



# Integrated Faith Standards for Academic Curriculum

## English Language Arts Curriculum

Grades Kindergarten – Grade 8

\*Revised 2022

*“Education is an important mission, which draws young people to what is good, beautiful, and true.”*  
**Pope Francis**

The Diocesan English Language Arts Standards are created from a long-planned revision of the Massachusetts English Language Arts Curriculum Framework, and build on the Stotsky Standards modeled after them. The standards are conjoined with the Neuman Standards and Integrated Faith standards created by Father Belmonte.

This curriculum framework provides standards designed to guide reading and English teachers in the development of a dynamic English language arts curriculum from PreK to 12. It is based on two premises: that learning in the English language arts should be cumulative and that the reading of increasingly challenging literary and non-literary works as well as the writing of increasingly extensive research papers are the basis for developing the independent thinking needed for self-government.

The four discipline-based strands in this framework—Listening and Speaking, Language Study, Reading and Literature, and Research and Composition—are interdependent. At all grade levels, a sound English language arts curriculum integrates concepts and skills from all four strands. A sound reading and literature curriculum also expects students to apply their language skills to increasingly challenging material linked in ways that promote cumulative learning. A coherent sequence of reading, research, and writing assignments ensures that students both broaden and deepen their base of literary/historical knowledge. It is this broadening and deepening knowledge base that stimulates intellectual growth and enhances their capacity for independent critical thinking.

In Catholic education, literature should be selected that supports Christian morals and virtues and fosters a love of Christ and other. The attached reading list is an aid for educating children across a broad spectrum of literature and includes many authors whose literary works can be both edifying and challenging. Care should be exercised in choosing among literary works by the authors listed within this document so that the selected reading material is developmentally and morally appropriate. We expect each teacher to use their literary judgment as they make selections. In planning a curriculum, it is important to balance depth with breadth. As teachers in our Diocesan schools work with this curriculum framework to develop literature units, they will often combine works into thematic units. Exemplary curriculum is always evolving. We urge each school to take initiative to create programs meeting the needs of their students.

### *Basic Principles Underlying All Standards to be Used for the Planning of Curriculum for the Diocese of Manchester*

- A passion for mission should inform every curriculum decision.
- All knowledge reflects God’s Truth, Beauty, and Goodness.
- Curriculum and instruction enable deeper incorporation of the children into the Church, the formation of community within the school, and respect for the uniqueness and dignity of each person as created in the image and likeness of God.
- Education fosters growth in Christian virtue and contributes to development and formation of the whole person for the good of the society of which he/she is a member, and in recognition of their destiny, an eternal life in Christ.
- Each subject is to be examined in the context of the Catholic faith through Scripture and Tradition and is to be illuminated by Gospel values.
- Learning and formation are interconnected, as are the natural and spiritual development of each student.

- Curriculum and instruction seek to promote a synthesis of faith, life, and culture, forming students as disciples of Jesus.
- All curricula must support a commitment to strong and consistent Catholic identity.
- Curriculum will assist the student's ability to think critically, problem solve, innovate, and lead towards a supernatural vision.

### *In a Catholic School, Curricular Formation...*

1. Involves the integral formation of the whole person, body, mind, and spirit, in light of his or her ultimate end and the good of society.<sup>i</sup>
2. Promotes human virtues and the dignity of the human person as created in the image and likeness of God and modeled on the person of Jesus Christ.<sup>ii</sup>
3. Seeks to know and understand objective reality, which includes transcendent Truth, is knowable by reason and faith, and finds its origin, unity, and end in God.
4. Develops a Catholic worldview and enables a deeper incorporation of the student into the heart of the Catholic Church.<sup>iii</sup>
5. Encourages a synthesis of faith, life, and culture.<sup>iv</sup>

## *Guiding Principles for English Language Arts*

**Guiding Principle 1:** *An effective English language arts curriculum develops thinking and language together through interactive learning.* Effective language use both requires and extends thinking. As learners listen to a speech, view a documentary, discuss a poem, or write an essay, they engage in thinking. The standards in this framework specify the intellectual processes that students draw on as they use language. Students develop their ability to remember, understand, analyze, evaluate, and apply the ideas they encounter in the English language arts when they undertake increasingly challenging assignments that require them to write or speak in response to what they are learning.

