E3)
14a.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, such as sequencing events and steps in a process (ELA-7-E1)
14b.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts by explaining how the setting impacts other story elements, including the characters' traits and actions (ELA-7-E1)
14c.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts by using specific evidence from a story to describe a character's traits, actions, relationships, and/or motivations (ELA-7-E1)
14d.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts by confirming or denying a prediction about information in a text (ELA-7-E1)
14e.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts by comparing and contrasting story elements or information within and across texts (ELA-7-E1)
19c.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including identifying cause-effect relationships in texts and real-life situations.
19d.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts by generating questions to guide examination of topics in texts and real-life situations (ELA-7-E4)
19e.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts by explaining connection between information from texts and real-life situations (ELA-7-E4)
22.	Identify and audience for a specific writing assignment and select appropriate vocabulary, details, and information to create a tone or set the mood and to affect or manipulate the intended audience (ELA-2-E2)
23a.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying writing processes, including selecting topic and form (ELA-7-E4)
23b.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying the writing processes, including prewriting (e.g., brainstorming, researching, raising questions, generating graphic organizers) (ELA-7-E4)

GLE #	GLE Text and Benchmarks
23c.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying the writing processes, including drafting (ELA-7-E4)
23d.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying the writing processes by conferencing with peers and teachers (ELA-7-E4)
23e.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions by identifying and applying the writing processes, including revising based on feedback and use of various tools (e.g., LEAP21 Writer's Checklist, rubrics) (ELA-7-E4)
24.	Develop paragraphs and compositions of at least three paragraphs using the various modes (i.e., description, narration, exposition, and persuasion), emphasizing narration and description (ELA-2-E4)
26a.	Write for various purposes including formal and informal letters that follow a specific letter format, include relevant information, and use an appropriate closure (ELA-2-E6)
26b.	Write for various purposes, including informational reports that include facts and examples and that present important details in a logical order (ELA-2-E6)
26c.	Write for various purposes, including book reports that include an opinion and/or a persuasive viewpoint (ELA-2-E6)
31a.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including selecting and using common interjections (ELA-3-E4)
31b.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including identifying and using transitive and intransitive verbs correctly (ELA-3-E4)
31c.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including identifying and using verb tenses correctly, including present perfect, past perfect, and future perfect (ELA-3-E4)
31d.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including using grade-appropriate irregular verb tenses correctly (ELA-3-E4)
32.	Use knowledge of root words, affixes, and syllable constructions to spell words (ELA-3-E5)
34.	Adjust pacing to suit purpose, audience, and setting when speaking (ELA-4-E1)

ELA CCSS	
CCSS #	Common Core State Standard Text
Reading Standards for Literature	
RL.4.5	Explain major differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems (e.g., verse, rhythm, meter) and drama (e.g., casts of characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) when writing or speaking about a text.
RL.4.7	Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text.
RL.4.9	Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics (e.g., opposition of good and evil) and patterns of events (e.g., the quest) in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures.

CCSS #	Common Core State Standard Text
Reading Standards for Literature	
RL.4.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in the grades 4-5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
Reading Standards for Informational Text	
RI.4.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grades 4-5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
Reading Standards: Foundational Skills	
RF.4.3	Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words. a. Use combined knowledge of all letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and morphology (e.g., roots and affixes) to read accurately unfamiliar multisyllabic words in context and out of context.
RF.4.4a	Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. a. Read on-level text with purpose and understanding.
RF.4.4c	Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. c. Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.
Writing Standards	
W.4.6	With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of one page in a single sitting.
W.4.9a	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. a. Apply grade 4 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text [e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions].”).
W.4.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
Speaking and Listening Standards	
SL.4.1a	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grade 4 topics and texts</i> , building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly. a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.

CCSS #	Common Core State Standard Text
Speaking and Listening Standards	
SL.4.1b	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grade 4 topics and texts</i> , building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. b. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles.
SL.4.1c	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grade 4 topics and texts</i> , building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. c. Pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information, and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to the remarks of others.
SL.4.1d	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grade 4 topics and texts</i> , building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. d. Review the key ideas expressed and explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.
SL.4.5	Add audio recordings and visual displays to presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main idea or themes.
Language Standards	
L.4.3c	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. c. Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion).
L.4.4a	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grade 4 reading and context</i> , choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. a. Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

Sample Activities

Activities 1-7 are ongoing throughout the curriculum.

Activity 1: Silent Sustained Reading and Guided Reading (Ongoing throughout curriculum) (CCSS: RL.4.10, RI.4.10, RF.4.3a, RF.4.4a, RF.4.4c)

Materials List: a wide variety of trade books, non-fiction, classroom sets, and chapter books at various reading levels, student library books

Reserve a specific amount of time every day for Silent Sustained Reading. This reading time should supplement the standard reading program by encouraging students to read independently.

This time also provides an opportunity for students to read according to a variety of student interests and abilities. This daily reading time **should not** take the place of regular guided reading instruction.

Teachers will discuss with students that reading skills are improved and fluency goals best met when the students choose texts that are not too easy and not too difficult. Usually students can tell immediately if the text is too easy or too difficult. The five-finger rule is helpful in teaching students to check if the reading level is right for them. Have students open to any page in the book and read the page (aloud if possible). Students should put one finger up for every word that cannot be pronounced. If a student puts up five fingers while reading one page, the book is too difficult.

