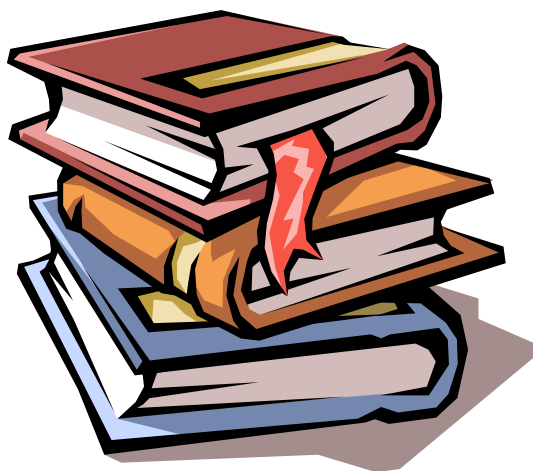


ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS/ BENCHMARKS\*  
GRADES 3 AND 4

DECEMBER 2004



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\*This document represents the agreed-upon English Language Arts benchmarks for the Acton Public Schools. The Department of Education's language has been modified occasionally. Where the district has modified the state's original language, the number of the standard is followed by (APS). The examples are a blend of the DoE document (June 2001) and those developed by Acton Public Schools. Specific APS grade-level examples are designated, e.g. (APS 3).

# Language Strand

## Grades 3 & 4

Most of the benchmarks listed in the third and fourth grade level are introduced in third grade and worked on further through fourth grade. Third grade teachers do not need to expect student mastery by the end of third grade. Teachers should continue to address earlier standards as needed and as they apply to more difficult work.

### **Standard 1: Discussion**

Students will use agreed-upon rules for informal and formal discussions in small and large groups.

- 1.2 Follow agreed-upon rules for class discussion and carry out assigned roles in self-run small group discussions.

*For example:*

*In literature discussion groups, students take on roles of leader, scribe, and reader as they discuss questions they have generated in preparation for class.*

*Two children may co-lead each day's class meeting, on a rotating basis, with the responsibility of fairly encouraging participation according to the class rules. (APS 3)*

*Roles such as leader/questioner, recorder, reporter (back to the whole group) and "caller" (to fairly ask for opinions and ideas) may be modeled, practiced, and rotated so that they become familiar to every child. (APS 3)*

*During the first week of school, the teacher should direct a class discussion on agreed-upon rules for the class, including listening and responding. Rules should include: attentive listening, responding on topic or creating an appropriate transition to a new topic, building on the ideas of previous speakers, showing consideration of others' contribution to the discussion, avoiding sarcasm and personal remarks, taking turns, and gaining the floor in appropriate ways. (APS 4)*

### **Standard 2: Questioning, Listening, and Contributing**

Students will pose questions, listen to the ideas of others, and contribute their own information or ideas in group discussions or interviews in order to acquire new knowledge.

- 2.2 Contribute knowledge to class discussion in order to develop ideas for a class project and generate interview questions to be used as part of the project.

*For example:*

*Students interview community helpers, using questions the class has generated, and report the results to the class.*

*As part of a class project, each child may be assigned a space on an easel chart on which to write their own information, ready for the class's next step in the project. (APS 3)*

*Students will participate in class and group discussions by asking questions, answering questions, responding to discussions. Students work in small reading or discussion groups with designated leadership roles; e.g., reader, clarifier, summarizer, and illustrator. (APS 4)*

### **Standard 3: Oral Presentation**

Students will make oral presentations that demonstrate appropriate consideration of audience, purpose, and the information to be conveyed.

- 3.3 Adapt language to persuade, to explain, or to seek information.
- 3.4 Give oral presentations about experiences or interests using eye contact, proper place, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

For example:

*Students give a presentation of information acquired from a class visit to the Children’s Museum.*

*Oral presentation techniques such as eye contact and clear voice are modeled and constantly encouraged by the strong interest of the class. (APS 3)*

*Students will give oral presentations about experiences or interests using eye contact, proper pace, volume, and clear enunciation; i.e., “Show & Tell” or “Sharing,” poetry recitation, oral reports, dramatic readings. (APS 4)*

- 3.5 Make informal presentations that have a recognizable organization (sequencing, summarizing).
- 3.6 Express an opinion about a literary work or film in an organized way with supporting detail.
- 3.7 Use teacher-developed assessment criteria to prepare their presentations.

