

**Wapsie Valley Community Schools**  
**Standards and Benchmarks**  
**Language Arts**  
**Grade 4**

**Standard 1: The student uses the reading process to comprehend print.**

**Benchmark: The student applies a wide range of research-based strategies to comprehend text.**

- Makes predictions, inferences and deduces meaning
- Determines main idea, sequence, cause/effect, problem/solution, compare/contrast to understand stated information
- Automatically applies multiple comprehension strategies to fluently read grade-appropriate texts
- Scans when searching for key words, skims texts using headings and key words to get the gist of ideas
- Recognizes blatant bias embedded in text
- Generalizes, makes judgments, verifies or refines predictions, summarizes, paraphrases, and visualizes
- Uses graphic organizers independently before, during, and after reading
- Draws conclusions, makes inferences, and deduces meaning
- Interprets non-literal language used in a text

**Benchmark: The student recognizes and understands vocabulary.**

- Determines the meaning of new words from their context
- Interprets non-literal language
- Understands the meanings of English words derived from common Latin and Greek roots
- Chooses the appropriate prefix or suffix to modify a word to create the desired meaning
- Demonstrates a playfulness with vocabulary and understanding of multiple meanings
- Uses dictionaries and other reference tools to expand vocabulary understanding
- Uses punctuation, explanatory phrases, and overall sense to gain and monitor word meaning
- Interprets synonyms, antonyms, homophones, and homographs
- Understands connotations and denotations
- Knows abbreviations, acronyms, and shortened forms of words
- Uses context clues for understanding words, phrases, and word referents

**Benchmark: The student uses phonics and structural analysis to decode unknown words.**

- Maintains automatic and effective decoding strategies and applies them to increasingly difficult texts
- Applies structural cues to decode and recognize words: plurals, possessives, compounds, base words, inflections, contractions, prefixes, and suffixes
- Uses fix-up strategies

**Benchmark: The student reads fluently.**

- Reads smoothly at developmental level, with appropriate volume, phrasing, intonation, and pace

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**Standard 2: The student reads for a variety of purposes and across content areas.**

**Benchmark: The student analyzes story elements and literary devices within a variety of genre.**

- Infers traits, feelings, motives of characters
- Describes and compares the human experience (e. g., birth, love, death, war) depicted across pieces of literature
- Describes how various cultures are represented in literature, recognizing stereotyping
- Analyzes complex plot development, building of tension in a story (climax), and resolution
- Responds to fiction and nonfiction critically and creatively, providing opinions, evidence, and alternative views
- Compares and contrasts across selections, genre, and cultures (intertextuality)
- Identifies the author's views or purpose (e. g., inform, entertain, persuade, express)
- Identifies theme
- Understands various points of view
- Explores how the authors' voices can evoke different responses and feelings
- Reads a various genre and identifies qualities (drama/plays, fantasy, historical fiction, realistic fiction, traditional stories, fables, folk tales, myths, tall tales, biographies, autobiographies)

**Benchmark: The student applies knowledge of text features and structures to comprehend informational text.**

- Automatically applies knowledge of text structure: sequence, cause/effect, main idea, compare/contrast, problem/solutions text structure
- Makes inferences about informational text from title page, table of contents, and chapter headings
- Draws conclusions from maps, charts, diagrams, and graphs
- Asks inferential questions from informational text and identifies possible answers

**Benchmark: The student reads independently for a variety of purposes.**

- Sets a purpose and previews text in order to self-select appropriate reading materials
- Reflects on reading and responds creatively and critically
- Develops signs of lifelong reading by choosing to read a variety of informational text and genre, both classic and contemporary
- Keeps reading log/journal and/or list of favorite authors and works

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**Standard 3: The student uses the writing process to communicate effectively.**

**Benchmark: The student applies a variety of strategies for composing a coherent message.**

- Prewrites (brainstorms ideas, determines an organizational structure that is useful to the reader, outlines)
- Focuses writing on a chosen topic with well-supported, insightful details, across an entire piece, with strong leads and smooth transitions
- Applies sequence, description, cause/effect, problem/solution, and compare/contrast text structure to expository writing
- Develops and enhances components of complex story structure within narrative writing (foreshadowing, flashback, etc.)
- Uses varying sentence patterns and lengths to slow reading down, speed it up, or create a mood (pacing and tone)
- Self-monitors writing to make sense
- Routinely revises, edits, and proofreads

**Benchmark: The student demonstrates personal voice, clarity of language, and effective word choice**

- Uses vivid language to create visual and sensory images including onomatopoeia and alliteration
- Uses voice that is strong and well suited to the topic, purpose and audience
- Demonstrates varied and precise word choice
- Writes sentences that are varied and fluent
- Uses strong topic sentences in expository writing
- Writes complex sentences with conjunctions to combine sentences
- Uses a thesaurus to assist with appropriate word choice
- Chooses appropriate vocabulary, including words with prefixes and/or suffixes

**Benchmark: The student produces legible writing that is grammatically and mechanically correct.**

- Develops personal cursive style with correct letter formation and appropriate size
- Masters keyboarding skills
- Uses correct spelling in final copy
- Uses resources to find correct spelling and synonyms
- Recognizes and uses parts of speech appropriately (e.g. verbs and verb tenses, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, interjections, and prepositions)
- Uses a variety of sentence structures
- Demonstrates control of all writing conventions

**Benchmark: The student writes fluently when prompted.**

- Controls cursive (holding pencil, paper position, stroke, posture)
- Controls keyboarding
- Writes without resistance when given the time, place, and materials
- Writes daily

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**Standard 4: The student writes for a variety of purposes and across content areas.**