Guided reading instruction should take place daily. Provide instant feedback to students to confirm and self-correct word recognition and understanding of unfamiliar multisyllabic words in context. Have students re-read passages until both recognition and understanding are achieved. Continually probe and question students throughout the process to address new strategies and skills as well as individual deficits, and have students respond to those probes and questions orally and in short written responses while providing teacher scaffolding. Each student should meet in guided reading groups weekly. However, provide struggling students with more time in guided reading intervention groups. A variety of texts should be provided including nonfiction and technical texts.

Activity 2: Vocabulary Activities (Ongoing throughout curriculum) (GLEs: 02, 03)

Materials List: 3 x 5 or 5 x 7 index cards, pictures or video clips, index cards, colored pencils/markers/crayons, Vocabulary Self-Awareness Chart BLM, dictionaries, thesauruses, glossaries

Use a variety of vocabulary-building activities throughout the year. Use these strategies to help students gain meaning from unfamiliar texts through application of context clues and determination of base word meanings. These strategies will be repeated, built upon, and ongoing. Assess student understanding of vocabulary either formally (written tests) or informally (writing stories, poems, or sentences using the vocabulary words, etc.) Choose from these activities to reinforce weekly vocabulary comprehension. Students may use dictionaries, thesauruses, and/or glossaries to assist with the activities. It is not necessary to use every activity.

Vocabulary Cards Activity

Have students create *vocabulary cards* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) related to words in the stories they are reading. Give each student an index card and a word from the story. Have students write the word (or a sentence using the word) on the front and the definition on the back (Have these ready before class to save time). Give each student one vocabulary card. Say, “Stand up, hands up, and pair up.” Students will walk around the room and find a partner. Students will hold up their cards, and the partner they are paired with will state the definition. If the partner does not know it, the student may give hints or use the word in a sentence. After two

chances the student should show the definition to the partner, who turns to hold up his/her vocabulary card and asks for the definition. When the two students are finished, they trade cards. Then, say, “Stand up, hands up, and pair up” again, and have students find a new partner and repeat the process.

Illustrate the Word Activity

Show pictures or video clips that demonstrate the meaning of a word. Give students a list of the vocabulary and instruct them to draw and label a picture illustrating the meaning of the words from the story. This activity is not limited to concrete nouns—for example, a *grim* expression. The labels explain how the word and drawing fit. Drawing skills are not important; stick figures with accurate labels can succinctly express an idea as much as a well-drawn picture. The student should not replace an abstract idea with a concrete example of it. The vocabulary cards above can also be used to illustrate the definition of the words. After learning the word meanings, students can also play a Pictionary or charades style game to practice and reinforce vocabulary meanings.

Vocabulary Self-Awareness Activity

Before reading a story, give students a list of vocabulary words and direct them to complete a *vocabulary self-awareness chart* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to determine their knowledge of the words. Do not give students definitions or examples at this stage. Prompt them to rate their understanding of each word with either a “+” (understand well), a “?” (limited understanding or unsure), or a “—” (don’t know) and add definitions and sentences as best they can at this stage. After reading the story and exposing the students to context clues and other information, have them return to the chart to make revisions and add new information to it. The goal is to replace all check marks and minus signs with plus signs. Give the students many opportunities to revisit their vocabulary charts to revise their entries.

Vocabulary Self-Awareness Chart

Word	+	?	--	Definition	Sentence/Example
Author	+			The writer of a book, article, or other text.	Who is the author of that book?
Paraphrase	+			A restatement of a text or passage in another form or other words, often to clarify meaning.	Please paraphrase the article.

2013-2014

Activity 3: Vocabulary Activities (Ongoing throughout curriculum) (CCSS: L.4.4a)

Materials List: 3 x 5 or 5 x 7 index cards, pictures or video clips, index cards, colored pencils/markers/crayons, Vocabulary Self-Awareness Chart BLM

Activity 3 is an extension of Activity 2. In 2013-2014, add the following extensions to address the added transitional material:

Vocabulary Cards Activity

Students create *vocabulary cards* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) related to words in the stories they are reading. Demonstrate how to create the vocabulary cards first. The cards should include the word on one side of the card. On the back, the word should be repeated in the middle. Place the definition on the upper left hand corner, the part of speech on the upper right hand corner, a sentence using the word on the lower left hand corner, and an illustration on the lower right hand corner. For words with multiple meanings, have the students complete the vocabulary card activity on both sides of the card representing one meaning on one side and the other meaning on the other side.

Example of a vocabulary card:

Definition:	VOCABULARY WORD	Part of Speech:
Sentence:		Illustration:

Games can be played with these vocabulary cards for reinforcement. For example, say, “Stand up, hands up, and pair up.” Students will walk around the room and find a partner. Students will announce their word to a partner who will state the definition. If the partner does not know it, the student may give hints or use the word in a sentence. After two chances, the student should show the definition. Then the partner turns to hold up his/her vocabulary card and asks for the definition. When the two students are finished, they trade cards. After allowing a reasonable amount of time for partners to identify definitions, say, “Stand up, hands up, and pair up” again, and students will find new partners.