**Guiding Principle 2:** *An effective English language arts curriculum develops students' oral language and literacy through appropriately challenging learning.* A well-planned English language arts program provides students with a variety of oral language activities, high-quality and appropriate reading materials, and opportunities to work with others who are reading and writing. In the primary grades, systematic phonics instruction and regular practice in applying decoding skills to decodable materials are essential elements of the school program. Reading to preschool and primary grade children plays an especially critical role in developing children's vocabulary, their knowledge of the natural world, and their appreciation for the power of the imagination. Beyond primary grades, students continue to refine language skills.

**Guiding Principle 3:** *An effective English language arts curriculum draws on literature from many genres, time periods, and cultures.* Students should become familiar with works that are part of a literary tradition going back thousands of years. Thus, the curriculum should emphasize literature reflecting the literary and civic heritage of the English-speaking world. Students also should gain exposure to works from the many communities that make up contemporary America as well as from countries and cultures throughout the world. Appendix A of this framework presents a list of suggested authors and illustrators who contribute to the common literary and cultural heritage of students, as well as past and present authors from other countries and cultures. In order to foster a love of reading and prepare students for college, a great deal of independent reading should be encouraged.

**Guiding Principle 4:** *An effective English language arts curriculum emphasizes writing as an essential way to develop, clarify, and communicate ideas in expository, persuasive, narrative, and expressive discourse.* At all levels, students' writing records their imagination and exploration. As students attempt to write clearly and coherently about increasingly complex ideas, their writing serves to propel intellectual growth. Through writing, students develop their ability to think, to communicate ideas, and to create worlds unseen.

**Guiding Principle 5:** *An effective English language arts curriculum provides for the study of all forms of media.* Multimedia, television, radio, film, Internet, and videos are prominent modes of communication in the modern world. Like literary genres, each of these media has its unique characteristics, and students learn to apply techniques used in the study of literature and exposition to the evaluation of multimedia, television, radio, film, Internet sites, and video.

**Guiding Principle 6:** *An effective English language arts curriculum provides explicit skill instruction in reading and writing.* Explicit skill instruction is most effective when it precedes student need. Systematic phonics lessons (decoding skills) should be taught to students before they try to use them in their subsequent reading. Systematic instruction is especially important for those students who have not developed phonemic awareness - the ability to pay attention to the component sounds of language. Effective instruction occurs in small groups, individually, or in a class. Explicit skill instruction can also be effective when it responds to specific problems in student work.

**Guiding Principle 7:** *An effective English language arts curriculum teaches the strategies necessary for acquiring academic knowledge, achieving common academic standards, and attaining independence in learning.* Students need to develop a repertoire of learning strategies that they consciously practice and apply in increasingly diverse and demanding contexts. Skills become strategies for learning when they are internalized and applied purposefully. For example, a research skill has become a strategy when a student formulates his own questions and initiates a plan for locating information. A reading skill has become a strategy when a student sounds out unfamiliar words, or automatically makes and confirms predictions while reading. A writing skill has become a strategy when a student monitors her own writing by spontaneously asking herself, “Does this organization work?” When students are able to articulate their own learning strategies, evaluate effectiveness, and use techniques that work best for them, they become independent learners.

**Guiding Principle 8:** *An effective English language arts curriculum builds on the language, experiences, and interests that students bring to school.* Teachers recognize the importance of being able to respond effectively to the challenges of linguistic and cultural differences in their classrooms. Sometimes students have learned ways of talking, thinking, and interacting that are effective at home and in their neighborhood, but may not have the same meaning or usefulness in school. Teachers try to draw on these different ways of talking and thinking as bridges to speaking and writing.

**Guiding Principle 9:** *An effective language arts curriculum develops each student’s distinctive writing or speaking voice. A student’s writing and speaking voice is an expression of self.* Students’ voices tell us who they are, how they think, and what unique perspectives they bring to their learning. Students’ voices develop when teachers provide opportunities for interaction, exploration, and communication. When students discuss ideas and read one another’s writing, they learn to distinguish between formal and informal communication. They also learn about their classmates as unique individuals who can contribute their distinctive ideas, aspirations, and talents to the class, the school, the community, and the nation.

**Guiding Principle 10:** *While encouraging respect for differences in home backgrounds, an effective English language arts curriculum nurtures students’ sense of their common ground as present or future American citizens in order to prepare them for responsible participation in our schools and in civic life.* Teachers instruct an increasingly diverse group of students in their classrooms each year. Taking advantage of this diversity, teachers guide discussions about the extraordinary variety of beliefs and traditions around the world. At the same time, they provide students with common ground through discussion of significant works in American cultural history to help prepare them to become self-governing citizens in their communities.

