



Language Arts Benchmarks Grade 9

Dear Parents,

This document was produced in an effort to give you a preview of the skills and concepts introduced at this grade level. Teachers seek an active partnership with parents. Please make opportunities to reinforce the skills developed in grade nine in your home. Each teacher combines individual creativity with a school philosophy of education to teach students. Different strategies will be used to approach the instruction of these skills and concepts. These benchmarks represent the skills and strategies ninth graders must know and be able to do independently by the end of the year. We invite you to meet with your child's teacher so that you will understand how you can reinforce what is taught in your child's classroom.

Reading & Responding:

In the area of reading, your ninth grade student will be able to:

- q Use vocabulary strategies independently to improve fluency and enhance comprehension across content areas with a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts.
- q List the etymology of significant terms.
- q Recall Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and affixes.
- q Discern the meaning and relationship between pairs of words, such as synonyms and antonyms.
- q Use context clues or analysis to discern the meaning of unfamiliar and/or difficult words: definition (e.g., direct presentation of definition within context), example (e.g., providing examples to reveal word meaning), comparison (e.g., indicating a word meaning through a statement of similarities), and contrast (e.g., indicating a word meaning through statement of opposites)
- q Read prose, poems, soliloquies or dramatic dialogues aloud adjusting reading rate to text difficulty to maintain fluency.
- q Read with clarity, force, and volume.
- q Read literature appropriate for their reading level to read for a variety of purposes. (e.g., literary experience, to gain information, to perform a task, for enjoyment)
- q Read independently in class for CAPT.
- q Identify the central idea, author's message, and purpose of a text.
- q Communicate thoughts, opinions, and/or questions that arise during reading.
- q Describe the effectiveness of elements in text.
- q Examine the relationship between prior knowledge and the text by making inferences, drawing conclusions, predicting events, and extracting clues or evidence.
- q Define ways the meaning of a selection represents a view or comment on life.
- q Recall some of the ways clarity is affected by the patterns of organization and repetition of key ideas in text.
- q Discern an author's beliefs about a subject.
- q Recall patterns and perspectives with text.

- q Ask text-related critical and evaluative questions before, during, and after reading, writing, listening, and viewing texts.
- q Use a variety of strategies to monitor and adjust text read, listened to, and viewed.
- q Predicts outcomes of text read, listened to and viewed and assess validity of predictions.
- q Recognize the literary and aesthetic features of text: author's style, textual features, irony, tone, and characterization are used for specific purposes with literature.
- q Recall different viewpoints (personal values, perspectives and experiences) and defend multiple interpretations of text.
- q Identify strategies to evaluate explicit and implicit information within a written work to include in a response to or extend written response.

Producing Texts (e.g., Writing):

In the area of writing, your ninth grade student will be able to:

- q Write independently for an extended period of time to produce first drafts and final products.
- q Independently write to produce texts in a variety of forms yearly. (e.g., narrative essay, expository essay, , persuasive essay, letter writing, response to literature)
- q Use the writing process.
- q Use the elements of discourse (e.g., purpose, speaker, audience, form) when completing narrative, expository, persuasive, informational, or descriptive writing assignments.
- q Write with transitions to unify ideas or arguments and support them with relevant examples.
- q Demonstrate coherence across paragraphs and sentences by using parallel structures and a variety of sentence lengths and structures.
- q Utilize according to form, purpose, and audience, concise language, action verbs, descriptive language, colorful modifiers, and active, passive, and individual voice to enhance written presentations and convey specific tones.
- q Express personal ideas in a variety of ways (e.g., fictional, autobiographical, or biographical narratives, plays, short stories, prose, poetry).
- q Sequence of events that contain scenes and incidents in specific places.
- q Write thank you letters to the appropriate audience and for a purpose determined by the context.
- q Use an appropriate form and voice consistent with the document's purpose.
- q Write expository texts for an intended audience.
- q Define, inform, and/or explain a clear and accurate perspective on the subject.
- q Support main ideas with evidence from the texts in the forms of data, facts and ideas.

- q Evaluate explicit and implicit informants and/or make plausible judgments about the text.
- q Write to persuade an intended audience by taking a clear persuasive position.
- q Support the position with information from relevant source materials.
- q Supporting with information that is accurate and relevant.
- q Anticipate and refute counter arguments.
- q Deliver multimedia presentations after identifying the form, purpose, and audience and drawing information from many sources.
- q Write responses.
- q Recognize the use of imagery, language and universal themes of the text.
- q Relate ideas and viewpoints through references to the text and other works and recall the author's use of stylistic devices.
- q List research questions and research strategies (e.g., field studies, oral histories, interviews, or experiments)
- q List strategies to organize and record information. (e.g., anecdotal scripting, annotated bibliographies)
- q Use organizational features of electronic information and computerized catalogs to research information for specific purposes.
- q Give credit for quoted, summarized, and paraphrased information in a works consulted page using Trimmer guide to MLA.
- q Recognizes plagiarism, intentional and unintentional, and its consequences.
- q Assess the logic of ideas, diction, and transitions by reviewing writing based on a rubric or self-generated criteria.
- q Prepare writing for publication using an authorized format and design with electronic resources to enhance final product.
- q Reflect yearly on text in portfolio identifying strengths and writing goals.

