



NORTH DAKOTA
**DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

North Dakota
English Language Arts (ELA)
Content Standards
Family & Community Guides

September 2024

Updated May 2025

North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
Kirsten Baesler, State Superintendent
600 East Boulevard Avenue, Dept. 201
Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0440
www.nd.gov/dpi

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Introduction | 3 |
| How To Read This Document | 4 |
| Resources | 5 |
| ND ELA Family & Community Guides Writing Committee..... | 6 |
| Project Support & Facilitation Staff..... | 6 |
| K-12 ELA Family & Community Guides..... | 7 |
| Kindergarten | 8 |
| First Grade..... | 9 |
| Second Grade | 10 |
| Third Grade | 11 |
| Fourth Grade | 12 |
| Fifth Grade..... | 13 |
| 6-8 Grades..... | 14 |
| 9-12 Grades..... | 15 |

Introduction

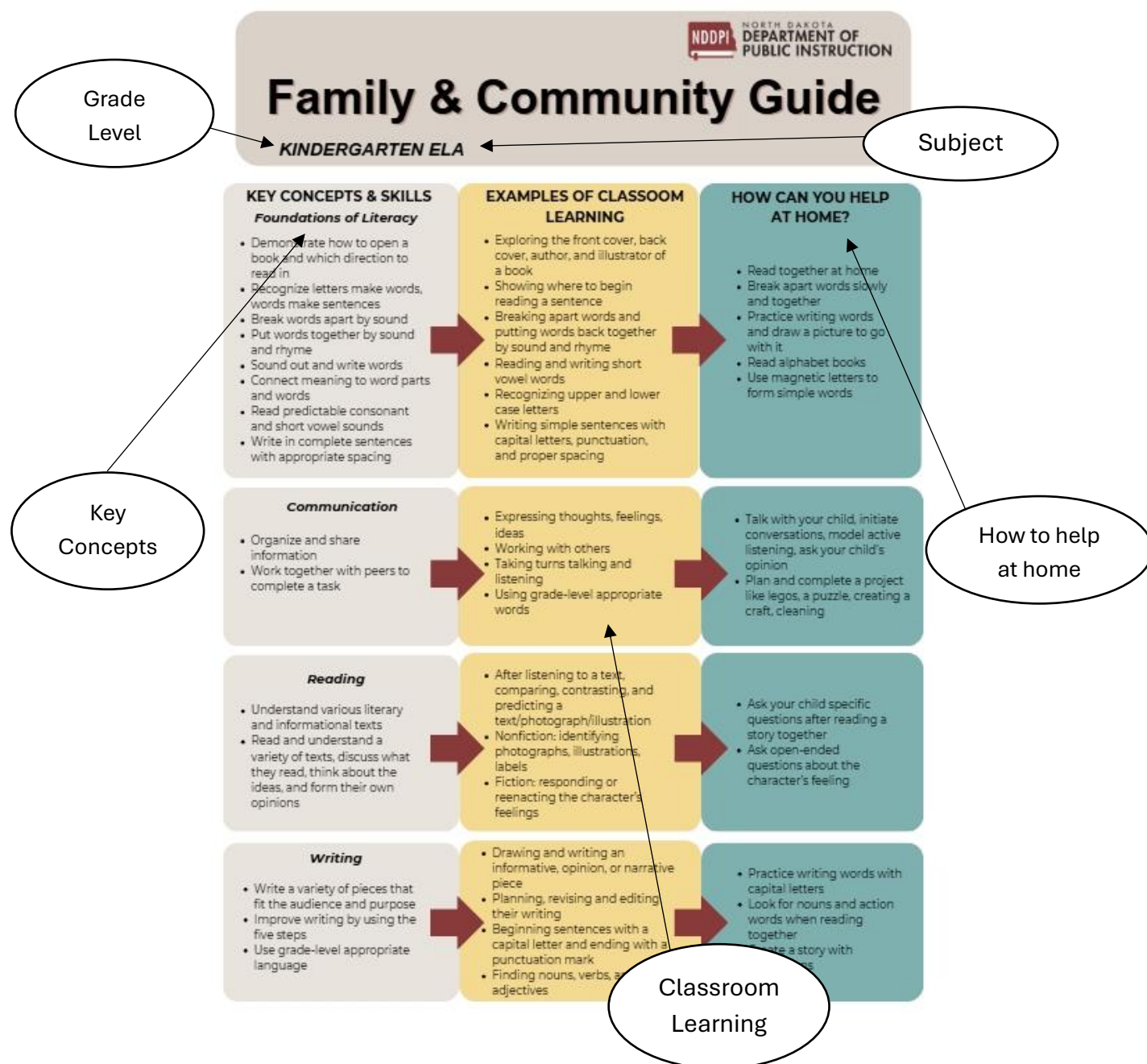
The Family & Community Guides are designed for individuals outside the education field who are invested in students' learning experiences. These guides provide an overview of what students will learn at each grade level, offering insights into classroom activities and suggestions for supporting learning at home.