A modified version of this activity can be conducted with multiple-meaning words. However, instead of stating one meaning, the students would be expected to give both meanings of the word.

Illustrate the Word Activity

Show pictures or video clips that demonstrate the meaning of a word. Give students a list of the vocabulary they will use to draw and label pictures illustrating the meaning of the words from the story. This activity is not limited to concrete nouns—for example, a *grim* expression. The

labels should explain how the word and drawing relate. Drawing skills are not important; stick figures with accurate labels can succinctly express an idea as much as a well-drawn picture. The student should not replace an abstract idea with a concrete example of it. The vocabulary cards above can also be used to illustrate the definition of the words. Multiple-meaning words can be illustrated multiple times. After learning the word meanings, students can also play a Pictionary or charades-style game to practice vocabulary meanings.

Vocabulary Self-Awareness Activity

This will be the same as in activity 2.

Activity 4: Spelling Activities (Ongoing throughout curriculum) (GLE: 32; CCSS: RF.4.3a)

Materials List: weekly spelling lists that include grade-level appropriate words, 20 Ways to Practice Spelling BLM

Provide students with ample opportunities to practice spellings and basic recognition of grade-appropriate words with common syllabication patterns, phonetic patterns, and roots and affixes. This ongoing study should encourage and develop grade-level phonetic and word decoding skills.

Students can practice spelling patterns in a variety of ways through the use of the 20 Ways to Practice Spelling BLM. Particular activities may be assigned each week, or students may be given the freedom to choose one activity from each level. However, emphasize the importance of choosing activities that require the students to practice syllabication, spelling patterns, and phonetic awareness. Allow students to have some freedom to choose activities that are more fun, but perhaps require one specific activity that is more skill based each week. At times, it may be necessary to choose the activity from the skill-based or word-meaning sections based on class needs.

When practicing a specific spelling skill, add or manipulate activities to match the content. For example, when studying words with silent letters, have students write the words and circle the letters that are not pronounced.

Activity 5: Daily Language (Ongoing throughout curriculum) (GLEs: 31a, 31b, 31c, 31d)

Materials List: daily sentences that are to be edited, printed copies for each students, transparency copy for use as a class

The Everyday Edits can be used in many ways. Here is *one* possible procedure that might be used:

- Copy the day's daily edit passage onto a transparency. As students return from recess or lunch, hand them a copy of the day's passage and direct them settle quickly into finding the ten errors of capitalization, punctuation, or grammar included in that passage.
- Give students 5 minutes or so to find and mark ten errors in the day's passage.
- Divide the class into two or more teams. The teams established in this way will be "permanent teams" (for at least a month). Start with one team and ask a student on that team to identify an error in the passage. When a student correctly identifies one of the ten errors in that day's passage, award a point to the team. Then give the other team(s) a chance to identify an error. Go back and forth until all ten errors have been found in that day's passage. (Students might even find additional errors in a daily passage. Also, give credit if a team offers an idea that would improve the passage.)
- Keep score over the course of a month and award a special treat (an ice pop, a homework-free-night coupon, or something else that students will value) to members of the team that has the highest score at the end of the month. The makeup of the teams may be changed for the following month.

Be sure to include sentences that have errors with interjections, transitive and intransitive verbs, irregular verb tenses, and present, past, future, and perfect verb tenses.

Activity 6: Daily Writing Activities (Ongoing throughout curriculum) (GLEs: 22, 23a, 23b, 23c, 24, 26a, 26b, 26c)

Materials List: journal, pencil

Have students keep a daily journal. Writing in the journal can include any or all of the writing processes that are addressed in unit 2 including pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and/or publishing. Give students some autonomy with daily journal writing, and allow them to identify their own audience and determine their own tone and mood. This should be more of an exploratory activity rather than a structured, modeled writing lesson. Daily writing activities should cover a broad range of writing styles which include but are not limited to the following list:

Narratives: daily journal prompts, picture prompts (use pictures to create a story), word wall or spelling activities, story starters, Round Robin Writing (Students create and add to stories as they are passed around.)

Expository: descriptions, how-to papers

Informational: biographies, autobiographies, brief reports on a topic

Response to Fiction: story summaries, character analyses, story responses
(respond to reading story or trade book)

Response to Nonfiction: responses to news articles, current event summaries, summaries of nonfiction texts, responses to non-fiction articles, books, or digital sources

Letters: pen pals (write to another class), business letters, letters to the principal

Express an Opinion: argumentative responses to a topic, letters to the editor

Other: daily news (write about things that happened at school that day), poetry, comic strips (fill in what the characters are saying), greeting cards, want ads, advertisements, directions

Website for writing prompts: <http://www.canteach.ca/elementary/prompts.html>

2013-2014

Activity 7: Daily Writing Activities (Ongoing throughout curriculum) (CCSS: W.4.10)

Materials List: My Writing Inventory BLM

Activity 7 is an extension of Activity 6. In 2013-2014, add the following extensions to address the added transitional material:

Have students keep track of their writing progress on the My Writing Inventory BLM. Students should include all of their daily writing activities from Activity 6 as well as all of their significant writing assignments derived from the remaining activities. Students should determine whether their writing is a “short time frame piece” or an “extended time frame piece.” Facilitate a discussion to determine the difference between these two terms. Students should also identify their purpose for writing on the BLM. Purposes for writing may include, but are not limited to narration, (entertainment), description, information, explanation, persuasion, expressing an opinion, reflection, or analysis. Students should also use the BLM to identify the stages of the writing process that were completed.

