

Sample Literacy Learning Targets for Students in Grades 6-8



Literacy is a basic human right, achievable by all students. Today's learners need to know how to read, write, speak, and communicate effectively in order to survive in an ever-changing and challenging global society. English Language Arts/Literacy is the foundation for learning in all of the content areas. The literacy continuum develops across an individual's lifetime, but literacy does not reside solely in the individual person; it requires and creates relationships with others through communication and interaction. Literacy is a developmental process that empowers students to become lifelong, effective learners and communicators.

This collection of literacy targets represents a set of skills that students are working on during this grade span. It is important to remember that these are learning and instructional targets that should serve as reference points. Each learner is unique and acquires skills in different ways and at different times. Use the targets in this document to communicate with caregivers and educators and to support literacy at home and in the community.

LANGUAGE TARGETS

The language standards are not a checklist, but key components of reading, writing, speaking, and listening instruction, and they should be treated as such.

In the area of language, students are learning to...

- Spell correctly
- Use punctuation correctly including commas, semicolons, ellipsis, and dashes.
- Use pronouns and verbs correctly in a variety of contexts.
- Vary sentence patterns when writing or speaking maintaining consistency in style and tone.
- Use language precisely and consistently to achieve a distinct purpose.
- Determine the correct meaning of words using context clues (think of common words used in uncommon ways) and use reference sources when necessary, consistently building vocabulary knowledge.
- Recognize and use figures of speech correctly.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING TARGETS

Speaking and listening are essential components in our schools, our homes, our communities, and our places of work. Direct, interpersonal communication is the cornerstone of human relationships, and nowhere is this more clearly articulated than in dialogue, discussion, presentation, and debate.

When speaking and listening, students are learning to...

- Effectively engage in a range of collaborative conversations.
- Come to discussions prepared having studied and with evidence to support the topic.
- Discuss the topic, ask and answer questions, recognize the viewpoints of others and reconsider their own views.
- Pose questions to elicit elaboration.
- Delineate information presented in a variety of media.
- Interpret and analyze sources.
- Integrate multimedia when appropriate.

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- Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a sequenced, focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound and valid reasoning, and well-chosen details.
- Adapt speech to a variety of contexts.

READING TARGETS

The goal of all reading instruction is to help students become competent consumers of a wide variety of texts in diverse forms so that they can achieve independence, find meaning, and use literacy for lifelong learning, empowerment, and enjoyment. Text is anything that can be read, heard or viewed. Texts may include words, images, objects, sounds, and symbols that convey messages from developers to consumers.

When reading any text, students are learning to...

- Cite evidence that strongly supports analysis and inferences.
- Create an accurate summary including theme; central idea; how the information, topic or story is developed; compelling supporting details; and story elements.
- Determine the meaning of figurative, connotative, and technical word meanings and phrases as they are used in various texts; analyze the impact of specific word choices and techniques on meaning and tone
- Analyze how the organization and structure of specific features and components in various texts develop ideas and/or meaning, contributing to the author's purpose for the text as a whole.
- Analyze how and why authors from various contexts (e.g. diverse, intersectional, multicultural, religious) use perspective for intended purposes and/or audiences.
- Distinguish among fact, opinion, evidence, reasoning, and qualifying statements.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the author's craft including the advantages and disadvantages of an author's choices.
- Analyze how different authors treat the same subject or topic in various texts and media.

WRITING TARGETS

Writing is a lifelong, essential tool for communication. The strand of writing includes three standards, which have been arranged to reflect a traditional learning progression in the classroom, incorporating the use of technology when authentic to the task.

When writing, students are learning to...

- Investigate self-generated questions, build knowledge through an inquiry process that assesses credibility of sources.
- Take organized notes to effectively quote, paraphrase, and summarize sources.
- Follow a standard format for citation.
- Plan, compose, revise, edit, rewrite, reflect, try a new approach.
- Collaborate with others to deepen understanding and improve writing.
- Use technology to collaborate and produce writing.
- Compose increasingly complex writing over time to fully explore depth of ideas.
- establish and maintain a formal style.
- write an informational piece using different organizing structures (e.g., classifying, comparing and contrasting) to present information.
- Use technology appropriately to enhance writing and presentation.