#### **Standard 4: Vocabulary and Concept Development**

Students will understand and acquire new vocabulary and use it correctly in reading and writing.

For example:

*Teachers may develop a “Word Wall” to focus on new vocabulary; e.g., build a list of homophones or synonyms or words related through prefixes. Weekly vocabulary words will be used to build a developing vocabulary. Students create a personal vocabulary book with new words encountered in reading. (APS 4)*

- 4.9 Recognize that words are constructed of many parts; identify the meaning of common prefixes (un-, re-, dis-), suffixes, root words; review syllables.

For example:

*A “Word Wall” is used to display new words and to group words with common spelling patterns, prefixes, and suffixes. (APS 3)*

*“Word Walls” can build an understanding of related words through the mean of prefixes: e.g., uni=one (unicorn, unison, unity); anti=against (antifreeze, antislavery, antisocial). Students then can decode similar words encountered in reading. (APS 4)*

- 4.10 Identify the meaning of common Greek and Latin roots to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words.

For example:

*Students discuss the meaning of the common Greek root, graph, to help them understand the meaning of the words telegraph, photograph, and autograph.*

*Identify words or word parts from other languages that have been adopted into the English language.*

*Discuss Greek or Latin prefixes and try to compile as many words as can be found that use these word parts; i.e., octo- (Latin for eight as in octagon, October, octopus; anti- (Latin, against), uni- (Latin, one). (APS 4)*

- 4.11 Identify the meaning of common idioms and figurative phrases and recognize that sometimes words have both a literal and a non-literal meaning.

For example:

*Students collect and illustrate idioms, such as: “It’s raining cats and dogs”; “It’s only the tip of the iceberg”; and “That happens once in a blue moon.”*

- 4.12 Identify playful uses of language (puns, jokes, palindromes).
- 4.13 Determine the meaning of unknown words using their context.

For example:

*New “unit vocabulary” is repeated in reading, writing, speaking, and through varied media. This allows all children to learn these words in a meaningful way, without the conscious effort of “study.” (APS 3)*

- 4.14 Recognize and use words with multiple meanings (sentence, school, hard) and be able to determine which meaning is intended from the context of the sentence.
- 4.15 Determine meanings of words and alternate word choices using a dictionary or thesaurus.

For example:

*Small groups will work together to discover the purpose of guide words and become familiar with their use through “word hunts.” In subsequent lessons, students will list together unfamiliar words they find in a story. Initially in pairs, and later independently, they will find those words in their dictionaries and share the meanings found with the group. (APS 3)*

4.16 Identify and apply the meaning of the terms *antonym*, *synonym*, and *homophone*.

### **Standard 5: Structure and Origins of Modern English**

Students will analyze Standard English grammar and usage and recognize how its vocabulary has developed and been influenced by other languages.

5.5 Recognize the subject/ predicate relationship in sentences.

5.6 Identify the five basic parts of speech (adjective, noun, pronoun, verb, and adverb).

5.7 Identify correct mechanics (end marks, commas for series, commas in dates, capitalization), correct usage (subject and verb agreement in a simple sentence), and correct sentence structure (elimination of sentence fragments); distinguish between a question and a statement.

5.8 Identify words or word parts from other languages that have been adopted into the English language.

For example:

*Students discuss some of the common foods they eat and discover how many of the names come from other languages: pizza, yogurt, spaghetti, sushi, tacos, and bagels. They use a map to locate countries where these words originated.*

*Children will make a list of toys that come from other cultures, such as piñata, Pokeman, Nintendo, dreidle, and mancala. (APS 1)*

*Children may find on a map the countries from which many toys or foods originate. (APS 2)*

*During a Paris-Boston comparative study, volunteer French teachers visit and demonstrate how such words as palette, buffet, and cache have come from the French. We notice the French pronunciation and spelling patterns. (APS 3)*

### **Standard 6: Formal and Informal English**

Students will describe, analyze, and use appropriately formal and informal English.

