

English / Language Arts

Fifth Grade

The fifth-grade curriculum and instruction build on and extend the foundational and transitional skills begun in the fourth grade. The instructional priority for both the fourth grade and the fifth grade is a continued focus on ensuring that all students are able to read fluently and accurately and are therefore prepared to read and comprehend complex narrative and expository texts in the content areas. In addition, students in the fifth grade are introduced to new, advanced forms of evaluation, such as expository critique and literary criticism in the reading domain.

Curriculum Outline

Below are the Montana content standards for the English / Language Arts and the local Ronan School District #30 standards that further explain the goals of our program:

MONTANA STANDARDS FOR READING

Reading is essential to learning. It is the pathway to lifelong learning and the key to life's opportunities. Reading is a strategic problem-solving process of gaining personal meaning from text. Students use a range of skills and strategies in the process of reading to comprehend what they read. Reading is not only a basic skill, it is an indispensable tool for critical and creative thinking. There are a diversity of purposes for which readers read a variety of materials. Reading literacy allows students to make connections between their own and others' experiences, to inquire systematically, to access, analyze, synthesize, and critically evaluate information. Early reading achievement is a reliable predictor of later school performance. Success in school is often determined by student proficiency in reading. Proficient readers monitor and evaluate their own progress in reading.

Montana Standard 1—Students construct meaning as they comprehend, interpret, and respond to what they read.

Montana Standard 2—Students apply a range of skills and strategies to read.

Montana Standard 3—Students set goals, monitor, and evaluate their progress in reading.

Montana Standard 4—Students select, read, and respond to print and nonprint material for a variety of purposes.

Montana Standard 5—Students gather, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information from a variety of sources, and communicate their findings in ways appropriate for their purposes and audiences.

MONTANA STANDARDS FOR LITERATURE

Literature, a primary vehicle for teaching reading, attempts to show life in its uncertainties, complexities, and imperfections, offering many insights for the reader. Responding to print and nonprint media allows participants to experience vicariously other lives and to measure their own experiences against those of others. The exploration of literature and films encourages students to become critical and reflective thinkers and to develop personal aesthetic standards for print and nonprint media as art forms.

Montana Standard 1—Students construct meaning as they comprehend, interpret, analyze and respond to literary works.

Montana Standard 2—Students recognize and evaluate how language, literary devices, and elements contribute to the meaning and impact of literary works.

Montana Standard 3—Students reflect upon their literary experiences and purposefully select from a range of works.

Montana Standard 4—Students interact with print and nonprint literary works from various cultures, ethnic groups, traditional and contemporary viewpoints written by both genders.

Montana Standard 5—Students use literary works to enrich personal experience and to connect to the broader world of ideas, concepts and issues.

1.0 Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development

Students use their knowledge of word origins and word relationships, as well as historical and literary context clues, to determine the meaning of specialized vocabulary and to understand the precise meaning of grade-level appropriate words.

Word Recognition

1.1 Read aloud narrative and expository text fluently and accurately and with appropriate pacing, intonation, and expression.

Vocabulary and Concept Development

1.2 Use word origins to determine the meaning of unknown words.

1.3 Understand and explain frequently used synonyms, antonyms, and homographs.

1.4 Know abstract, derived roots and affixes from Greek and Latin and use this knowledge to analyze the meaning of complex words (e.g., *controversial*).

1.5 Understand and explain the figurative and metaphorical use of words in context.

2.0 Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials)

Students read and understand grade-level appropriate material. They describe and connect the essential ideas, arguments, and perspectives of the text by using their knowledge of text structure, organization, and purpose. The selections in *Recommended Readings in Literature, Kindergarten Through Grade Eight* illustrate the quality and complexity of the materials to be read by students. In addition, by grade eight, students read one million words annually on their own, including a good representation of grade-level appropriate narrative and expository text (e.g., classic and contemporary literature, magazines, newspapers, online information). In grade five, students make progress toward this goal.

Structural Features of Informational Materials

- 2.1 Understand how text features (e.g., format, graphics, sequence, diagrams, illustrations, charts, maps) make information accessible and usable.
- 2.2 Analyze text that is organized in sequential or chronological order.