Applying Standard English:

In the area of oral and written communication, your ninth grade student will be able to:

- q Identify coordinating conjunctions (e.g., for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) that link works or groups or words.
- q Identify subordinating conjunctions (e.g., after, although, as, because) that link an independent clause to a dependent clause.
- q Identify correlative conjunctions (e.g., both...and, either...or, neither...nor, not only...but also, whether...or) that link similar words or word groups and are used in pairs.
- q Identify prepositions. (e.g., about, behind, above)
- q Identify different types of phrases (e.g., prepositional, adjectival, adverbial, appositive, verbal: participle, gerund, infinitive)
- q Identify an independent clause.
- q Identify a dependent clause. (i.e., adverb clause, adjective clause, noun clause)

- q Maintain noun-pronoun and subject-verb agreement (including when there is a phrase/clause between the subject and verb) in writing.
- q Use a variety of pronouns appropriately in sentences: pronouns reference/antecedent; pronoun case: pronoun as subject, object, possessive; indefinite pronouns.
- q Use adjectives and adverbs appropriately in sentences. (e.g., indefinite adjectives; another, each, neither, many, and conjunctive adverbs: accordingly, also, beside) to link ideas and paragraphs.
- q Revise fragments, run-on sentences, sentences with awkward construction, and sentences in need of combining or separating.
- q Use parallel structures (e.g., words, phrases, and clauses) in speech and writing.
- q Identify proper usage of the following:
 - Commas
 - Quotation marks
 - Apostrophe
 - Semicolon
 - Colon
- q Capitalize:
 - Titles of people
 - Proper nouns
 - Proper adjectives
 - First word in dialogue
 - The names of places
 - Organizations
 - Nationalities
 - Buildings
 - Historical events
 - Works of art
- q Identify resources and strategies for spelling.
- q Use concise language, action verbs, descriptive language and colorful modifiers.
- q Use appropriate transition words to unify ideas.
- q List the etymology of significant terms.
- q Identify and use diction needed according to the audience, purpose, and tone of writing and/or speech. (e.g., idiomatic, elevated diction; formal language, Standard English, colloquial language, slang, vernacular, dialect)
- q Paraphrase the speaker's purpose/viewpoint and ask/answer relevant questions.
- q Complete tasks from oral instructions (e.g., workplace assignment) and transmit the instructions to others.
- q Evaluate oral presentations according to an established rubric.
- q Take notes from an oral presentation.
- q Recognize the organization or structure of a spoken message.
- q Speak and respond clearly in class to a variety of audiences in a variety of formal and informal
- q Select and use verbal and non-verbal techniques to enhance communication.
- q Analyze and present a dramatic selection and/or reading.
- q Use props, visual aids, and technology to support presentations.
- q Support, modify, or refute a position using effective oral delivery strategies.

- q Speak in a variety of situations and choose the organizational pattern appropriate to the audience and purpose.
- q Identify criteria to evaluate presentations and discussions.

Exploring & Responding to Literature:

In the area of literature, your ninth grade student will be able to:

- q Identify the author's use of literacy conventions and devices with a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts.
- q Recall characteristics of sub-genres such as satire or allegory, which are used in poetry, prose, drama, novel, or short story.
- q Identify the characteristics of forms of poetry (e.g., narrative, lyric) and organization within the poem. (e.g., stanza, couplet)
- q Identify the genre and how it shapes the theme or topic (short story, novel, drama, essay, biography, autobiography, journalistic writing, and film)
- q Find segments of text that illustrate irony or tone to achieve specific purposes.
- q Identify ways in which poets use imagery or figures of speech.
- q Determine and analyze an author's viewpoint and perspective.
- q Determine tone and analyze its impact in a reading selection.
- q Identify and analyze the role of conflicts in fiction: man vs. man, man vs. self, man vs. society, man vs. nature.
- q Identify and describe the author's techniques for establishing and developing mood/atmosphere.
- q Identify, analyze, and use figure language.
- q Identify and analyze the components of various literary genres (e.g., poetry, drama, short story, epic, novel)
- q Describe the use and impact of setting on character motivation and development.
- q Make inferences and draw conclusion concerning the use and impact of plot structure: exposition, exciting force or incident, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution.
- q Explain themes in relationship to real-life situations.
- q Identify and responds to the universal experience found in multicultural literature with a variety of fiction and nonfiction.
- q Identify values and traditions from text with reader's experiences and background.
- q Compare values and traditions between various texts.
- q Recognize how dialect is reflective of time period and culture.
- q Reflect on diverse cultures as a means of gaining insights into one's own culture.
- q Identify the influence culture can have on historical/global context.
- q Identify the influence environment and setting has in multicultural text.
- q Summarize the appeal of various literary works and determine literary value based upon individual preferences and established standards while studying the genre.

- q Identify meaning of literary works using a variety of critical approaches.
- q Identify the aesthetic qualities of works of poetry, drama, fiction, prose, or film work together to create meaning.
- q Identify the techniques used by the author in the presentation of arguments, their ability to persuade an audience and the credibility of the argument.
- q Read classic literature and be aware of the ways it has shaped/reflected Western culture.
- q Identify reasons that the texts are classics and continue to extend their view of good literature with a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts.
- q Read, view, and listen to contemporary texts to create responses that identify the works principal elements with a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts.
- q Identify the various influences on authors and the impact of those influences on the text.
- q Read and respond to classic, modern, and contemporary literature to identify political and social ideas found therein.
- q Read, listen to and view literary texts to interpret the universal human experience.