6.2 Recognize dialect in the conversational voices in American folk tales when they are read aloud.

For example:

*In the Drinking Gourd, students will recognize differences in character’s dialect due to social groups and/or geographical region of the story. (APS 1)*

*Having listened to the Drinking Gourd, The Hundred Penny Box, Strega Nona or Talking Eggs, children will be able to discuss the differences in words, phrases, and intonations. (APS 2)*

*Dick King-Smith’s Babe is an opportunity for shared reading of a story in which the dialect of an English country farmer and his neighbors can be orally interpreted and enjoyed. (APS 3)*

*Identify variation in the dialect of literary characters and explain how these variation relate to differences in the characters’ occupation or social groups or the geographic region of the story; e.g., The Ballad of Lucy Whipple. (APS 4)*

6.3 Identify formal and informal language use in advertisements read, heard and/ or seen.

For example:

*In writing a thank you note to a parent chaperone, the standard of “informal but correct” would be applied, while a more formal language would be the goal in thanking a guest who has read aloud to our class. (APS 3)*

# Reading and Literature Strand

## Grades 3 & 4

Most of the benchmarks listed in the third and fourth grade level are introduced in third grade and worked on further through fourth grade. Third grade teachers do not need to expect student mastery by the end of third grade.

Teachers should continue to address earlier standards as needed and as they apply to more difficult work.

### Standard 7: Beginning Reading

Students will understand the nature of written English and the relationship of letters and spelling patterns to the sounds of speech.

7.8 Use letter-sound knowledge to decode written English.

For example:

*Teachers present a directed approach to phonemic awareness, such as the Bradley or Scott Foresman programs. (APS 3)*

7.9 Read grade-appropriate imaginative/literary and informational, expository text with comprehension.

For example:

*Silent and shared reading, with discussion of the materials read, as well as listening to a “read aloud,” are regular parts of the third grade day/week. (APS 3)*

7.10 Read aloud grade-appropriate imaginative/literary and informational, expository text fluently, accurately, and with comprehension, using appropriate timing, change in voice, and expression.

For example:

*The children will choose and prepare as choral readings a selection of Halloween poems, paying special attention to clarity and to variations in pitch and tempo. They will present their choral readings to their reading buddies as part of a Halloween sharing. (APS 3)*

*Students recite “Little Orphan Annie” in October, using appropriate expression to evoke the eeriness of the words. Students recite “Paul Revere’s Ride” in observance of Patriots’ Day and experiment with different pitch, tempo and tone to create different effects.*

### Standard 8: Understanding a Text

Students will identify the basic facts and main ideas in a text and use them as the basis for both interpretation and retelling in sequence.

For imaginative/literary texts:

8.11 Identify and show the relevance of foreshadowing clues that will help the reader predict what will happen later in a story.

For example:

*Students summarize a chapter in a book and predict (either orally or in writing) what might logically happen next. Students may be asked to use this prediction to write the next chapter and then compare it to the author’s chapter. (APS 4)*

8.12 Identify sensory details and figurative language.

For example:

*Students read The Cricket in Times Square by George Selden, noticing passages that contain figurative language and sensory details, such as: “And the air was full of the roar of traffic and the hum of human beings. It was as if Times Square were a kind of shell, with colors and noises breaking in great waves inside*

it." Then students discuss the effect of the images and draw an illustration that captures their interpretation of one image.

8.13 Identify the speaker of a poem or narrator of a story.

8.14 Identify and make judgments about narrative elements (e.g., setting, characters, plot, and events) and support them with evidence from the text.

For example:

*Picture books, such as one by Beatrix Potter, are used for shared prediction, discussion, and the comparison of elements with other books, as well as with the students' experiences. (APS 3)*

For informational/expository texts:

8.15 Form questions about a text and locate facts that answer the reader's questions.

For example:

*Strategies of asking oneself questions during personal reading may be modeled by the teacher and later reviewed by the class. (APS 3)*

8.16 Distinguish cause from effect.

8.17 Distinguish fact from opinion or fiction.

8.18 Summarize main ideas and supporting details.

For example:

*Students read Christopher Columbus by Stephen Krensky. In pairs they summarize important facts about Columbus's voyage, arrival, search for gold, failure to understand the treasures on the islands, and return to Spain. Then students revise, edit, rewrite, and illustrate their reports and display them in the classroom or library.*

*Students determine the main idea and basic facts in a social studies chapter or paragraph, relating it to prior information (APS 4)*

## **Standard 9: Making Connections**

Students will deepen their understanding of a literary or non-literary work by relating it to its contemporary context or historical background.