The guides are organized by grade level to align with the typical school structure, except for Middle School and High School, which has a single guide each covering grades 6-8 and 9-12, respectively. Available in PDF format, these guides can be easily printed and shared, making them accessible to families and community members.

Alignment to North Dakota Content Standards

The North Dakota Content Standards serve as a model to establish teaching and learning goals, outlining the knowledge and skills students should achieve at each grade level. While local school districts choose the specific curriculum to meet these standards, the Family & Community Guides present a simplified version for parents and community members. These guides provide a basic understanding of the expected skills and learning experiences, complementing the more detailed standards written for professional educators.

How to Read This Document



The document is organized by grade level (K-5) and grade span (6-8, 9-12). Each guide has a list of all key concepts & skills, corresponding examples of classroom learning, and tips/resources for how families can help support the learning at home. The key concepts and skills are broken down by the five ELA strands: Foundations of Literacy (grades K-6 only), Communication, Reading, Writing, and Inquiry and Research (grades 2-12 only).

Resources

2020 Family and Community Guides to the Colorado Academic Standards | Colorado Department of Education. Colorado Department of Education | Retrieved May 29, 2024, from

<https://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/guidestostandards>

Learning Standards for Families | Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Massachusetts Department of Education | Retrieved May 29, 2024, from <https://www.doe.mass.edu/highstandards/default.html>

North Dakota ELA K-12 Standards | North Dakota Department of Public Instruction. (2023, June). North Dakota Department of Public Instruction. | Retrieved June 16, 2024, from [ND ELA Content Standards](#)

North Dakota ELA Family & Community Guides

Writing Committee

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Margaret Hilbers McKenzie County Public Schools | Crystal Michels Minot Public Schools | Crystal Ridl Fargo Public Schools |
| Andrea Eklund Grand Forks Public Schools | Amber Schick West Fargo Public Schools | Kate Rothschiller Dickinson Public Schools |
| Cassie Suter McKenzie County Public Schools | | |

Project Support & Facilitation Staff

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Kate Waechter Program Administrator Academic Support NDDPI | Ann Ellefson Director Academic Support NDDPI | Jane Gratz Staff Support Academic Support NDDPI |
|---|---|--|



NORTH DAKOTA
**DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

North Dakota

English Language Arts
(ELA)

Family & Community Guides

Family & Community Guide

KINDERGARTEN ELA

KEY CONCEPTS & SKILLS

Foundations of Literacy

- Demonstrate how to open a book and which direction to read in
- Recognize letters make words, words make sentences
- Break words apart by sound
- Put words together by sound and rhyme
- Sound out and write words
- Connect meaning to word parts and words
- Read predictable consonant and short vowel sounds
- Write in complete sentences with appropriate spacing

EXAMPLES OF CLASSROOM LEARNING

- Exploring the front cover, back cover, author, and illustrator of a book
- Showing where to begin reading a sentence
- Breaking apart words and putting words back together by sound and rhyme
- Reading and writing short vowel words
- Recognizing upper and lower case letters
- Writing simple sentences with capital letters, punctuation, and proper spacing

HOW CAN YOU HELP AT HOME?