Comprehension and Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

- 2.3 Discern main ideas and concepts presented in texts, identifying and assessing evidence that supports those ideas.
- 2.4 Draw inferences, conclusions, or generalizations about text and support them with textual evidence and prior knowledge.

Expository Critique

- 2.5 Distinguish facts, supported inferences, and opinions in text.

Evaluation of Progress in Reading.

- 2.6 Set fluency goals for use with SRI sub-category.
- 2.7 Participate in a home/school program to promote value and enjoy books and reading.
- 2.7 Maintain a record of books read at home

3.0 Literary Response and Analysis

Students read and respond to historically or culturally significant works of literature. They begin to find ways to clarify the ideas and make connections between literary works. The selections in *Recommended Readings in Literature, Kindergarten Through Grade Eight* illustrate the quality and complexity of the materials to be read by students.

Structural Features of Literature

- 3.1 Identify and analyze the characteristics of poetry, drama, fiction, and nonfiction and explain the appropriateness of the literary forms chosen by an author for a specific purpose.

Narrative Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

- 3.2 Identify the main problem or conflict of the plot and explain how it is resolved.
- 3.3 Contrast the actions, motives (e.g., loyalty, selfishness, conscientiousness), and appearances of characters in a work of fiction and discuss the importance of the contrasts to the plot or theme.
- 3.4 Understand that *theme* refers to the meaning or moral of a selection and recognize themes (whether implied or stated directly) in sample works.
- 3.5 Describe the function and effect of common literary devices (e.g., imagery, metaphor, symbolism).

Literary Criticism

- 3.6 Evaluate the meaning of archetypal patterns and symbols that are found in myth and tradition by using literature from different eras and cultures.
- 3.7 Evaluate the author's use of various techniques (e.g., appeal of characters in a picture book, logic and credibility of plots and settings, use of figurative language) to influence readers' perspectives.

Cultural Reading

- Read grade appropriate American Indian Text
- Read Text from various cultures and ethnic groups.
- Read texts written by both genders.
- Read about traditional and contemporary viewpoints.
- Listen and discuss.

Literary works from various cultures, ethnic groups, traditional and contemporary viewpoints written by both genders are to be used.

MONTANA STANDARDS FOR WRITING

The standards set in this document represent what research and experience have described as important in the process of writing. Writing is essential to thinking and learning. As a strategic, problem-solving process, writing is a key element of communication and a critical part of comprehension. In addition to being a developmental basic skill, writing is also indispensable to critical, ethical, and creative thinking. Writers use a range of skills and strategies in the process of writing to communicate with diverse audiences and for diverse purposes. Writing proficiency enables individuals to learn, make connections between their own and others' experiences, create meaning, and evaluate information.

Montana Standard 1—Students write clearly and effectively.

Montana Standard 2—Students apply a range of skills and strategies in the writing process.

Montana Standard 3—Students evaluate and reflect on their growth as writers.

Montana Standard 4—Students write for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Montana Standard 5—Students recognize the structures of various forms and apply these characteristics to their own writing.

Montana Standard 6—Students use the inquiry process, problem-solving strategies, and resources to synthesize and communicate information.

1.0 Writing Strategies

Students write clear, coherent, and focused essays. The writing exhibits the students' awareness of the audience and purpose. Essays contain formal introductions, supporting evidence, and conclusions. Students progress through the stages of the writing process as needed.

Organization and Focus

- 1.1 Create multiple-paragraph narrative compositions:
 - a. Establish and develop a situation or plot.
 - b. Describe the setting.
 - c. Present an ending.
- 1.2 Create multiple-paragraph expository compositions:
 - a. Establish a topic, important ideas, or events in sequence or chronological order.
 - b. Provide details and transitional expressions that link one paragraph to another in a clear line of thought.
 - c. Offer a concluding paragraph that summarizes important ideas and details.

Research and Technology

- 1.3 Use organizational features of printed text (e.g., citations, end notes, bibliographic references) to locate relevant information.
- 1.4 Create simple documents by using electronic media and employing organizational features (e.g., passwords, entry and pull-down menus, word searches, the thesaurus, spell checks).
- 1.5 Use a thesaurus to identify alternative word choices and meanings.

Evaluation and Revision

1.6 Edit and revise manuscripts to improve the meaning and focus of writing by adding, deleting, consolidating, clarifying, and rearranging words and sentences.