9.3 Identify similarities and differences between the characters or events in a literary work and the actual experiences in an author's life.

For example:

*Students read excerpts from a biography of Laura Ingalls Wilder and discuss how she drew upon her personal experiences when she wrote Little House on the Prairie.*

*During a study of wolves, the children will share the reading of The Eyes of Grey Wolf, contrasting its poetic language with that in an excerpt read to them from John Muir's observations of wolves in the wild. They will explore how the writer's use of language makes them feel about wolves. They will then go on to read together part of a Boston Globe article on the return of the wolf to New England and to look for both factual reporting as well as their response to this writer's use of language. (APS 3)*

*Readers explore the theme of "good thinking is more important than size" while reading and comparing Ruby and Jemima Puddleduck and Shel Silverstein's poem "Smart." Students then write about a personal experience in which this theme was shown in real life. (APS 3)*

## **Standard 10: Genre**

Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the characteristics of different genres.

10.2 Distinguish among forms of literature such as poetry, prose, fiction, nonfiction, and drama and apply this knowledge as a strategy for reading and writing.

For example:

*After reading a variety of materials on bats, students write a class magazine that includes poetry, fiction, and nonfiction articles on the subject.*

*Students gather and read historical information (nonfiction), realistic and historical fiction, and tall tales about Johnny Appleseed, identifying the characteristic differences. Students apply this knowledge by selecting a famous person of known deeds and writing about that person in a chosen genre. (APS 4)*

*Students read a biography of Ben Franklin and then read Ben and Me by Robert Lawson, identifying the similarities of fact and the elements of fiction. Students then write a personal narrative and rewrite it into realistic fiction, changing the setting, names, and outcomes. (APS 4)*

### **Standard 11: Theme**

Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of theme in a literary work and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

11.2 Identify themes as lessons in folktales, fables, poems, legends and myths for children.

For example:

*Students read Aesop fables, folktales from several countries, and Greek myths and discuss the lessons the stories demonstrate.*

### **Standard 12: Fiction**

Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structure and elements of fiction and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

12.2 Identify and analyze the elements of plot (e.g., problem/ solution), character, and setting in the stories they read and write. Identify personality traits of characters and the thoughts, words and actions that reveal their personalities.

For example:

*After reading several adventure tales, students identify elements of the adventure story (leaving home, growing stronger through facing difficulty, returning home), and find individual examples of other adventure stories to present to the class.*

*After the class reads a series of French fairy tales, they look for common elements of plot, setting, and character. When they have decided what the similarities are, they then, in pairs, write their own fairy tale. (APS 3)*

*Students will compare and contrast different retellings of Cinderella. Venn diagrams may be used to compare/contrast such elements as plot, setting, and character. (APS 3)*

*Students read adventure books and compare the character's want, the challenge and struggle of trying to get it, and the unexpected twist for the solution, such as Stone Fox by John Reynolds Gardner, Sign of the Beaver by Elizabeth George Speare, or Trouble River by Betsy Byars. Students are guided in recognizing the element of the adventure story such as a boy assuming adult responsibilities, getting stronger, making decisions, encountering difficulties but achieving the goal. Students compare the settings and discuss why each setting was important for each story. (APS 4)*

### **Standard 13: Nonfiction**

Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the purpose, structure, and elements of nonfiction or informational materials and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

13.6 Identify and use knowledge of common textual features (title, table of contents, headings, paragraphs, key words, topic sentences, concluding sentences, captions with illustrations/ photographs, and glossary).

13.7 Identify and use knowledge of common graphic features (charts, maps, diagrams, and illustrations)

For example:

*Regularly using an age-appropriate classroom newsmagazine such as Time for Kids, children will focus on tables, charts, and other graphic features as a key to full understanding of a piece. They will then use such features on posters for an end-of-unit project to share their learning. (APS 3)*

13.8 Identify and use knowledge of common organizational structures (chronological order)

For example:

*As they study European colonization of America, students examine an annotated map that shows the colonies of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and North and South Carolina. As a class project, they use the information from the map to construct a timeline showing the names, founding dates, and significant facts about each colony.*

*Children, reading about the history of Massachusetts, will notice a chronological organization with which the class will be able to place events on a timeline. (APS 3)*

13.9 Form questions about the text and locate facts that answer the reader's questions.

13.10 Distinguish cause from effect.

13.11 Distinguish fact from opinion or fiction.

13.12 Identify and summarize main ideas and supporting details.

**Standard 14: Poetry**

Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the theme, structure, and elements of poetry and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

14.2 Identify poetic elements (e.g., rhyme and rhythm, repetition, similes, and sensory images) and terminology for structural elements of poems (e.g., *stanza* and *verse* are both terms for groups of lines in poetry).