- Read together at home
- Break apart words slowly and together
- Practice writing words and draw a picture to go with it
- Read alphabet books
- Use magnetic letters to form simple words

Communication

- Organize and share information
- Work together with peers to complete a task

- Expressing thoughts, feelings, ideas
- Working with others
- Taking turns talking and listening
- Using grade-level appropriate words

- Talk with your child, initiate conversations, model active listening, ask your child's opinion
- Plan and complete a project like legos, a puzzle, creating a craft, cleaning

Reading

- Understand various literary and informational texts
- Read and understand a variety of texts, discuss what they read, think about the ideas, and form their own opinions

- After listening to a text, comparing, contrasting, and predicting a text/photograph/illustration
- Nonfiction: identifying photographs, illustrations, labels
- Fiction: responding or reenacting the character's feelings

- Ask your child specific questions after reading a story together
- Ask open-ended questions about the character's feeling

Writing

- Write a variety of pieces that fit the audience and purpose
- Improve writing by using the five steps
- Use grade-level appropriate language

- Drawing and writing an informative, opinion, or narrative piece
- Planning, revising and editing their writing
- Beginning sentences with a capital letter and ending with a punctuation mark
- Finding nouns, verbs, and adjectives

- Practice writing words with capital letters
- Look for nouns and action words when reading together
- Create a story with illustrations

Family & Community Guide

FIRST GRADE ELA

KEY CONCEPTS & SKILLS

Foundations of Literacy

- Find the features of a sentence
- Break words apart by sound
- Put words together by sound and rhyme
- Sound out and write words
- Read words and simple sentences
- Write complete sentences with appropriate spacing between words

EXAMPLES OF CLASSROOM LEARNING

- Understanding that letters make words and words make sentences
- Breaking words apart by sound and syllable
- Reading and writing grade-level words
- Recognizing all upper and lower case letters
- Blending sounds
- Writing simple sentences

HOW CAN YOU HELP AT HOME?

- Read together at home and identify: sentences, first word, capitalization, punctuation marks
- Play rhyming games
- Make up silly songs that focus on different word sounds
- Break apart words by letter sounds, put them back together
- Play with magnet letters
- Write simple notes back and forth

Communication

- Organize and share information
- Work together with peers to complete a task

- Speaking in full sentences
- Working with others
- Taking turns talking and listening
- Using grade-level appropriate words

- Talk with your child, initiate conversations, model active listening, ask your child's opinion
- Plan and complete a project like legos, a puzzle, baking, house projects

Reading

- Understand various literary and informational texts
- Read and understand a variety of texts, discuss what they read, think about the ideas, and form their own opinions

- Asking/answering questions before, during, and after reading or listening to a text
- Nonfiction: recognizing basic text features like title, author, heading, pictures, etc.
- Fiction: comparing and contrasting the experiences of characters

- Ask your child specific questions after reading a story together-"What is the story about? What information do the pictures give you?"
- Ask open-ended questions about the character's thoughts, feelings, etc.

Writing

- Write a variety of pieces that fit the audience and purpose
- Improve writing by using the 5 steps
- Use grade-level appropriate language

- Summarizing using details
- Writing a narrative with a beginning, middle, and end
- Planning out writing using outlines or graphic organizers
- Writing multiple drafts
- Revising and editing their work
- Writing simple sentences
- Using appropriate space
- Recognizing and using parts of speech (nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, conjunctions)

- Practice writing words with capital letters
- Look for nouns and action words when reading together
- Research a topic of interest together and write a piece together, add illustrations

Family & Community Guide

SECOND GRADE ELA

KEY CONCEPTS & SKILLS

Foundations of Literacy

- Sound out and write words
- Connect meaning to word parts and words
- Write in complete sentences and complete paragraphs
- Read a variety of grade-level texts

EXAMPLES OF CLASSROOM LEARNING

- Connecting sounds to letters
- Adding emotion to reading with few errors
- Reading with few errors
- Reading/writing second-grade words, sentences, and paragraphs

HOW CAN YOU HELP AT HOME?

- Read together at home or listen to an audiobook
- Break apart words by letter sounds and put them back together
- Encourage your child to write in all forms (notes, letters, stories, etc.)

Communication

- Organize and share information
- Work together with peers to complete a task

- Presenting to an audience
- Speaking in full sentences
- Using grade-level appropriate words
- Working with others
- Taking turns talking and actively listening

- Talk with your child, initiate conversations, model active listening, ask your child's opinion
- Plan and complete a project like legos, a puzzle, creating a craft, cleaning

Reading

- Understand various literary and informational texts
- Read and understand a variety of texts, discuss what they read, think about the ideas, and form their own opinions

- Asking/answering questions before, during, and after reading or listening to a text
- Nonfiction: recognizing basic text features like title, author, heading, pictures, etc.
- Fiction: comparing and contrasting the experiences of characters

- Ask your child specific questions after reading a story together
- Ask open-ended questions about the character's feeling

