

# Course Syllabus

## Language Arts, Grade 4

Grade 4 Language Arts, Final  
Guardian Angels School

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The ITBS Form A- Survey for reading and language arts measures the skills and achievement of students.

The Standards for the English Language Arts center around three core beliefs:

\* "First, Guardian Angels School believes that standards are needed to prepare students for the literacy requirements of the future as well as the present. Changes in technology and society have altered and will continue to alter the ways in which we use language to communicate and to think. Students must be prepared to meet these demands."

\* "Second, we believe that standards can articulate a shared vision of what the nation's teachers, literacy researchers, teacher educators, parents, and others expect students to attain in the English language arts, and what we can do to ensure that this vision is realized."

\* "Third, we believe that standards are necessary to promote high educational expectations for all students and to bridge the documented disparities that exist in educational opportunities. Standards can help us ensure that all students become informed citizens and participate fully in society."

In Language Arts, students concentrate on reading operations, writing, speaking, and listening. Students engage in projects which require them to apply language arts skills in real world contexts.

In this course, Guardian Angels students explore the world of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Students engage in activities which require them to apply their knowledge of language structure by editing for language mechanics, usage, and cohesiveness. Course work includes working independently and in groups to complete projects, learning study and organizational skills, incorporating an increasing vocabulary to speaking and writing, applying word structure and context analysis to define words, demonstrating the writing process, and identifying and extending patterns found in written and spoken language. The course emphasizes the need for students to construct meaning from, and respond to, oral communication and reading selections, and to express ideas and thoughts to others through speaking, writing, and drawings.

The Standards for the English Language Arts provide

twelve standards that are "intended to serve as guidelines that provide ample room for the kinds of innovation and creativity that are essential to teaching and learning."

### Genres

The Genres Unit includes identifying and comparing key characteristics of literary genres, as designated by a work's subject, theme, style, and time period. Some examples of genres are science fiction, poetry, drama, classical literature, and multicultural literature.

- The learner will be able to construct meaning from a short story by interpreting details, the title, character motives and feelings, and by predicting outcomes.
- The learner will be able to analyze a short story for details, emotions, and events, and predict the outcomes of the story.
- The learner will be able to independently select books from a variety of genres (biographies, nonfiction, fiction, diaries, and journals) and from multiple cultures.
- The learner will be able to compare and contrast the themes, points of view, and styles of two authors.
- The learner will be able to synthesize information from three entries from one or more reference books.
- The learner will be able to identify the author's purpose in a given passage.
- The learner will be able to analyze short stories.
- The learner will be able to analyze a character depicted in a short story.
- The learner will be able to recognize narrative patterns.
- The learner will be able to identify the genre of a given passage.

### Language Expressions

The Language Expressions Unit focuses on language conventions, structure, usage, and language study. It also addresses parts of speech, figures of speech, syntax, paragraph and sentence structure, word agreement,

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modifiers, and grammar.

- The learner will be able to show an understanding of similes by reading sentences and choosing the best similes for the underlined words or phrases.
- The learner will be able to interpret metaphors and show an understanding of how they are used in comparisons.
- The learner will be able to demonstrate standard language usage.
- The learner will be able to edit a series of sentences for double negatives, verb forms, subject-verb agreement, redundancies, and clarity.

### Language Mechanics

The Language Mechanics Unit includes comprehending and applying the rules that govern punctuation and capitalization when writing and editing written works.

- The learner will be able to understand and apply English language conventions in the following areas: punctuation (commas, periods, quotation marks) and usage (pronouns, singular and plural nouns, subject/verb agreement, verb tenses, singular possessives).
- The learner will be able to capitalize cities and states.
- The learner will be able to edit sentences for the correct use of commas and show an understanding of how commas alter meaning.
- The learner will be able to identify the correct punctuation.
- The learner will be able to use capitalization correctly.
- The learner will be able to capitalize a title.

### Listening

The Listening Unit includes identifying and distinguishing between sounds and patterns in sounds, constructing meaning from information delivered verbally, and understanding and responding to verbal information.

