

Fourth Grade Literacy Information

Fluency	<p>When students reach fourth grade, fluency greatly helps students as they read independently. Students that are fluent readers are shown to have better comprehension (understanding) of the books they read. In fourth grade, fluency instruction revolves around using expression and accuracy while reading with a proper rate.</p>
Writing	<p>In fourth grade, students learn about four main genres of writing. Students work on writing that revolves around personal narratives, opinion/essays, informational and literary analysis. When students write a personal narrative, they are choosing a "seed moment" to write and elaborate upon. When students write an opinion/essay, they are learning about thesis statements. Thesis statements are the students idea about a specific topic. They use the "Boxes and Bullets" method in which they write their thesis (box) and then support their thesis with specific ideas and details (bullets). When students write and create their informational book, they are writing about a major battle from the American Revolutionary War. Students divide their informational writing into specific chapters. The chapters give an overview of the war, details about a specific battle, a fictional narrative about a character living through the battle, and then an essay on the importance of the war. This informational writing reflects on the previous writing units the students have already had. The students also write a literary essay about a specific character from a book. Students chose a character from the class read aloud. They create a thesis about the character and their traits. The students really work on using examples and details from the text to support their reasoning. Students spend a great deal of time working on elaboration within their writing. Using specific details is extremely important as students explore these different genres.</p>
Comprehension (understanding)	<p>In fourth grade students expand upon their reading skills from the previous years. Students continue learning how to summarize their reading. When summarizing, the kids learn the importance of only sharing the most important parts of their reading. Students also learn how to analyze character traits to see who the character truly is. Students are always instructed to back their ideas up with specific evidence from the text. Furthermore, students learn about the importance of theme. Determining an author's theme helps students learn the true message of the story. In addition, we spend time reading and learning from nonfiction texts. Students learn to utilize the text features to further comprehend their nonfiction reading. Students also read in order to learn about history. Students read nonfiction books relating to the American Revolutionary War. This is an exciting unit for students to learn about specific battles and events in the war. Finally, we end the year with a unit on Historical Fiction Book Clubs. This is a great way for students to learn about a specific time in history through the view of a fictional character.</p>

Phonics/Spelling

Fourth grade phonics is geared around the learning of Greek and Latin Roots. Knowing the meaning of these roots can help students decode unknown words. For example, the word biology (bio=life, ology=study of) can be broken apart to decode the meaning of the word. Students also learn their Red Words. These words do not follow the typical pattern of spelling. Together we chunk the words into separate parts. The students tap the words out according to the chunking of the word. This interactive approach helps students learn the power of breaking apart words to spell them correctly.