Writing

- Write a variety of pieces that fit the audience and purpose
- Improve writing by using the five steps
- Use grade-level appropriate language

- Summarizing using details
- Writing a narrative with beginning, middle, and end
- Planning out writing using outlines or graphic organizers
- Writing multiple drafts
- Revising and editing their work
- Writing simple sentences
- Using appropriate space

- Practice writing words with capital letters and appropriate spacing
- Create a story with illustrations
- Use different parts of speech when writing a story together

Inquiry & Research

- Create and revise questions, find information, plan, and devise a process to come to a conclusion

- Locating important information on a topic and using tools to keep track of the information

- Research a topic with your child that interests them
- Help them track and record information on that topic

Family & Community Guide

THIRD GRADE ELA

KEY CONCEPTS & SKILLS

Foundations of Literacy

- Sound out and write words
- Connect meaning to word parts and words
- Write in complete sentences and complete paragraphs
- Read a variety of grade-level texts

EXAMPLES OF CLASSROOM LEARNING

- Using their knowledge of:
 - a. 6 syllable types
 - b. syllable division
 - c. inflectional endings (-ing, -es, -ed, -s)
- Adding emotion to reading with few errors
- Reading with few errors
- Writing a paragraph

HOW CAN YOU HELP AT HOME?

- Read together at home or listen to an audiobook
- Break apart words by letter sounds and put them back together
- Repeated readings
- Encourage your child to write in all forms (notes, letters, stories, etc.)

Communication

- Organize and share information
- Work together with peers to complete a task

- Presenting to an audience
- Speaking in full sentences
- Using grade-level appropriate words
- Working with others
- Taking turns talking and actively listening

- Talk with your child, initiate conversations, model active listening, ask your child's opinion
- Plan and complete a project like legos, a puzzle, creating a craft, cleaning

Reading

- Understand various literary and informational texts
- Break a story apart to determine its meaning and purpose
- Compare and contrast pieces of writing on the same topic

- Summarizing the story and providing details and major story elements
- Describing how characters feel, what they are like
- Using headings, pictures, and captions to help them read and understand a story or article

- Ask your child specific questions after reading a story together (what is the story trying to teach us? what are the main parts of the story?)
- Ask open-ended questions about the character's feeling

Writing

- Write a variety of pieces that fit the audience and purpose
- Improve writing by using the five steps
- Use grade-level appropriate language

- Writing a narrative with beginning, middle, and end
- Planning out writing using outlines or graphic organizers
- Writing multiple drafts
- Revising and editing their work
- Writing simple and compound sentences
- Using correct capitalization, punctuation, and parts of speech

- Research a topic and organize the information to write a new piece together
- Revise and edit writing together
- Check for correct grammar, spelling, punctuation

Inquiry & Research

- Create and revise questions, find information, plan, and devise a process to come to a conclusion

- Locating important information on a topic and using tools to keep track of the information
- Telling the difference between fact and opinion

- Research a topic with your child that interests them
- Help them track and record information on that topic
- Help them understand the difference between facts and opinions

Family & Community Guide

FOURTH GRADE ELA

KEY CONCEPTS & SKILLS

Foundations of Literacy

- Sound out and write words
- Connect meaning to word parts and words
- Write in complete sentences and complete paragraphs
- Read a variety of grade-level texts

EXAMPLES OF CLASSROOM LEARNING

- Using their knowledge of:
 1. 6 syllable types
 2. syllable division
 3. inflectional endings (-ing, -es, -ed, -s)
- Adding emotion to reading with few errors
- Reading with few errors
- Writing a paragraph

HOW CAN YOU HELP AT HOME?

- Read together at home or listen to an audiobook
- Break apart words by letter sounds and put them back together
- Repeated readings
- Encourage your child to write in all forms (notes, letters, stories, etc.)