For example:

*During a study of animals, students read animal poems and songs, "Jellicle Cats," a poem in T. S. Eliot's Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats.*

*Students write their own animal poems and recite or sing their own lyrics.*

*Children may read poems or write them. One or more recitations, with each child choosing his/her own poem, are held. (APS 3)*

*Children will share poems about their favorite animals, enjoying the poets' images. Then they will choose an animal from their rain forest study as the subject of their own poem. They will work with rhythm, and possibly rhyme, to bring images of that animal to their listeners. (APS 3)*

*Students read, recite, and/or memorize a variety of poems, recognizing rhyming patterns, beat, and meter. Students analyze use of words that enhance the poem, e.g. onomatopoeia, alliteration, simile, metaphor, hyperbole. (APS 4)*

*Students should read, recite, and/or memorize different forms of poetry, identifying poetry as made of images, concrete descriptive phrases, and the figurative language of simile and metaphor. Narrative poems such as "Casey at the Bat" and "Paul Revere's Ride" are often favorites. (APS 4)*

**Standard 15: Style and Language**

Students will identify and analyze how an author's words appeal to the senses, create imagery, suggest mood, and set tone and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

15.2 Identify words appealing to the senses or involving direct comparisons in literature and spoken language.

For example:

*After reading The Great Yellowstone Fire, by Carole G. Vogel and Kathryn A. Goldner, students discuss examples of an author's use of vivid verbs that bring an idea to life ("the flames skipped across the treetops"), and use vivid verbs in their own writing*

*When reading "The Pudding Like a Night on the Sea" in The Tales Julian Tells, the class will enjoy and list together the similes with which Julian's father describes the wonderful dessert. They will go on to describe their favorite food using vivid similes. (APS 3)*

*"The wind whispered in my ear": "The flames skipped across the treetops and clawed their way up the tree trunks." (Personification) (APS 4)*

Students read a short story, an informative article from *Time for Kids*, and a narrative poem and discuss how the language and the tone are different. They then discuss how their personal feelings are affected by each piece. Students look for other articles and/or stories that evoke different emotions and share them with the class. (APS 4)

### **Standard 16: Myth, Traditional Narrative, and Classical Literature**

Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the themes, structure, and elements of myths, traditional narratives, and classical literature and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

16.4 Identify natural events explained in origin myths (Prometheus / fire; Pandora / evils).

For example:

Children will listen to and read myths and tales about weather, with such stories as *Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain*, the Greek myth of Iris, and the Inuit legends in *This World We Know*. They will find and discuss the similarities and differences among them. They each child will choose a weather phenomenon and write their own weather myth or tale. (APS 3)

16.5 Identify the adventures or exploits of a character type in traditional literature.

For example:

Students listen to and compare trickster tales across cultures such as the Anansi tales from Africa, the Iktomi stories of the Plains Indians, the Br'er Rabbit tales, and the pranks of Til Eulenspiegel.

16.6 Acquire knowledge of culturally-significant characters and events in Greek, Roman, and Norse mythology and other traditional literature

For example:

Students read legends and folk tales from Native American nations, comparing and/or contrasting them. Students discuss the habitat of the people, noting the similarities in the tales; e.g. legends of Inuit people center around the snow and ice while legends of the Iroquois feature woodlands and streams. (APS4)

### **Standard 17: Dramatic Literature**

Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the themes, structure, and elements of drama and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

17.2 Identify and analyze the elements of plot and character, as presented through dialogue in scripts that are read, viewed, written, or performed.

For example:

Reading and dramatizing a short play in “readers’ theater” style helps children understand the way plays are written, as well as how to interpret them. (APS 3)

*Ruby*, a Boston picture book, lets the children enjoy a character’s dialogue while discussing what part of it might, or might not, be appropriate from them to use in different situations. This could be contrasted with the reading of *Eloise*. (APS 3)

### **Standard 18: Dramatic Reading and Performance**

Students will plan and present dramatic readings, recitations, and performances that demonstrate appropriate consideration of audience and purpose.