Over the course of the year, impress upon students that it is not necessary that each writing piece go through all stages of the writing process. For example, explain to students that reflection may only require drafting. Not every piece of writing is intended for publishing.

Activities 8—15 are ongoing throughout the unit with stories from multiple genres.

Activity 8: Read to Me Please (Ongoing throughout unit) (GLEs: 05b, 14a, 19c, 19d, 19e; CCSS: RL.4.10)

Materials List: book to read aloud, reading learning log, Sample Rubric for Student Self - Assessment BLM

See Teacher Resources at the end of the unit for a list of possible introductory read-alouds. These books are excellent choices to capture students’ interest and practice comprehension strategies. Model, coach, and apply the strategies, focusing on only one at a time. Use “thinking aloud” to model for students how to make predictions, read and verify, ask questions and read to confirm, activate prior knowledge, and make connections while reading.

Use the *QtC* (*questioning the content*) strategy ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) which helps students set up a framework for the types of questions that they should be asking themselves while reading independently. While reading, stop often and think aloud. Ask yourself questions and allow the students to participate in answering the questions. Keep a list of questions that good readers ask themselves. Some possible questions include the following:

- “Oh, I think I know what is going to happen What do I think might happen next?”
- Reading on to confirm predictions....“How did I guess that correctly?”
- “I wouldn’t do that if I were the character....What would I do?”
- “I’m not sure what that word means. Could I guess by rereading the rest of the paragraph, or do I need to look that word up in the dictionary?”
- “Things might not have worked out that way at my house.... What might have happened at my house?”
- “Has that ever happened to me before?”
- “I’ve had a similar problem/conflict before when I . . I would deal with this by...”

After modeling sufficiently, have students practice using the same questioning strategies while reading in groups or with partners. Stories from the following activity, Activity 9, could be used for practicing *QtC* (*questioning the content*). Provide additional modeling and clarification during this process, and encourage students to reread when necessary for understanding.

Encourage students to write the questions they come up with in their reading *learning log* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)). A *learning log* is a bound collection of a student’s ideas, questions, reactions, reflections, summaries, and responses. This reading *learning log* will be used for recording information during guided and independent reading activities.

Activity 9: Genre...Is French for Type or Kind? (Ongoing throughout unit) (GLEs: 12, 13, 14e)

Material List: books from different genres of literature, reader’s learning log, Genre Characteristics BLMs, My Reading Inventory BLM

Begin fourth-grade literature studies with a variety of texts representing numerous genres. Examples of genre to be studied should include the following:

- Nonfiction: Informational text, biography, autobiography
- Fiction: Historical fiction, modern realistic fiction, science fiction, fantasy, poetry, dramas, and traditional literature (e.g., myths, legends, fables, folktales)

Choose a grade-appropriate book, short story, or drama to read each day to present examples of each reading genre, and have students begin a reading list and Genre Characteristics BLM, identifying each category of literature with a list of characteristics. Give students a My Reading Inventory BLM and ask them to keep a list of what is read, noting title/author, date completed and genre. Use daily mini-lessons to introduce models for reading and responding during whole-

Grade 4 ELA ♦ Unit 1 ♦ Read All About It

class and independent reading activities. During these lessons, have student volunteers share summaries of their personal reading, then direct the class to identify the genre of each story and support its conclusions by relating the genre's identifying characteristics. When the genre charts are complete, students will search their homes, classroom, and/or school libraries to fill in the name of a book under each genre heading.

The Genre Characteristics BLM and My Reading Inventory BLM should be used throughout the unit for Activities 10-15. Any time a new genre is studied, students should be prompted to add to their Genre Chart BLM. They can also add as many examples as possible to the chart. Students should also be keeping track of all stories that they read on the My Reading Inventory BLM throughout the unit.

Activity 10: Drama Here, There, Everywhere! (Ongoing throughout unit) (GLEs: 23a, 23b, 23c, 34; CCSS: RL.4.5, RL.4.7, RL.4.10)

Material List: journals, daily genre samples from Activity 9, various grade-level appropriate dramas, tape or video recorder, reading learning log

This activity uses a *lesson impression* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)). *Lesson impressions* gain student interest by elevating curiosity and activating prior knowledge. In this instance, the *lesson impression* strategy will pique student interest in vocabulary related to drama and theater.

Impression Words: *characters, setting, dialogue, stage, props, script, spot light, and dress rehearsal*

Present the impression words to students, and instruct them to guess the content that will be covered in class that day. Elicit student responses and be sure to ask students to justify their speculations. The goal is for students to share what they already know about the above-mentioned words so all students can make connections and gain basic understandings about drama and theater.