**K-8                      English Language Arts                      Catholic Integrated Faith Standards**  
**Catholic Curricular Standards and Dispositions in English Language Arts**

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**ELA Foundational Standards**

- K-8.LA.IF.FS-1.0**     Analyze literature that reflects the Catholic culture and worldview.
- K-8.LA.IF.FS-2.0**     Share how literature can contribute to strengthening one’s moral character.
- K-8.LA.IF.FS-3.0**     Demonstrate how literature is used to develop a religious, moral, and social sense.
- K-8.LA.IF.FS-4.0**     Articulate how spiritual knowledge and enduring truths are represented and communicated through Sacred Scripture, fairy tales, fables, myths, parables, and stories.
- K-8.LA.IF.FS-5.0**     Identify how Christian and Western symbols and symbolism communicate the battle between good and evil.
- K-8.LA.IF.FS-6.0**     Identify the causes underlying why people do the things they do.
- K-8.LA.IF.FS-7.0**     Summarize how literature can reflect the historical and sociological culture of the time period in which it was written to help us better understand ourselves and other cultures and times.
- K-8.LA.IF.FS-8.0**     Use language as a bridge for communication with one’s fellow man for the betterment of all involved.
- K-8.LA.IF.FS-9.0**     Write in various ways to naturally order thoughts, align them with Truth, and accurately express intent, knowledge, and feelings.
- K-8.LA.IF.FS-10.0**     Share how literature cultivates the aesthetic faculties within the human person.
- K-8.LA.IF.FS-11.0**     Share how literature ignites the creative imagination.
- K-8.LA.IF.FS-12.0**     Recognize literary characters possessing virtue and begin to exhibit these virtuous behaviors, values, and attitudes.
- K-8.LA.IF.FS-13.0**     Share how the beauty and cadence of poetry impacts human sensibilities and forms the soul.

### Listening and Speaking

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- K-12.ELA.GS.LS-1 Discussion and Group Work:** Group discussion can be effective when students listen actively, stay focused, consider ideas of others, avoid sarcasm and personal remarks, take turns, and gain the floor appropriately. Group discussion may lead students to a greater complexity of thought as they expand on the ideas of others, refine initial ideas, pose hypotheses, and work toward solutions to intellectual problems.
- K-12.ELA.GS.LS-2 Oral Presentation:** Planning an effective presentation requires students to match their presentation purpose, medium, style, and format to their intended audience. Frequent opportunities to plan presentations for various purposes and to speak before various groups help students learn how to gain and keep an audience’s attention, interest, and respect.

### Language Study

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- K-12.ELA-GS.LS-1 Structure and Conventions of Modern English:** The study of the structure of Modern English, as well as its oral and written conventions, gives students more control over the meaning they intend in their writing and speaking.
- K-12.ELA-GS.LS-2 Vocabulary and Concept Development:** Our ability to think clearly and communicate with precision depends on the acquisition of a rich vocabulary. As students employ a variety of strategies for acquiring new vocabulary, their skill in using that perfect word can heighten interest in vocabulary itself.
- K-12.ELA-GS.LS-3 Formal and Informal English:** Study of different forms of the English language helps students understand how to use different levels of formality in their own writing and speaking. It also enriches their understanding of regional and social dialects in their conversational language and in literature.

### Reading and Literature

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- K-12.ELA-GS.RL-1 Foundations of Reading and Spelling:** Phonemic awareness, accurate and fluent decoding and word recognition, and an understanding of the basic features of written English texts are essential to beginning reading and writing. These skills should be taught, continually practiced, and monitored until mastered.
- K-12.ELA-GS.RL-2 Nonfiction:** Many students regularly read historical nonfiction and other nonfiction books, news articles, and websites on the Internet. Learning to identify and understand common expository organizational structures helps them read challenging nonfiction material. Knowledge of textual and

graphic features of nonfiction further extends a student’s control in reading and writing informational texts.

**K-12.ELA-GS.RL-3 Fiction:** Stories are vehicles for a student’s development of empathy, moral sensibility, and understanding. The identification and analysis of elements of fiction—plot, conflict, setting, character development, and foreshadowing—make it possible for students to think more critically about stories, respond to them in more complex ways, reflect on their meanings, and compare them to each other. A story is the imagined world of the author into which the reader is invited. Imaginative works are there to entertain and enlighten us.

