



LANGUAGE ARTS

Grade – 4

Creative Writing

It's important for children to have time to write freely, about any topic, without concern for spelling and grammatical errors. This free writing lets children experience the joy of writing, and find a flow to their inner narrative. It lets them set their imagination free or get thoughts off their minds and onto paper. Creative writing should always be included in your program and encouraged.

It is also important, of course, for students to learn different structured types of writing. The skill of writing on a topic assigned to them, and following a provided format, is crucial for their futures in both continued education and the workplace.

Therefore, we recommend balancing your Language Arts schedule with both creative writing days and structured writing days.

Creative writing days don't have topics provided within this curriculum because it should be the free choice of the child. When you see "Creative Writing" on the schedule, give your student the freedom to write. You can encourage the creative decision making by providing ideas, such as fictional stories with illustrations, comic strips, non-fiction fact books, lists (grocery, books, wish list for birthdays), invitations, or calendars. Older kids might also enjoy journals or diary entries, letters, or poetry.

Reading Comprehension

Reading samples are provided in Complete Canadian Curriculum 4, at the beginning of each Language unit, and followed by some comprehension questions. Please remember though that students working on “Grade 4” will display a wide variety of reading levels. Reading Comprehension is generally a slightly lower level than pure phonetic decoding skills. Bearing this in mind, your student may be able to successfully decode all the words of a piece of writing, but may need a slightly easier piece in order to be successful at comprehension. Use the outline below to practice reading comprehension throughout the year, with any text that is a suitable level for your student.

Assessing Written Work

A rubric for assessing written work and providing feedback to your student is provided. Here are some tips to help you use it:

1. Assessment Rubrics should always be explained to students before they do the work, and anytime during writing, so they know what is expected of them.
2. The levels function similarly to grades in previous generations- think of a Level 4 as an A, Level 3 as a B, Level 2 as a C, and Level 1 as a D.
3. Read through the writing piece once fully. Think about your overall feel of the work vs your expectations.
4. Read through the piece again, correcting any spelling, grammatical, or factual errors.
5. Go through the rubric one requirement at a time, and assign a level for each skill independently.

6. Some of the skills are subjective (especially those regarding effort) and this is where homeschooling is really beneficial. Remember that you know your student best for assessing whether or not they have done their best work and made their best effort.
7. The same rubric can be used over different grades. The only thing that changes is your expectations for the length, maturity of insight, and overall quality of the finished product. The levels on the rubric for meeting the expectations stays the same, just the expectation increases.

The goal with writing is *progress*, not *perfection*. If you see improvements in your student's work from one assignment to the next, then you are on track!

WRITING

There are many different types of writing for your student to explore! This curriculum will guide you through the basic instruction of several, but feel free to add others on your own as you see fit, or as your child’s interests guide you. Each writing unit will include the same steps/schedule of learning, ending with a final product. It is expected that each writing unit will take 2 weeks, over 4 blocks (alternating with creative writing blocks), and may require your student to work outside of these blocks (as if for “homework”) at times.

Writing Schedule:

Lesson 1:

- Introduction of Topic
- Parts of Text
- Skills Needed
- Brainstorming
- Notetaking of Ideas

Lesson 3:

- Editing and Expanding
- Asking Questions
- Proofreading for Spelling and Grammar

Lesson 2:

- Quick review of Parts of Text
- Research
- First draft writing

Lesson 4:

- Second re-read
- Final edits
- Final draft writing
- Hand in final draft for assessment

Writing Topics:

- Paragraph
- Book Report
- Fiction
- News Article
- Comic Strip
- Recipe
- How-To Manual
- Letter
- Email
- Autobiograph

Rubrics for Assessment of Final Products:

Expectations for Final Written Product Total Grade: _____ / 40	Level 4 - Excellent - Always - Consistently - Above & Beyond Expectations	Level 3 - Good - Regularly - Usually - Meets Expectations	Level 2 - O.K. - Sometimes - Occasionally - Needs Some Improvement to Meet All Expectations	Level 1 - Not Good - Rarely - Seldom - Did Not Meet Expectations
Brainstormed and Took Notes to Organize Thoughts and Ideas				
Researched Information When Needed to Support Writing				
Completed first draft on time and with best effort				
Edited first draft carefully				
Added to first draft in order to improve final product				
Asked questions to improve their work				
Proofread carefully for spelling and grammar errors. Final product is free from errors.				
All elements required were included.				
Final product is neat, tidy, and well presented.				
Work quality suggests student worked to the best of their ability, and put forth their best effort.				

BOOK REPORT / REVIEW

Lesson 1: Introduction of Topic

What Is It?

- ✎ A book report or review lets other people know what a book is like before they read it, and can help them decide if they will like it or not.

Elements and Skills:

- ✎ Summarize the story:
 - ✓ Plot (beginning, middle, end)
 - ✓ Main Characters
 - ✓ Setting (main places the story took place)
- ✎ Write about your favourite and/or least favourite part of the story
- ✎ Rate the book (usually out of 5 stars) and explain why you chose this rating.

Brainstorm Ideas:

- ✎ Note taking of ideas and some supporting details. Try a few different topic ideas and see what details you can find to support your ideas.

Lesson 2: Draft Writing

(May need to be broken into two lessons if a lot of research is needed on topic)

- ✎ Quick Review of parts from Lesson 1
- ✎ Research supporting details
- ✎ Write first draft

Lesson 3: Editing

- ✎ Read over your first draft and edit any mistakes you find
- ✎ Expand your work by adding more details, clarifying, improving word choice, etc.
- ✎ Proofread carefully for spelling and grammar errors or have an adult proofread for you and circle errors for you to fix

Lesson 4: Final Draft

- ✎ Reread your work again slowly and thoughtfully
- ✎ Make any final edits or changes to your work
- ✎ Write or type your final good copy
- ✎ Hand in your finished product for assessment
- ✎ Be proud of yourself for your hard work and effort!