Then, in their journals, give students fifteen minutes to write a very brief imaginative narrative using as many as the impression words as possible. An example follows:

I was so nervous about our drama club's dress rehearsal for our production of *Romeo and Juliet*. I just knew that one of the characters would forget his or her dialogue. I wanted it to be perfect, so I called each of my friends and reminded them to practice. I had my script memorized, and I was ready for the stage. I even packed my props in my duffle bag three days ahead of time to be sure that they did not get left behind.

Finally, it was the big day! To my surprise, everyone was there on time, and everyone knew their lines! We had just changed the stage scenery to the courtyard setting. Since I was Romeo, I knew that this was one of my shining moments! When the spot light shined on me to deliver my line, I froze. What were my lines? How could this happen to me? I got so nervous that I tripped over my own feet and fell flat on my face. Let's hope opening night goes a little better.

While students are writing, monitor and clarify misconceptions. Upon completion, read aloud a few student samples which provide context and meaning to the impression words.

Provide the students with background knowledge about the *lesson impression* words. While reading examples of student work, have the class use context clues to determine meanings of these new words. Allow the class to come up with definitions of these words together and record definitions in their reading *learning logs* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)). Once students are more familiar with drama terminology, have them return to their impression text and revise it to reflect their better understanding of the vocabulary.

Conduct a few dramas or Reader's Theaters within in the classroom over the course of Unit 1. Dramas should be available within the basal text. *Scholastic Scope* also includes a drama in every edition and can be accessed at <http://www.scholastic.com/browse/classmags.jsp?srcId=78>.

Begin with a short drama, assign cast roles to students, and have them read through the dialogue. Then, start to incorporate stage directions. Assist students in portraying their assigned character by using the stage directions to exemplify the stated emotions. Also, have students follow the commands of movement onto and off of the "stage" or front of the classroom.

As the students become more comfortable with drama, choose more complex dramas with more advanced stage directions and acting. For the final production, encourage students to practice their scripts at home ahead of time in order to read aloud fluently and expressively. Also, encourage students to bring costumes or props. Have a "dress rehearsal" one day to practice stage directions. If possible, tape or video the class as they read the play together. Then, have an "opening night" the following day.

Try to incorporate the other genres throughout Unit 1 in the drama study. Point out to students that any story can be turned into a drama by bringing the characters and setting to life by changing text to dialogue and adding stage directions.

It would be very beneficial to use the text from another genre, possibly traditional literature, to create a very brief dialogue and conduct a Reader's Theater within the classroom. Be sure to help students note the differences between the story as text and as a genre. Elicit class discussion to help students compare and contrast stories to dramas, pointing out that a text can be descriptive and offer feelings and thoughts, whereas a drama or script gives the exact words and actions of a character.

Activity 11: Before Reading (Ongoing throughout unit) (GLEs: 11, 12, 13, 14d, 14e, 19d; CCSS: RL.4.10)

Materials List: daily genre samples from Activity 9, reading learning log, Genre Characteristics BLM, My Reading Inventory BLM, Sample Rubric for Student Self Assessment BLM

The *DLTA directed learning-thinking activity* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) can be used with each selection from the genre study in Activity 9. The *directed learning-thinking activity*

will assist students in becoming independent in the process of making and self-correcting predictions when reading various texts. Begin the lesson with a discussion to find out what students may already know from personal experiences and prior readings. Model the prediction process by using titles, headings, bold words, and background knowledge. Think aloud through the skimming and scanning process. For example, say things such as, “Because of the title, I think this may be a nonfiction article. Look at this word. This word makes me think that this piece may be about some sort of scientific experiment or discovery.” Explain how good readers make predictions about what they are going to read and can base some pre-reading predictions on what they already know about the kind of story to be read (genre, author’s purpose). Explain that predictions can also come from a person’s previous experiences with or studies of a particular topic or theme.

Students should record the discussed predictions on the board, chart paper, overhead, or in their reading *learning log* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)).

After discussing predictions, review the characteristics of the genre being studied to set a purpose for what students might expect to hear in such a story or drama. Have students refer to the Genre Characteristics BLM to assist in identifying the genre that is being studied. Possible characteristics include:

- telling about other cultures
- being passed down over time
- having themes such as greed, jealousy, love, and courage
- having a setting in different times and places (long ago)
- having problems solved by repetition of words, phrases, sentences, events, trickery, magic, or things happening in threes
- having a single character dominating the action
- having animals as characters
- having characters with supernatural abilities
- having characters who are considered “royalty”
- having a calm beginning, action rising to a high point, and then resolution leading to “happily ever after”
- teaching a lesson

Stories or dramas can be read aloud, independently, or in small groups. Instruct students to stop at key points during their reading, think about their predictions, and change their predictions, if necessary, using evidence from the story and explaining why they are changing their predictions. Once reading is completed, use student predictions to elicit discussions about their original predictions and reasons they revised them. Have students write summaries about their predictions in their reading *learning logs*.

As stories or dramas are read, direct students to identify examples of these identifying characteristics and record their observations and questions in a reading *learning log* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)). Have the class discuss which elements were present in the story. With proper modeling and coaching, students become more adept in using prior knowledge to read analytically and begin to use these techniques independently in their personal reading.