**K-12.ELA-GS.RL-4 Poetry:** In the study of poetry, we learn to pay particular attention to rhythm and sound, compression and precision, the power of images, and the appropriate use of figures of speech. We also learn that poetry is playful in its attention to language, where rhyme, pun, and hidden meanings are pleasant surprises. The analysis of the figurative language associated with poetry—metaphor, simile, personification, and alliteration—has an enormous impact on student reading and writing in other genres as well.

**K-12.ELA-GS.RL-5 Drama:** Since ancient times, drama has entertained, informed, entranced, and transformed us as we willingly enter the world created on stage. In reading dramatic literature, students learn to analyze the techniques playwrights use to achieve their magic. By studying plays, as well as film, television shows, and radio scripts, students learn to be more critical and selective readers, listeners, and viewers of drama.

**K-12.ELA-GS.RL-6 Sacred Scripture, Classical Literature, Traditional Narrative, Myth, and Legend:** Young students enjoy the predictable patterns, excitement, and moral lessons in traditional and classical stories. In the middle grades, knowledge of the character types, themes, and structures of these stories enables students to perceive similarities and differences when they compare traditional stories across cultures. In the upper grades, students can describe how authors through the centuries have drawn on traditional patterns and themes as archetypes in their writing, deepening their interpretations of these and other authors’ works.

## Research and Composition

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**K-12.ELA-GS.RC-1 The Research Process:** As the amount and complexity of knowledge increases, students need information literacy skills to understand the features, strengths, and limitations of the many digital and print resources, as well as people, available to them. They must also know how to conduct an efficient and successful search for accurate and credible information, and to adhere to principles of academic integrity to document and cite the sources they use.



- K-12.ELA-GS.RC-2 Analytical Writing:** Analytical writing requires the development and use of logical thinking processes, reading “between the lines,” and an ever-growing knowledge base for the topic being analyzed. Beginning in grade 3, analytical writing should constitute at least half the writing students do in school, and beginning in grade 9, three-quarters of student writing assignments should require research and analysis.
- K-12.ELA-GS.RC-3 Persuasive Writing:** Persuasive writing uses all the major components of effective communication for the goal of convincing someone of something or moving someone to a particular kind of action. It requires a keen appreciation of the audience’s particular characteristics. Strong persuasive writing presents a position or claim, defends it with credible, precise, and relevant evidence, and uses language appropriate to the audience and purpose.
- K-12.ELA-GS.RC-4 Personal Writing:** When we draw on our own or imagined experiences, observations, and reflections for personal writing, we want to bring them to life through engaging language. Writing about our own experiences, observations, or reflections helps us to understand our lives and can bring pleasure to our readers.

*\*Address earlier standards as needed.*

## **LISTENING AND SPEAKING**

### **Discussion and Group Work**

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**K.ELA.DG-1.0** Follow agreed-upon rules for class discussion (e.g., listen to others, wait until one’s turn to speak) and add one’s own ideas to small group discussions or tasks.

### **Oral Presentation**

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**K.ELA.OP-1.0** Orally describe personal interests, tell stories, or recite poems, facing the audience and speaking clearly.

## **LANGUAGE STUDY**

### **Structure and Conventions of Modern English**

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- K.ELA.SE-1.0** Use appropriate words to express actions.
- K.ELA.SE-2.0** Identify correct capitalization for names and places.
- K.ELA.SE-3.0** Correctly use a period or a question mark at the end of a sentence.
- K.ELA.SE-4.0** Correctly use a capital letter for the first letter of a name, the first word in a sentence, and the pronoun I.

### **Vocabulary and Concept Development**

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- K.ELA.VC-1.0** Predict the meaning of a new word from its context when listening to a text being read aloud.
- K.ELA.VC-2.0** Use new words acquired by listening to literary or informational texts read aloud.

### **Formal and Informal English**

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**K.ELA.FI-1.0** Identify examples of formal and informal language in stories read aloud.

## READING AND LITERATURE

### Print Concepts

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- K.ELA.PC-1.0** Determine the purpose of a text (i.e., to provide information, tell a story, or provide language play, as in nursery rhymes, riddles, etc.).
- K.ELA.PC-2.0** Locate the title and name of the author of a book.
- K.ELA.PC-3.0** Point to show that written words are made up of separate letters.
- K.ELA.PC-4.0** Identify and name all uppercase and lowercase letters.
- K.ELA.PC-5.0** Point to identify spacing between words.
- K.ELA.PC-6.0** Print one's own first name and all upper- and lowercase letters.