- The learner will be able to analyze a story and discuss story elements after hearing it read aloud. This includes identifying the main idea, events, sequence, and details of the story.
- The learner will be able to respond to others (in a group discussion) by paraphrasing the comments of others, asking poignant questions, and demonstrating patience while listening.
- The learner will be able to evaluate the oral presentations given by others on the basis of a set of student/teacher developed criteria (cohesive main idea, consistent organization of supporting ideas, and effective speaking style).

### Media

The Media Unit includes the study of information and entertainment communications. Topics include: advertising, art, journalism, film, and media messages, forms and productions.

- The learner will be able to find and describe information displayed in an advertisement.
- The learner will be able to use an understanding of media techniques to create, evaluate, and/or discuss print and nonprint materials.

### Reading Operations

The Reading Operations Unit includes constructing meaning from fiction and non-fiction selections at comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and judgment levels of understanding. It includes skills which address identifying, discussing, and comparing both concrete and abstract elements of selections (setting, plot, characterization, genre, historical period, theme, tone, moral message, and psychological and political implications)

- The learner will be able to analyze how elements of a story are connected, and utilize this analysis to make predictions about how a story might end.
- The learner will be able to interpret a variety of reading materials.

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- The learner will be able to keep a reading response log which includes sections for detailing events, and for providing an emotional and/or intellectual reaction to story elements. Such a log should be referred to by the student as a measure of the student's growth as a reader, for topics for group discussions, and as a way to become an engaged reader.
- The learner will be able to engage in self-initiated reading response activities such as prewriting on topics (lists, webbing, illustrations, graphs, clusters), maintaining reading response logs, discussing reading materials with peers, and forming questions about reading materials during which the student is able to recall key elements of reading materials, summarize, paraphrase main ideas, generalize about characters, explain how elements of reading materials may be connected, and remain open to the ideas and interpretations of others.
- The learner will be able to analyze main characters by creating story maps which highlight the adventures, personalities, and growth of main characters. Such maps should include quotes from main characters, other characters, and narrators, which substantiate commentary on the main characters.
- The learner will be able to analyze story elements such as characters, point of view, setting, and story line, and discuss how these elements are connected.
- The learner will be able to draw logical and supported conclusions from passages.
- The learner will be able to understand facts in a reading selection.
- The learner will be able to make inferences about the elements of a story.
- The learner will be able to infer meaning from figurative language.
- The learner will be able to identify the time structure of a reading passage.
- The learner will be able to make a generalization based on passage elements.

- The learner will be able to develop generalizations about short stories.

### Speaking

The Speaking Unit focuses on techniques and strategies (voice modulation, body language, ordering of ideas, visual aids, etc.) to convey meaning and to present information and opinions to groups. This unit includes formal and informal communication, debate skills, and verbal/nonverbal communication.

- The learner will be able to communicate a point of view utilizing persuasive devices (powerful examples, language, tone of voice, and sequencing events), and body language.
- The learner will be able to orally present a report, speech, poem, or story which follows the guidelines set by the class/teacher for an appropriate presentation.
- The learner will be able to participate as an active member of a group preparing a presentation. The presentation should be appropriate for its purpose, the audience, and topic, and should incorporate audio/visual aids.
- The learner will be able to orally retell or summarize a story.

### Spelling

The Spelling Unit includes studying language and word structure knowledge to discern the correct spelling of words. It includes skills related to editing passages for correct spelling by making connections between spelling, meaning, and structure.

- The learner will be able to edit for correct spelling by transferring a knowledge of prefixes, suffixes, and their definitions to the spelling of words.
- The learner will be able to review sentences for the appropriate use and correct spelling of homophones.
- The learner will be able to develop a study method for learning how to spell new words (such as keeping a log of words misspelled frequently).

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- The learner will be able to correctly spell words where an affix may or may not change the spelling of the root word.
- The learner will be able to choose a word that best completes a sentence and is spelled correctly.
- The learner will be able to correctly write words with irregular spelling.
- The learner will be able to spell words correctly.
- The learner will be able to correctly spell words which have a suffix.

### Study and Research Skills

The Study and Research Skills Unit includes developing organization and research skills needed to find appropriate resources, to judge resources as relevant or not relevant to a given topic, to categorize and synthesize information, to take notes in class, and to study for exams.

