



Language Arts Benchmark Achievements Senior Language Arts (Ages 12+)

As students participate in reading and listening to great literature and as they create their Science, Literature and History notebooks, they will naturally develop skills listed below. Students will be given ample opportunity to practice writing skills as they prepare their history and science notebooks. Students and parents may consider a specific writing class such as *Institute for Excellence in Writing* for the teaching of writing skills. Parents and mentors should monitor progress to determine if a separate grammar, vocabulary, and spelling curriculum are necessary.

	Penmanship
	Regular practice in cursive writing (upper and lower case letters)
	Words
	Common prefixes and suffixes and how they change the meaning and part of speech
	Compound words
	Syllabication
	Synonyms, antonyms, homonyms
	Using abbreviations to shorten words
	Words used as metaphors
	Words for worship and formal speaking
	Spell common English words accurately
	Grammar
	Nouns: Singular and plural, common and proper, possessive
	Verbs: present and past tense, helping verbs, linking verbs, transitive and intransitive
	Verb forms: present, past, infinitive, present participle, past participle; perfect tense, present perfect, past perfect, future perfect tense; progressive tense, present progressive, past progressive, future progressive
	Verbals: gerund phrases, participial phrases, infinitive phrases
	Pronouns: pronoun case and agreement, personal, reflexive, indefinite, demonstrative, first-person, second-person, third-person
	Adjectives: noun modifiers and predicate adjectives, comparative, superlative, articles, demonstratives, number words, possessives, prepositional phrases used as adjectives
	Adverbs: modifying verbs (when, where, how, why, how often), modifying

	adjectives, modifying other adverbs, prepositional phrases used as adverbs,
	Conjunctions: coordinating, correlative, and subordinating
	Prepositions:
	Sentences: Subject, predicate, subject-verb agreement, declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamatory, how to diagram a sentence
	Sentence structure: simple, compound, complex, compound-complex
	Direct and indirect objects, predicate nominative, predicate adjective
	Sentence fragments and run-on sentences
	Phrases: noun phrase, appositive phrase, verb phrase, prepositional phrase
	Clauses: independent and dependent, adverb clause, adjective clause, noun clause
	Correcting errors in sentence construction: complete sentence, subject-verb agreement, run-on sentences, pronoun case, reflexive pronouns, pronoun agreement, pronouns and antecedents, verb tense agreement, misplaced modifiers.
	Understand when to use rise or raise; sit or set; lie or lay.
	Punctuation
	The use of periods, questions marks and exclamation points to end sentences.
	The uses of commas: in dates and addresses; after greetings and closings of letters; in series; to set off no, and yes, and similar words; to set off names when persons are addressed; when a person's last name is written first; with quotation marks.
	The placement of quotation marks in short quotations and in quotations more than a paragraph long.
	The use of apostrophes in contractions and to show possession.
	Indent at the beginnings of paragraph, certain lines of poetry, and each time a different person speaks in a conversation of direct quotations.
	Writing
	Be able to write poems in one or more common rhythm and rhyme patterns.
	Organize and develop a brief essay (drafting, revising, proof-reading).
	Use of anecdotes in reports and articles to add interest
	Personification in writing
	Writing notes and making outlines.
	Stylistic techniques to add interest (as taught in the <i>Excellence in Writing</i> course).
	Dress-ups (who-which clause, "ly" words, because clause, strong verbs, quality adjectives, <i>when, while, where, as, since, if although</i> clauses)
	Sentence openers (subject, prepositional, "ly" word, "ing" word, clause, very short sentence, "ed" words
	Decorations (questions, conversation/quotation, Three short staccato sentences, dramatic opening/closing, simile/metaphor, alliteration

	Sentence styles (word repetition in the same sentence, phrase & clausal repetition, repeating “-ings”, repeating “lys”, repeating adjectives or nouns, repeating verbs)
	Summarizing narrative stories: Story sequence and critiques
	Paragraph construction: Topic sentence with final clincher
	Summarizing references: One topic from a one paragraph source
	Summarizing references: One topic from a longer reference
	Summarizing references: Two or more topics from one source. Final composition 2-3 paragraphs
	Summarizing references: Two or three references with information on the same topic. Students create a fused outline with a one paragraph summary
	Summarizing references: Multiple topic research (three-topic, three-paragraph composition)
	Writing from pictures: write a three-paragraph story from three pictures.
	Writing from pictures: write a three-paragraph story from one or two pictures.
	Creative writing: Use of an introduction and conclusion in a 5 paragraph composition
	Essay writing: Use of an introduction and conclusion in essays of five, seven or more paragraphs. Include quotations, footnotes, and proper citation of resources.
	Essay writing: Create a multiple page essay (research paper) including a bibliography with proper citation of resources.
	Essay writing: Writing a persuasive essay with pros and cons
	Critiques: Write an essay using the critique model (introduction, characters/setting, conflict/plot, climax/theme, conclusion.
	Reading
	Recall details from a reading selection.
	Reflect about deeper meanings.
	Understand literal meaning and figurative meaning.
	Be introduced to critical reading, evaluate material as to its probable truth, and understanding the difference between fact and opinion.
	Use good expression in oral reading.
	Understand the use of different reading speeds for different purposes.
	Begin to develop ability in skimming and fast reading.
	Study Skills
	Know how to alphabetize and use alphabetized helps such as dictionaries and encyclopedias.
	Use guide words at the tops of pages in these alphabetized study helps.

	Be able to use card catalogs or computerized catalogs in libraries.
	In a dictionary, understand the “fine print” of multiple meanings, parts of speech, accents, pronunciation symbols, and syllabication.
	Know how to use indexes and tables of contents in books.
	Know how to use a library.
	Speaking
	Show courtesy in conversation, answering a telephone, making introductions.
	Tell stories with events in sequential order.
	Give oral reports and take part in group dramatizations.
	Memorization and delivery of paragraphs and documents
	Poem memorization and recitation