### Phonemic and Phonological Awareness

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- K.ELA.PPA-1.0** Segment the parts of a compound word (e.g., base + ball → baseball). For example, students clap to show they understand the syllables of a word.
- K.ELA.PPA-2.0** Orally blend and segment words into syllables (e.g., /ta/ + /ble/ → table).
- K.ELA.PPA-3.0** Identify and produce rhyming words (e.g., mop as a word rhyming with top).
- K.ELA.PPA-4.0** Orally blend the onset (e.g., the initial sound) and the rhyme (e.g., the vowel and ending sound) in words (e.g., /c/ + /at/ → cat).
- K.ELA.PPA-5.0** Identify the initial sound in spoken words (e.g., /f/ as the first sound in fish).
- K.ELA.PPA-6.0** Identify words that have the same initial sound (e.g., Given pat, put, sat, indicate that the first two words begin with /p/).
- K.ELA.PPA-7.0** Orally blend individual sounds in simple one-syllable words (e.g., /c/ /u/ /p/ → cup).
- K.ELA.PPA-8.0** Segment individual sounds in simple one-syllable words (e.g., put → /p/ /u/ /t/).

### Phonics, Word Recognition, and Spelling

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- K.ELA.PHO-1.0** Name a printed letter that matches a sound (e.g., The teacher says /t/, and the student points to the /t/ letter tile).
- K.ELA.PHO-2.0** Match spoken words to printed words (e.g., The teacher pronounces /pat/, and the student selects pat from a set of three word cards).
- K.ELA.PHO-3.0** Blend letter sounds to decode simple CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant) or VC (vowel-consonant) words with two or three letters (e.g., man, cat, up).
- K.ELA.PHO-4.0** Read some common high-frequency words by sight (e.g., a, the, I, my, you, is).
- K.ELA.PHO-5.0** Use letter-sound knowledge to write simple messages and words that accurately represent at least the initial sounds (e.g., soap written as sop).

## Comprehension

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- K.ELA.CMP-1.0** Make predictions about text content using the illustrations.  
**K.ELA.CMP-2.0** Identify important elements of the text (e.g., characters, events, topics).  
**K.ELA.CMP-3.0** Retell main ideas from text heard or read.

## Nonfiction

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- K.ELA.N-1.0** Identify important elements of the text (e.g., events, topics, concepts) and answer questions about them.  
**K.ELA.N-2.0** Identify textual and graphic features of a nonfiction text (e.g., title, author, table of contents, illustrations, and index).  
**K.ELA.N-3.0** Restate and follow task-oriented two-step directions.

## Fiction

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- K.ELA.F-1.0** Make predictions about what will happen in a story as it is read aloud.  
**K.ELA.F-2.0** Identify lessons learned by characters in a story.  
**K.ELA.F-3.0** Identify words in a text related to the senses (e.g., touch, hear, see, smell, and taste).

## Poetry

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- K.ELA.P-1.0** Identify and demonstrate the regular beat in nursery rhymes and children's songs.

## Drama

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- K.ELA.D-1.0** Act out dialogue from a familiar story with guidance and support from an adult.

## Sacred Scripture, Classical Literature, Traditional Narrative, Myth, and Legend

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- K.ELA.M-1.0** Identify and predict recurring phrases (e.g., Once upon a time) in traditional literature.  
**K.ELA.M-2.0** Retell or dramatize a favorite Scripture story or folk/fairytale.

## RESEARCH AND COMPOSITION

### The Research Process: Students Generate Topics of Interest about Their School or Community and Decide Who or What Can Answer Questions about Their Topics

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**K.ELA.RP-1.0** Identify relevant pictures or people as sources of information on a topic of interest.

### Analytical Writing

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**K.ELA.WA-1.0** Develop and use a topic sentence or a controlling (main) idea when discussing observations on topics related to the curriculum. For example, students look at pictures of animals from the same species. Starting with the main idea that animals of the same species can be alike and different, students speak or write full sentences on their observations.

**K.ELA.WA-2.0** Orally describe patterns of change (e.g., daily/seasonal weather changes).

### Persuasive Writing

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**K.ELA.WP-1.0** Voice logical reasons for suggesting that others follow a particular course of action. For example, some students say that the teacher should allow more time for music because the class needs to practice for an upcoming assembly.

### Personal Writing

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**K.ELA.WE-1.0** Tell a story about an experience the student has had or has imagined.

**K.ELA.WE-2.0** Arrange ideas of a story in three-part order (beginning, middle, and end).

**K.ELA.WE-3.0** Identify words and phrases that convey meaning expressively.