Activity 12: During Reading: Map it Out! (Ongoing throughout unit) (GLEs: 05a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 12, 13, 14a, 14b, 14c; CCSS: RL.4.10)

Materials List: Story Map Poster BLMs, daily genre samples from Activity 9, overhead projector, Genre Characteristics BLM, My Reading Inventory BLM

Continue to coach through daily read-aloud experiences to instruct students in recognizing story elements, such as vocabulary, the impact of character and setting, multiple conflicts, first- and third-person points of view, and theme development. Read to students from grade-appropriate books, and model the process of using a Story Map Poster to analyze story elements. The three Story Map Poster BLMs advance in complexity to include new concepts. With each new story, move to a more complex Story Map Poster and introduce new story elements.

After reading each short story, book, or drama aloud, in groups, or independently, elicit student responses noting setting, characterization, theme, cultural differences, and literary elements.

2013-2014

Activity 13: Let's Discuss! (Ongoing throughout unit) (GLEs: 05b, 5d, 14a, 14c, 34; CCSS: RL.4.10, W.4.9a, SL.4.1a, SL.4.1b, SL.4.1c, SL.4.1d, SL.4.5, L.4.3c)

Materials List: daily genre samples from Activity 9, reading learning log, Sample Collaboration Rubric BLM, chart paper, Genre Characteristics BLM, My Reading Inventory BLM

This activity will require students to conduct a *discussion* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)), specifically a Fishbowl *discussion*. Fishbowl *discussion* allows students to study in depth a particular topic and conduct a discussion of their studies while the remainder of the class looks on. Other students will learn from their classmates' *discussion* and feedback but will not be allowed to comment on the *discussion*. Only after the *discussion* will onlookers be given the opportunity to discuss any reactions, make revisions, or ask any questions. This will allow students to express their full understanding without immediate criticism from peers or the teacher.

In this activity, have students work in small groups. Give copies of the Sample Collaboration Rubric BLM and explain expectations before assigning students roles within their groups. Some possible roles may include those of timekeeper, noise patroller, recorder, investigator, and group leader.

This Fishbowl *discussion* will take place after reading a genre selection from Activity 9. It should include a *discussion* of the following story elements: main character traits and how they have changed over the course of the story, a character's actions to solve his/her problem, a detailed setting of the story, and a possible theme for the story. Students will have the opportunity to share their understandings and interpretations of the story with one another and evaluate and improve their own understandings.

Give each group about fifteen minutes to discuss one of the above-mentioned story elements. Try to include two groups of students studying character traits, two groups studying character actions, two groups studying setting, and two groups studying story theme. Have recorders create a list of ideas from all group members on large chart paper. Remind students that all ideas are encouraged and should be recorded on the group visual and that each child must add something. Character traits and a sequence of actions can be charted in graphic organizers if the students choose.

After completing small group *discussion* and visual, each group should reenact their *discussion*. Have individual students state their ideas to the class. Both groups who have studied character traits should report before the remainder of the class is allowed to participate in the *discussion* and make connections or ask questions. After both groups have presented, encourage student questioning. Perhaps require that each remaining group pose at least one question for the presenters. Lead the remaining students through identifying key ideas, posing questions, and explaining misunderstandings. At this time, revisions can be made on the visuals based on student and teacher feedback. Repeat the *discussion* with the other groups who have studied the character's actions, setting, and story theme.

Upon completing the *discussion*, remove the visuals. Students should be prepared to independently complete the following in their reading *learning logs* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)).

1. Who is the main character? Describe this character's personality traits at the beginning of the story. How did the character change over the course of the story? What evidence did you find in the story to support this change?
2. What conflict is the main character faced with? How does he or she resolve this problem? Use details from the story in your answer to explain the main character's most important actions.
3. Write two to three sentences identifying the setting and one theme of this story. What evidence did you use from the story to help you determine the setting? What evidence did you use from the story to choose this theme?

Activity 14: Define Genres Using Graphic Organizers (Ongoing throughout unit) (GLEs: 11, 12, 13, 14e)

Materials List: daily genre samples from Activity 9 (myths, legends, folktales, etc.), copies of Comparison/Contrast Chart BLM, reading learning logs, chart paper, Sample Collaboration Rubric BLM, Genre Characteristics BLM, My Reading Inventory BLM

After introducing the various types of genres, share two samples of varying genres, for example fables and fairy tales. Stories or dramas can be read aloud, independently, or in small groups. Carefully choose questions to guide students to notice important attributes of the two different genres. The following are possible questions to guide students to think about some of the elements that were found in their readings:

