



Literacy in Grades 3 and 4

In grades 3 and 4, readers and writers build and use literacy skills during several parts of the week:

- Humanities theme
- Science theme
- Literature Circles
- Passion Projects



Literacy Skills

Language Arts or Literacy skills are divided into several areas.

Reading: Humanities sessions involve reading, summarizing and analyzing articles, firsthand or secondhand accounts, fictional texts and research.

Writing: Writers engage in many different genres of writing, depending on the purpose of the expedition (or theme). Sometimes, they write short pieces and other times, research is required to write longer pieces. They follow a process for more detailed pieces: pre-writing using graphic organizers, drafting, writing, editing and revising, publishing and celebrating!



Literacy Skills

Grammar/Spelling: These skills are often embedded into lessons and may be taught during minilessons or within Literature Circles.

Speaking/Listening: These two skills go hand in hand. Speaking and listening involve discussing ideas in pairs, small groups and in a whole group; sharing opinions; brainstorming ideas for pre-writing; explaining about new knowledge or major projects; critiquing others with the intent to help a classmate grow; and presenting in front of an audience.



What to Expect in Humanities

Readers and writers in Grades 3 and 4 enjoy participating in a Humanities block every other day. The theme for the semester is at the heart of all of the materials explored in reading, writing and learning about history.

Students look at historical events through different lenses by reading and writing about them. Often, projects are constructed around knowledge gained through literacy.



What to Expect in Science

Scientists in Grades 3 and 4 also build and use literacy skills during the Science block, which meets every other day. The semester's theme guides the topic for their informational reading and writing. Skills such as research, reading for information, taking notes, summarizing, organizing a written piece, and improving work through multiple drafts are all addressed during Science as well as Humanities.



Writing Tools

The expectations for writing are higher in Grades 3 and 4. There are many structures in place to help students make progress in their writing:

- Writing collaboratively
- Modeling strong writing
- Mentor texts
- Sentence frames
- Mini-lessons
- Graphic organizers
- Student voice and choice
- Writing conferences
- Computers as tools for articulation and typing

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Essential Skills

Students entering Grades 3 and 4 are already prepared to:

- Work in small groups, as a whole class, and independently to complete tasks
- Read for information and summarize what they read
- Read at grade level, including a foundation in phonics
- Write for different purposes - to tell a story, explain information, or express an opinion
- Edit and revise their work

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How We Prepare Students

Students preparing to enter middle school will have developed:

- Strong reading comprehension and analysis skills for both fiction and nonfiction
- The ability to support an idea through quotes
- Writing skills - both quality and quantity, including proficient touch typing
- Skills to collaborate with partners on projects
- The ability to use different media formats to create and deliver a several-minute presentation

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