18.2 Plan and perform readings of selected texts for an audience, using clear diction and voice quality (volume, tempo, pitch, tone) appropriate to the selection, and use teacher-developed assessment criteria to prepare presentations.

## Composition Strand

### Grades 3 & 4

Most of the benchmarks listed in the third and fourth grade level are introduced in third grade and worked on further through fourth grade. Third grade teachers do not need to expect student mastery by the end of third grade.

Teachers should continue to address earlier standards as needed and as they apply to more difficult work.

#### Standard 19: Writing

Students will write with a clear focus, coherent organization, and sufficient detail.

For imaginative/literary writing:

19.9 Write stories that have a beginning, middle, and end and contain details of setting.

For example:

*To introduce the concept of “beginning, middle, and end” the teacher will read aloud a picture book such as Beatrix Potter’s Peter Rabbit; the children can afterward go back to identify the beginning, middle, and end. Children will use a graphic organizer for a personal experience narrative. The class will identify and discuss “beginning, middle and end” of individual pieces as read orally. (APS 3)*

*Writers will be shown how to plan their writing using organizers such as webs, time lines, Venn diagrams, or T-charts. The computer program, “Inspiration” is an effective tool. Using a variety of graphic organizers, whether commercial or self-designed, students plan their ideas before writing, resulting in better organization. (APS 4)*

19.10 Write short poems that contain simple sense details.

For example:

*After reading Shel Silverstein’s poem “Sick” or Alexander’s Terrible, Horrible, Very Bad, No Good Day, writers personally brainstorm and list words and phrases which evoke emotions for them. They then begin to write, with a goal of helping others “see” the images in the poet’s mind. They will share these poems in oral reading and in print. (APS 3)*

For informational/expository writing:

19.11 Write brief summaries of information gathered through research.

For example:

*Students plan a mini-encyclopedia on birds. As a group, they generate a set of questions they want to answer, choose individual birds to research, gather information, compose individual illustrated reports, and organize their reports for a classroom encyclopedia.*

19.12 Write a brief interpretation or explanation of a literary or informational text using evidence from the text as support.

19.13 Write an account based on personal experience that has a clear focus and sufficient supporting detail.

For example:

*Introduce the concept through teacher modeling of a personal experience story leaving out important details. Lead the children to ask question such as “Who,” “What,” “When,” “Where,” “Why,” and “How.” After that, children may write a short piece on an assigned topic such as “The Worst Thing That Happened to Me This Summer.” The class will make a list of the kinds of details someone would be interested to know if they read such a story (such as where it happened, or who was with you). Then, in pairs, they will read each other’s stories and suggest the details the writer might add. This will lead to a revision of the original story. (APS 3)*

*Writers will decide upon an idea to write about and orally state that idea. Then each person will write a sentence that fully states the chosen idea. This might be a response to the way they felt about an early-in-the-year field trip. (APS 3)*

Use a concrete object or specific event, selected by either child or teacher, to brainstorm and generate a topic sentence. Ask students to describe in detail the object or event. The children will first list two to five words or phrases that would be needed to tell more about their object or event. Then they will go on to write a complete sentence for each word or phrase, so that the reader will understand their full idea. (APS 3)

Students select an event from an activity at school or from their personal life and create a newspaper feature. (APS 4)

Following a discussion on biographies, students interview a grandparent or older relative or neighbor and write a biography of that person. (APS 4)

Students write personal reflections or poetry to share personal thoughts, emotions, and/or experiences. (APS 4)

## **Standard 20: Consideration of Audience and Purpose**

Students will write for different audiences and purposes.

20.2 Use appropriate language for different audiences (other students, parents) and purposes (letter to a friend, thank you note, and invitation).

For example:

After a field trip, the class will learn how to write a friendly letter so chaperones will feel appreciated. (APS 3)

The children will write friendly letters to pen pals, either in the third grade at another Acton school or from another place in or out of the United States. (APS 3)

Writers pick a favorite “writing group” story, or a new one they have chosen to write, and put together illustrations and text in a finished work to share with their kindergarten reading buddies as well as their own classmates. Alternatively, students may write a book with their reading buddies. (APS 3)

Students learn to write friendly letters to thank classroom visitors or chaperones for field trips. (APS 4)

Students learn the difference between writing to inform (about a hobby), to explain (how to make something), and to persuade (seeking to change something) and practice writing each. (APS 4)

## **Standard 21: Revising**

Students will demonstrate improvement in organization, content, paragraph development, level of detail, style, tone, and word choice (diction) in their compositions after revising them.