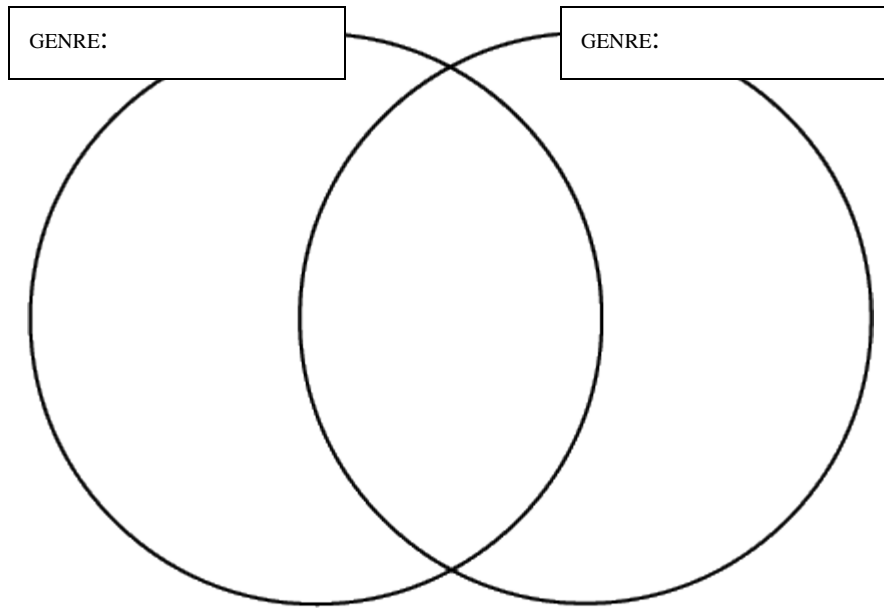
- What point of view is the story told in?
- Does the story tell about something real?
- Could the story's events be real, or are they totally unbelievable (fiction)?
- Are the characters human or animal?
- If the characters are human, could they have been real people?
- Are characters doing things that are typically human, or are they doing things that are superhuman?
- Is there magic?
- Does the character face a problem that must be solved?
- Can you tell when and where the story takes place, or could it take place at any time and anywhere?
- Does the story take place long ago?
- Is this a story that is commonly shared among people or passed down from one generation to the next?
- Are the people in the story ordinary/common people, or are they royalty?

Comparison/Contrast: Direct students to create a multiple-column comparison/contrast *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) as shown below. Students should replace the column headings with the genres of literature they are studying. Under “Story Characteristics,” have students write the questions above (or teacher-made questions) and answer the questions from the stories or dramas they have read. The information in the chart will help students understand the definitions of the genres being studied and will help them to better organize the many attributes associated with each genre.

Comparison/Contrast Chart

STORY CHARACTERISTICS	STORY:	STORY:

Upon completion of the Comparison/Contrast Chart, students should be guided through the process of creating another *graphic organizer*, the Venn diagram. The Venn diagram will help students to see clearly the differences between similar genres. Each genre can be placed on one side of the diagram. Guide students to find similarities between the two genres to be placed in the middle of the diagram. Differences should also be placed accordingly. Students can construct these Venn diagrams in their reading *learning logs* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)).



This activity can be repeated numerous times with various stories from different genres. Large charts can be constructed on chart paper by the teacher or groups of students and hung around the room to reinforce the differences and similarities among all genres.

As an extension, small groups of students can be assigned different genres to study and chart on Venn diagrams. Groups can share their findings in brief presentations using their Venn Diagrams as visuals. The Sample Collaboration Rubric BLM can be used to assess student participation. As an added extension, students can share their findings without labeling the genres on their Venn diagrams and then have classmates try to identify the two genres studied based on the similarities and differences presented.

2013-2014

Activity 15: Define Genres Using Graphic Organizers (Ongoing throughout unit) (GLEs: 13, 14e, CCSS: RL.4.9)

Materials List: daily genre samples from Activity 9 (myths, legends, folktales, etc.), copies of Comparison/Contrast Chart BLM, reading learning logs, chart paper, Sample Collaboration Rubric BLM, Genre Characteristics BLM, My Reading Inventory BLM

Activity 15 is an extension of Activity 14. In 2013-2014, add the following extensions to address the added transitional material:

Add the following questions to guide student thinking about story elements to the original list found in Activity 14:

- Describe the culture that the story originated from.
- What is a common theme found in the story (i.e., greed, jealousy, love, good overcomes evil, or courage)
- Does the story teach a lesson?

Activities 16 and 17 should be completed only after all genres have been thoroughly studied.

2013-2014

Activity 16: Reading Like a Writer (GLEs: 05a, 5b, 13, 14a, 14b, 23b, 23c, 23d, 23e; CCSS: W.4.6)

Materials List: copies of myths and legends and 1 transparency for each group, overhead projector OR word processing software and projection system, Sample Collaboration Rubric BLM

Divide the class into literature groups or pairs and give each group a myth or legend to read. Serve as a “consultant” while students read and discuss. Direct students to determine ways setting and culture influence the characters and events of their stories. Have them review the characteristics of the genre and use a story map to track the action in the story. Then, have students work as a group to change the setting, characters, and plot line of the first tale to create an original (but parallel) story. Students will follow the steps in the writing process by working as a group to:

1. Make a list of the elements to be found in a myth or legend.
2. Make a story map to plan the setting, characters, story problem, and ending.
3. Make an outline or story map to plan the sequence of events/ rising action to resolution.
4. Use a collaborative group approach first to tell and then write an original story.
5. Read the story to the class and ask for feedback about what would make the story more interesting.
6. Revise the composition to reflect input from classmates.

Each group will make an overhead transparency of the story or publish the story on a word processor. The Sample Collaboration Rubric BLM can be used to assess student participation.

Guide the class through making improvements and editing students’ stories according to grade-level conventions.