Communication

- Organize and share information
- Work together with peers to complete a task

- Presenting to an audience
- Speaking in full sentences
- Using grade-level appropriate words
- Working with others
- Taking turns talking and actively listening

- Talk with your child, initiate conversations, model active listening, ask your child's opinion
- Plan and complete a project like legos, a puzzle, creating a craft, cleaning

Reading

- Understand various literary and informational texts
- Break a story apart to determine its meaning and purpose
- Compare and contrast pieces of writing on the same topic

- Summarizing the story and providing details and major story elements and theme
- Describing how characters feel, what they are like
- Discovering how informational text is used to combine information from two texts about a topic

- Ask your child specific questions after reading a story together (what is the story trying to teach us? what are the main parts of the story?)
- Ask open-ended questions about the character's feeling

Writing

- Write a variety of pieces that fit the audience and purpose
- Improve writing by using the five steps
- Use grade-level appropriate language

- Writing various pieces with details, dialogue, and evidence
- Planning out writing using outlines or graphic organizers
- Writing multiple drafts
- Revising and editing their work
- Writing simple and complex sentences
- Using correct capitalization, punctuation, and parts of speech

- Research a topic and organize the information to write a new piece together
- Revise and edit writing together
- Check for correct grammar, spelling, punctuation

Inquiry & Research

- Create and revise questions, find information, plan, and devise a process to come to a conclusion

- Locating important information on a topic and using tools to keep track of the information
- Telling the difference between fact and opinion
- Citing sources and avoiding plagiarism

- Research a topic with your child that interests them
- Help them track and record information on that topic
- Help them understand the difference between facts and opinions and citing sources

Family & Community Guide

FIFTH GRADE ELA

KEY CONCEPTS & SKILLS

Foundations of Literacy

- Sound out and write words
- Connect meaning to word parts and words
- Write in complete sentences and complete paragraphs
- Read a variety of grade-level texts

EXAMPLES OF CLASSROOM LEARNING

- Using their knowledge of:
 1. 6 syllable types
 2. syllable division
 3. inflectional endings (-ing, -es, -ed, -s)
- Adding emotion to reading with few errors
- Reading with few errors
- Writing multiple paragraph

HOW CAN YOU HELP AT HOME?

- Read together at home or listen to an audiobook
- Break apart words by letter sounds and put them back together
- Repeated readings
- Encourage your child to write in all forms (notes, letters, stories, etc.)

Communication

- Organize and share information
- Work together with peers to complete a task

- Presenting to an audience
- Speaking in full sentences
- Using grade-level appropriate words
- Working with others
- Taking turns talking and actively listening

- Talk with your child, initiate conversations, model active listening, ask your child's opinion
- Plan and complete a project like legos, a puzzle, baking something together, crafting

Reading

- Understand various literary and informational texts
- Break a story apart to determine its meaning and purpose
- Compare and contrast pieces of writing on the same topic

- Summarizing the story and providing details and major story elements and theme
- Describing how characters feel, what they are like
- Discovering how informational text is used to combine information from two texts about a topic

- Ask your child specific questions after reading a story together (what is the story trying to teach us? what are the main parts of the story?)
- Ask open-ended questions about the character's feeling

Writing

- Write a variety of pieces that fit the audience and purpose
- Improve writing by using the five steps
- Use grade-level appropriate language

- Writing various pieces with details, dialogue, and evidence
- Planning out writing using outlines or graphic organizers
- Writing multiple drafts
- Revising and editing work
- Writing simple and complex sentences
- Using correct capitalization, punctuation, and parts of speech

- Research a topic and organize the information to write a new piece together
- Revise and edit writing together
- Check for correct grammar, spelling, punctuation

Inquiry & Research

- Pose and revise complex questions, find information, plan an inquiry process, and arrive at a conclusion

- Locating important information on a topic and using tools to keep track of the information
- Telling the difference between fact and opinion
- Citing sources and avoiding plagiarism

- Research a topic with your child that interests them
- Help them track and record information on that topic
- Help them understand the difference between facts and opinions and citing sources

Family & Community Guide

GRADES 6-8 ELA

KEY CONCEPTS & SKILLS

Communication

- Give formal presentations using multimedia
- Show confidence through eye contact, volume, and body language
- Prepare for and participate in a discussion or debate
- Work cooperatively with peers towards a goal/purpose

EXAMPLES OF CLASSROOM LEARNING

- Practicing presenting information in small groups
- Presenting in front of the class and creating a visual aid to go with it
- Participating in small group or whole class discussions
- Completing group projects

HOW CAN YOU HELP AT HOME?

- Listen to them practice their presentations
- Give feedback and positive encouragement
- Share tips on combating nerves or relaxation

Reading

- Comprehend and analyze different types of texts for various purposes
- Develop inferences and determine main ideas, claims, or themes using evidence
- Summarize the text
- Determine meaning and purpose of words and phrases within a text

- Summarizing a text and identifying the most important details
- Providing text evidence to support ideas
- Determining a word's meaning using context clues
- Creating graphic organizers to analyze ideas from a text (character maps, plot diagrams, etc.)