21.2 Revise writing to improve level of detail after determining what could be added or deleted.

For example:

Writers meet one or more times a month to share “stories” (fiction, non-fiction, personal narrative, or poetry) with a small group. These are in first draft form, with the purpose of providing writers with an audience of their peers and encouraging a wider range of ideas and styles through hearing the work of others. (APS 3)

Students research explorers, create a time line of events, and write a “diary” of the explorer’s experiences. Students use the writing process and meet with peers to improve their writing for the purpose of making it more interesting and clearer to the reader. (APS 4)

21.3 Improve word choice by using dictionaries and thesauruses.

For example:

Students learn to use a richer vocabulary through use of a thesaurus or dictionary. (APS 4)

## **Standard 22: Standard English Conventions**

Students will use knowledge of Standard English conventions in their writing, revising, and editing.

22.3 Write legibly in cursive, leaving space between letters in a word and between words in a sentence.

For example:

*As part of the writing program and in other curriculum areas such as social studies, there will be a balance of opportunities for students to practice manuscript and cursive, in addition to word processing. (APS 6)*

- 22.4 Use knowledge of correct mechanics (end marks, commas for series, capitalization), usage (subject and verb agreement in a simple sentence), and sentence structure (elimination of fragments) when writing and editing.
- 22.5 Use knowledge of letter sounds, word parts, word segmentation, and syllabication to monitor and correct spelling.
- 22.6 Spell most commonly used homophones correctly in their writing (there, they're, their; two, too, to).

### **Standard 23: Organizing Ideas in Writing**

Students will organize ideas in writing in a way that makes sense for their purpose.

- 23.3 Organize plot events of a story in an order that leads to a climax.
- 23.4 Organize ideas for a brief response to a reading.
- 23.5 Organize ideas for an account of personal experience in a way that makes sense.

For example:

*Students are taught to write a 5-paragraph essay by bringing in three small objects from home that reflect their interests. The first paragraph identifies that the student has several interests and identifies the objects as examples of those interests. The second (as well as the third and fourth) paragraph addresses one of the objects and expands on the interest. The concluding (or fifth) paragraph summarizes the objects and the interests of the writer, with a possible closing of "Now you know three things about me; I like to . . ." (APS 4)*

### **Standard 24: Research**

Students will gather information from a variety of sources, analyze and evaluate the quality of the information they obtain, and use it to answer their own questions.

- 24.2 Identify and apply steps in conducting and reporting research; define the need for information and formulate open-ended research questions.

For example:

*Students read Rudyard Kipling's account of how the alphabet came to be in the Just So Stories and ask, "Where did our alphabet really come from?"*

*To begin the study of "Chemical Tests," the class will list what they know, what they think they know, and what they need to know. "Need to knows," plus other questions that arise during the study, are chosen by individuals, pairs, or small groups for research. (APS 3)*

*Before beginning a new unit in science, class creates a KWL chart, documenting what students think they KNOW, a list of questions on what they WANT to know, and, after the study, what they LEARNED. (APS 4)*

*Before doing a research project on a topic, students generate a list of questions they hope to answer through this research. (APS 4)*

- Initiate a plan for searching for information.

For example:

*The class lists possible sources of information such as books to read, electronic media to read and view, or people to interview.*

- Locate resources.

For example:

*One group of students goes to the library/media center for books about the invention of writing; another group looks up "alphabet" in a primary CD encyclopedia; and a third group interviews speakers of*

languages other than English and upper-grade students who are studying Latin, Greek, French, Spanish, or German.

Some appropriate sources for third graders are: classroom and library books, other print media, videos, CD ROM's, and guided use (as in computer lab) of the Internet. Supervision is needed to be sure a child's chosen materials are within her/his comprehension range so that the search for answers is challenging but possible and exciting. (APS 3)

- Evaluate the relevance of the information.

For example

Having collected information from three sources, students decide which information is most relevant, accurate, and interesting.