Activity 17: Workshop Time (GLEs: 22, 34; CCSS: RL.4.5, RL.4.7, RL.4.10)

Materials List: copies of a drama, Story Maps Poster BLMs, Sample Collaboration Rubric BLM

To conclude this unit, have students work in literature groups to choose a favorite folktale, tall tale, legend, or fairy tale and work collaboratively to change the text into a Reader’s Theater script with dialogue and stage directions. Students should be given a rubric for writing and for presentation to guide them during this process. Students should be encouraged to refer back to their story map that they constructed for this story or to recreate a story map to help organize their thoughts and ideas about the text that they are recreating.

Each child should play the part of either a major or minor character or a narrator. Using the events from the story (students should be encouraged to refer to their sequence chart), the

students should practice reenacting their stories with dialogue, emotion, and action. Provide ample assistance to each group and monitor student cooperation throughout this process.

Students will practice reading their parts and will present the drama to the class. This project will involve a collaborative effort, and guidelines must be provided for effective group work. After each presentation, guide the class in a discussion about the possible themes for each story. Discuss the similarities and differences in the themes across the various stories and make connections among similar themes.

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the type of product that results from the student activities, and develop a scoring rubric collaboratively with other teachers or students. The following are samples of assessments that could be used for this unit:

General Assessments

- Students will keep a personal reading log of selections read by the teacher or independently, listing the book, author, title, a brief summary, and date completed. Students will classify the book by genre. Students will maintain a Reader's *learning log* containing teacher-provided information, vocabulary lists of words defined by the student, and a reading-response journal.
- Students will participate in scheduled reading conferences periodically to check Reader's *learning logs* and monitor their oral reading progress.
- Students will be provided with *graphic organizers* to help them comprehend increasingly complex material and organize thoughts for writing extensions.
- Students will be given writing prompts on a variety of topics to determine if students are able to write extemporaneously and fluently, producing a well-developed writing sample within a specified time.
- Students will choose appropriate independent reading material (95% and above words known) for various purposes. Observe and record student progress.

Activity-Specific Assessments

- Activity 8: Have students chart and summarize a chapter of a book read independently. In a reading/writing conference, evaluate the summary according to the standards suggested during model lessons:
 - Appropriate use of transitional words
 - Paragraphs with topic sentences, supporting details, and concluding

sentences

- Inclusion of characters, action, and theme development
- Organization according to sequence of events
- Edits for spelling, sentence construction, and grammar

Provide students with oral feedback about their writing progress. As students are given more practice, they will be able to use a self-assessment rubric to determine if their summaries meet the above criteria.

- Activity 9: Check Genre Charts for completion and accuracy. Then post a list of genres in the classroom library and make these terms a part of the literary language used in class discussions, checking to see that students are using the terms appropriately.
- Activity 11: The activity-specific assessment from Activity 8 may also be used for Activity 11.

OR Students can complete a self-assessment rubric for reading response, including the following guiding standards:

- I use prior knowledge and my own experience as I think about what I read.
 - I explain my own thinking clearly.
 - I use details from the text to support my ideas.
- Activity 13: In addition to the Sample Collaboration Rubric, the independently completed discussion questions can be assessed for thorough analysis of characters, setting, and theme.
 - Activity 14: In addition to the Sample Collaboration Rubric, compare student definitions to actual definitions, and check students' *graphic organizers*.
 - Activity 17: Students will be given a format for script writing, a timeline and guidelines for group work, and tips for oral presentation. This activity is not designed to perfect writing skills, but rather to engage students in higher order thinking and creative expression. Students are to be evaluated according to creativity and originality. Use a collaborative group rubric to evaluate the group's final product and final performance. Expand the student collaboration rubric to include elements of drama such as adequate dialogue, stage direction, and emotion demonstrated in performance and script.

Teacher Resources

Activities with Legends/Myths: Websites:

This website includes printable copies of myths, legends, and fables:

<http://home.freeuk.net/elloughton13/theatre.htm>

This website includes American myths and legends:

<http://www.americanfolklore.net/myths-legends.html>

Collection of European folklore:
Singer, Issac Bashevis. *Zlateh the Goat*

Activity 8: Teachers choose a grade-appropriate novel to read aloud to the class. Possible introductory read-alouds include:

- Babbitt, Natalie. *Tuck Everlasting*
- Hailey, Martha. *The Secret Garden Retold from the Frances Hodgson Burnett Original*
- Curtis, Christopher Paul. *Bud, Not Buddy*
- Curtis, Christopher Paul. *The Watsons Go to Birmingham*
- Hamilton, Virginia. *M.C. Higgins, the Great*
- Lowry, Lois. *Number the Stars*
- Saint-Exupery, Antoine de. *The Little Prince*
- Spinelli, Jerry. *Maniac Magee*

Sample texts that correlate with 4th Grade Social Studies curriculum:

- Armstrong, Jennifer. *Black-Eyed Susan*
- Carbone, Elisa. *Blood on the River: Jamestown 1607*
- Howard, Ellen. *The Crimson Cap*
- Lawlor, Laurie. *Addie Across the Prairie*
- Speare, Elizabeth George. *The Sign of the Beaver*
- Wilder, Laura Ingalls. *Little House in the Big Woods*