- Have the learner summarize what they read at school or a movie, tv show, video game, or other media
- Ask open-ended questions, encouraging them to expand their thinking
- Practice repeated reading short passages out loud
- Discuss how two articles on the same topic can be similar or different

Writing

- Use the writing process to develop clear and organized writing following grammar rules and conventions
- Write informative/explanatory pieces to examine and convey ideas
- Write argumentative pieces with claims and counterclaims
- Write narrative pieces to develop real or imagined stories

- Producing clear writing that follows a narrative, informative, or argumentative structure
- Developing writing by following the writing process

- Read your child's writing and offer feedback and positive encouragement
- Read their writing out loud to assist them with identifying errors
- Help your learner create or identify an outline for their writing
- Discuss your own writing methods
- Encourage your learner to use online tools (Grammarly, spell checkers, dictionaries, thesauruses)

Inquiry & Research

- Develop a research question
- Gather and analyze relevant and credible information
- Organize information into notes
- Avoid plagiarism by integrating sources and creating citations

- Using graphic organizers, notetakers, and outlines to find useful information from a source
- Sharing research findings in the form of a presentation, project, paper, and/or audiovisual format

- Discuss multiple viewpoints on a topic
- Discuss the credibility and/or bias of information
- Talk about avoiding plagiarism and AI in their writing

Family & Community Guide

GRADES 9-12 ELA

KEY CONCEPTS & SKILLS

Communication

- Give formal presentations based on audience and purpose using multimedia
- Show confidence through eye contact, volume, and body language
- Prepare for and participate in a discussion or debate evaluating perspectives or arguments made by others
- Work cooperatively with peers towards a goal/purpose incorporating guidelines for collaboration

EXAMPLES OF CLASSROOM LEARNING

- Presenting in front of the class and creating a visual aid to enhance the purpose of the presentation
- Participating in small group or whole class discussions and group projects
- Showing and understanding of group communication skills

HOW CAN YOU HELP AT HOME?

- Listen to their presentations
- Give feedback and positive encouragement, encourage practice
- Share tips on combating nerves or relaxation tips, working with others
- Discuss different perspectives of current events

Reading

- Read and comprehend different types of texts for various purposes
- Develop inferences and determine the main ideas, claims, or themes using text evidence
- Analyze different levels of texts to develop deeper insights of character development, purpose, and context
- Summarize and paraphrase texts
- Determine the meaning and purpose of words and phrases with a text

- Analyzing a text for a specific purpose through discussions or written responses
- Providing textual evidence to support ideas
- Determining a word's meaning using context clues or other resources

- Encourage reading for pleasure from books, webcomics, newspapers, and other platforms
- Encourage your learner to discuss what they are reading in school
- Ask open-ended questions, using how or why, to encourage them to expand on their thinking
- Discuss how two ideas on the same topic on social media or other high-interest platforms can be similar or different

Writing

- Use the writing process to develop clear and organized writing following grammar rules and conventions
- Write informative/explanatory pieces to examine and convey ideas
- Write argumentative pieces with claims and counterclaims
- Write narrative pieces using creative writing techniques to develop real or imagined stories

- Producing clear writing that follows a narrative, informative, or argumentative structure
- Developing and revising writing by following the writing process

- Read your learner's writing and offer feedback and positive encouragement about the writing process
- Read writing out loud to assist your learner in identifying errors
- Discuss your own writing methods
- Encourage your learner to use online tools such as Grammarly, spell checkers, dictionaries, and thesauruses

Inquiry & Research

- Develop a complex research question
- Gather, analyze, and evaluate relevant and credible information
- Organize information into notes
- Integrate sources and create citations
- Maintain academic integrity by avoiding plagiarism and creating original works without AI

- Using self-selected graphic organizers, notetakers, and outlines to find useful information from a source
- Sharing research findings in the form of presentations, projects, papers, and/or audiovisual formats

- Discuss multiple viewpoints on a topic
- Discuss the credibility and/or bias of information
- Talk about avoiding plagiarism and AI in their writing
- Encourage your learner to use online tools such as OWL at Purdue, Citation Generators (Easy Bib), and State Databases