During a study of wolves, children in computer lab will do a search of several pre-chosen web sites in order to compare this information to that which they have gained from stories, print media, and a visit to a wolf pack. Together with their sixth-grade wolf buddies, they will discuss and evaluate assigned pieces of this information. They will later share their conclusions within a whole-group discussion of how people view wolves in our country today. (APS 3)

- Interpret, use, and communicate the information.

For example:

Students in one group sort information from library books into categories; the members of a second group organize information from the CD, and the members of the third group summarize what they have learned from students and speakers of other languages. The students organize and communicate the results of these different forms of research in a single coherent presentation with documented sources.

Using journal entries, writers will bring back information to the class in a predetermined format. (APS 3)

After studying a few explorers and researching others, students create a time line to sequence chronological and logical order, including important information in order to compare countries of origin, objectives, routes, obstacles, and discoveries or destinations. Students compare and contrast, and discuss cause and effect. Students select an explorer and gather information from the time line to write a report in the form of a ship's log or a series of journal entries. Students use selected articles from *Time for Kids* to recognize features that grasp your attention and demonstrate a variety of ways to inform. (APS 4)

- Evaluate the research project as a whole.

For example:

Students determine how accurately and efficiently they answered the question, "Where did our alphabet really come from?"

## **Standard 25: Evaluating Writing and Presentations**

Students will develop and use appropriate rhetorical, logical, and stylistic criteria for assessing final versions of their compositions or research projects before presenting them to varied audiences.

25.2 Form and explain personal standards or judgments of quality, display them in the classroom, and present them to family members.

For example:

Before displaying their reports on the bulletin board about their visit to the Science Museum, students propose their own criteria for distinguishing more effective reports from less effective ones.

For sharing of researched answers, the standards might include clearly-understood information, an easily heard speaking voice, and a way of presenting that captures the interest of the audience. (APS 3)

Students will define the standards for a final project such as a book report, science project, poster, diorama, book jacket or other effort. (APS 3)

Students help in designing criteria (rubrics) for quality work in order to determine what constitutes a published piece of writing worthy of being posted for display. Students select pieces of their writing for inclusion in their writing portfolio, based on evidence of progress as well as quality. Parents are invited by students to view their writing portfolio. Students explain why samples were selected and how they demonstrate growth. (APS 4)

## Media Strand

### Grades 3 & 4

Most of the benchmarks listed in the third and fourth grade level are introduced in third grade and worked on further through fourth grade. Third grade teachers do not need to expect student mastery by the end of third grade.

Teachers should continue to address earlier standards as needed and as they apply to more difficult work.

#### **Standard 26: Analysis of Media**

Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the conventions, elements, and techniques of film, radio, video, television, multimedia productions, the Internet, and emerging technologies, and provide evidence from the works to support their understanding.

- 26.1 Identify techniques used in television (animation, close-ups, wide-angle shots, sound effects, music, and graphics) and use knowledge of these techniques to distinguish between facts and misleading information.

*While the state describes this standard as applying to first and second grade, the district wishes to especially encourage teachers in all grades to continue to address 26.1.*

- 26.2 Compare stories in print with their filmed adaptations, describing the similarities and differences in the portrayal of characters, plot, and settings.

For example:

*Students describe the differences and similarities in the way author E. B. White portrays Stuart Little in print and the way animators portray the character in a filmed version. They discuss the words White uses to describe Stuart and the degree to which the animators' visualization captures the spirit of the original text. Students discuss the advantages of reading a description and imagining how a character looks, speaks, and moves, and the advantages of viewing a film, where these details have been supplied by the director, animators, or actors.*

#### **Standard 27: Media Production**

Students will design and create coherent media productions (audio, video, television, multimedia, Internet, emerging technologies) with a clear controlling idea, adequate detail, and appropriate consideration of audience, purpose, and medium.

- 27.2 Create presentations using computer technology.

For example:

*Students make energy conservation pamphlets using elementary-level graphics software and digital photographs.*

*As the children write various pieces of poetry over the course of the year, they will word-process each poem. These poems, each accompanied by a graphic such as a photograph, computer drawing, or scanned-in piece of original art, can then be presented either as a class slide show or individual poetry portfolios. They can also be transmitted to a pen-pal class. (APS 3)*