- The learner will be able to work in a group and/or alone to decide on a research topic, develop a plan of action for completing the research, create a timeline for the project that includes each step of the research and presentation process, utilize resources such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, film, tape, experts, and technology, formulate a thesis statement, outline details, and prepare a presentation.
- The learner will be able to evaluate the usefulness of a resource book (to a given research project) by quickly skimming, reading a chapter title, index, title page, table of contents, glossary, paragraph headings, and visual aids.
- The learner will be able to identify the kinds of information a dictionary contains and locate information in a dictionary.
- The learner will be able to use organizational skills to complete an outline and choose the most appropriate title for a given outline.
- The learner will be able to locate information in an encyclopedia.

- The learner will be able to use a diagram and its accompanying keys.

### Vocabulary

The Vocabulary Unit includes studying and applying knowledge of word structure (bases and affixes), concrete analogies, synonyms, antonyms, and syllables. It also includes applying knowledge of connotation, denotation and words with multiple levels of meaning.

- The learner will be able to generate analogies which encompass the multiple levels of meaning and connotations of words.
- The learner will be able to draw logical conclusions about the meaning of words when they are presented within the context of a passage and utilize structural clues (affixes, base words, comparatives, superlatives, irregular verbs, pronouns and their referents, synonyms, and antonyms) to define unknown words.
- The learner will be able to demonstrate a large vocabulary and the ability to use multiple-meaning words precisely by writing cinquains, haikus, diamantes, and acrostics.
- The learner will be able to identify the vocabulary word that best completes a given sentence as read aloud by the teacher.
- The learner will be able to determine the meaning of a word through its relationship to another word.
- The learner will be able to determine the meaning of unfamiliar technical terms by analyzing the context (a paragraph or more) in which the words are used.
- The learner will be able to apply an understanding of vocabulary words.

### Writing

The Writing Unit focuses on each stage of the writing process: prewriting, writing, revising, and publishing. It includes skills covering a variety of organizational formats and purposes for writing (communicating ideas, opinions, and feelings, clarifying thoughts, and solving problems). Some example writing formats are expository, narrative,

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poetry, and drama.

- The learner will be able to write a response to a literary topic which includes a clear thesis statement, an effective introduction, paragraphs which provide supporting details, elaboration, and examples, and a strong conclusion which ties the ideas and concepts presented in the essay together. The essay should follow a logical and consistent organizational pattern, utilize punctuation, grammar, literary devices, rich word choices, and a variety of sentence constructions to add emphasis and strength to key points, and reflect a style and voice appropriate for a given audience, purpose, and subject matter.
- The learner will be able to edit final drafts of writing for correct use of the following conventions: pronouns, singular or plural nouns, subject-verb agreement, singular possessives, punctuation, and spelling.
- The learner will be able to proofread sentences for punctuation errors and complete sentences using correct punctuation and capitalization.
- The learner will be able to revise writing in terms of content, style, voice, selection and sequence of ideas, and sentence structure (declarative, interrogatory, imperative, exclamatory). The student should show a willingness to be flexible, open to changes in drafts, and should view writing as a continuous process.
- The learner will be able to create and edit a topic sentence which develops the topic of a given paragraph.
- The learner will be able to compile a portfolio of writing samples which includes writing from different content areas, short stories, reports, and poems with drafts from each stage of the writing process. The portfolio should also include an explanation of why the pieces were selected, a self-evaluation of progress made in writing, and a judgment statement on whether goals set by teacher and/or student were met.
- The learner will be able to demonstrate the writing process (prewriting, drafting, revising, rewriting, editing, publishing) to create an expository piece.
- The learner will be able to write a narrative which describes events in sequential order.
- The learner will be able to understand the development of a research paper.
- The learner will be able to write to describe the qualities of an object or an idea.
- The learner will be able to write a composition which includes a main idea and supporting details.
- The learner will be able to edit a paragraph for cohesiveness, theme, and sequence of ideas.
- The learner will be able to form cursive letters.
- The learner will be able to include a space between written words.
- The learner will be able to choose an appropriate writing style (expository, persuasive, narrative, or expressive) for a given purpose.