**Benchmark; The student uses knowledge of purpose, audience, text structure, and format in developing various forms of narrative, poetic, and expository text.**

- Applies sequence, description, cause/effect, compare/contrast, and problem/solution in expository writing
- Develops own criteria for content, style, and organization and makes judgments about own work
- Uses a range of genre and experiments with features of historical fiction, fables, folk tales, myths, tall tales, biographies, autobiographies, and poetry through own writing and storytelling
- Writing is well focused and on topic (expository, narrative, descriptive, and persuasive)
- Composes to inform, persuade, entertain
- Composes a research report from notes
- Writes as a response to literature – connects text to self, other texts, and the world
- Composes expressive pieces: character sketches, description, personal narratives poems, and stories
- Produces narratives with a beginning, middle, and end that contain complete story structure
- Composes simple Haiku, Limericks, and free verse poetry

**Benchmark: The student uses writing as a tool for learning.**

- Records learning or ideas by writing sentences in a literature log or journal
- Uses graphic organizers to organize concepts
- Writes labels, notes, captions, outlines
- Writes to reflect on/record the use of learning strategies
- Composes questions to extend thinking

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**Standard 5: The student interacts effectively as a speaker.**

**Benchmark: The student demonstrates control of delivery skills.**

- Maintains eye contact
- Asks questions for clarification and understanding
- Speaks confidently in an audible voice in a variety of situations
- Controls conventional grammar and usage when speaking
- Responds appropriately to questions, directions, and spoken messages
- Uses verbal and nonverbal communication in effective ways

**Benchmark: The student uses oral language to communicate ideas, appropriate to the time, place and occasion.**

- Engages in discussions and supports ideas with references
- Produces a coherent message
- Develops vocabulary through discussions
- Uses appropriate and new vocabulary to describe feelings, experiences, and ideas
- Connects experiences, ideas, and cultural traditions with those of others through speaking
- Participates in informal and formal book talks
- Develops interviewing techniques with follow-up probes
- Shows or explains something clearly enough for someone else to learn
- Offers leadership in book talks, asking questions that require others to discuss and support their answers
- Maintains acceptable levels of poise, including body position/movement, eye contact, and vocal expression
- Resolves conflict through negotiation and compromise

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**Standard 6: The student interacts effectively as a listener.**

**Benchmark: The student demonstrates the behaviors of active listening.**

- Maintains eye contact with the speaker
- Demonstrates attentive body language
- Listens attentively and responsively
- Listens to, compares, and values others' perspectives and ideas
- Responds appropriately in discussions to questions, directions, and spoken messages
- Self-monitors understanding of a spoken message and seeks clarification as necessary
- Participates as an effective audience member by providing specific feedback to others
- Listens to establish, maintain, and enhance relationships

**Benchmark: The student uses listening skills to process information.**

- Develops vocabulary through listening
- Listens for a purpose (enjoyment, information, vocabulary development, directions)
- Monitors ability to listen, understand, recall main ideas, details, and facts
- Listens and responds to peers in small groups
- Listens attentively and responsively to a variety of literature and texts
- Connects experiences, ideas, and cultural traditions with those of others through listening
- Draws conclusions from oral text
- Responds appropriately to directions, text read aloud, and oral presentations
- Automatically applies knowledge of main idea, sequence, compare/contrast, and problem/solution text structure
- Evaluates speaker's message: persuasion, bias, prejudice, propaganda, and emotional appeals.
- Understands and retells text and messages heard
- Visualizes a story being read
- Infers traits, feelings, motives of characters and changes they undergo when listening to oral text
- Identifies the author's purpose (e.g. inform, entertain, persuade, express)
- Understands and assumes alternative points of view in a selection

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**Standard 7: The student creates, interprets and evaluates a variety of media.**

**Benchmark: The student uses knowledge of purpose, audience, and structure of various media to enhance learning.**

- Produces graphics that creatively portray descriptive information
- Examines models for publishing, such as professionally produced books, magazines, and posters
- Creates graphic sources (e. g., charts, maps, pictures, tables, graphs, order forms, time lines, schedules)
- Synthesizes ideas from media
- Uses the computer for publishing
- Discusses a variety of illustrations, illustrator's techniques, and media
- Analyzes the purpose and effects of illustrations, visuals, and media
- Analyzes the ways visual images/graphics contribute, effect, and support meaning
- Compares/contrasts print, visuals, media
- Elaborates images with detail
- Uses a variety of media technology
- Creates visual aids to support presentations
- Produces artwork and writing to reflect understanding of and to extend meaning of text
- Draws visual images based on text content

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**Standard 8: The student investigates issues and ideas using a variety of sources.**

**Benchmark: The student accesses data from oral, print, and electronic media.**

- Forms and revises relevant questions for inquiry
- Uses almanacs, atlases, biographies, bibliographies, data bases, dictionaries, encyclopedias, internet, magazines, maps, globes, newspapers, nonfiction books, telephone books, textbooks and timelines as reference sources to locate and interpret information
- Uses alphabetical order and search techniques to locate information quickly and easily
- Identifies and can distinguish between reference sources
- Knows and uses parts of a book (e. g., table of contents, glossary, index)
- Uses author notes, copyright, outside experts and consultants, to determine credibility of sources

**Benchmark: The student interprets, evaluates, and synthesizes information to enhance learning.**

- Interprets information in new contexts
- Supports assertions and results with convincing evidence
- Takes notes on index cards to create an outline
- Uses graphics organizers, charts, graphs, diagrams, lists, maps, and outlines to organize information
- Uses available technology to organize information