2.0 Writing Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)

Students write narrative, expository, persuasive, and descriptive texts of at least 500 to 700 words in each genre. Student writing demonstrates a command of standard American English and the research, organizational, and drafting strategies outlined in Writing Standard 1.0. Using the writing strategies of grade five outlined in Writing Standard 1.0, students:

2.1 Write narratives:

- a. Establish a plot, point of view, setting, and conflict.
- b. Show, rather than tell, the events of the story.

2.2 Write responses to literature:

- a. Demonstrate an understanding of a literary work.
- b. Support judgments through references to the text and to prior knowledge.
- c. Develop interpretations that exhibit careful reading and understanding.

2.3 Write research reports about important ideas, issues, or events by using the following guidelines:

- a. Frame questions that direct the investigation.
- b. Establish a controlling idea or topic.
- c. Develop the topic with simple facts, details, examples, and explanations.

2.4 Write persuasive letters or compositions:

- a. State a clear position in support of a proposal.
- b. Support a position with relevant evidence.
- c. Follow a simple organizational pattern.
- d. Address reader concerns.

1.0 Written and Oral English Language Conventions

The curriculum for written and oral English language conventions have been placed between those for writing and for listening and speaking because these conventions are essential to both sets of skills.

Students write and speak with a command of standard English conventions appropriate to this grade level.

Sentence Structure

1.1 Identify and correctly use prepositional phrases, appositives, and independent and dependent clauses; use transitions and conjunctions to connect ideas.

Grammar

1.2 Identify and correctly use verbs that are often misused (e.g., *lie/lay*, *sit/set*, *rise/raise*), modifiers, and pronouns.

Punctuation

1.3 Use a colon to separate hours and minutes and to introduce a list; use quotation marks around the exact words of a speaker and titles of poems, songs, short stories, and so forth.

Capitalization

1.4. Use correct capitalization.

Spelling

1.5 Spell roots, suffixes, prefixes, contractions, and syllable constructions correctly.

Evaluation and Reflection of Writing

Dialog with the teacher to identify strengths and weaknesses in their writing.

MONTANA STANDARDS FOR SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Oral communication is the bridge to the future. It provides the basis of language development, thinking, gathering information, and shaping how we see ourselves and how others see us. Studies show that over 80 percent of communication is spent in speaking and listening, which lends credence to the belief that teaching these skills is not just desirable, but critical. It is the responsibility of education to ensure that students are prepared for their roles as family members, workers, and citizens through oral communication instruction. The National Communication Association defines speaking as “the uniquely human act or process of transmitting and exchanging information, ideas, and emotions using oral language” while listening is “the process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken and/or nonverbal messages.”

Montana Standard 1—Students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the communication process.

Montana Standard 2—Students distinguish among and use appropriate types of speaking and listening for a variety of purposes.

Montana Standard 3—Students apply a range of skills and strategies to speaking and listening.

Montana Standard 4—Students identify, analyze, and evaluate the impacts of effective speaking and evaluative listening.

MONTANA STANDARDS FOR MEDIA LITERACY

We have long understood the importance of literacy to becoming productive citizens in a democratic society. In our world of powerful images, sounds and words, students must be media literate. Studies show that students view an average of 3,000 or more hours of television prior to graduation from high school than they spend in class. Media literacy is the tool students need to access, analyze, evaluate and produce communication in a variety of forms. Students need to understand the ways words, images and sounds influence the way meanings are created and shared in our contemporary global society.

Montana Standard 1—Students recognize that media messages are constructed using specific techniques which manipulate sound, image, text and movement to convey meaning.

Montana Standard 2—Students distinguish among and use appropriate types of media for a variety of purposes.

Montana Standard 3—Students apply knowledge, skills and strategies to design and create media messages.

Montana Standard 4—Students identify, analyze and evaluate the impacts of media on individuals and societies.

1.0 Speaking, Listening, and Media Strategies

Students deliver focused, coherent presentations that convey ideas clearly and relate to the background and interests of the audience. They evaluate the content of oral communication.

Comprehension

- 1.1 Ask questions that seek information not already discussed.
- 1.2 Interpret a speaker’s verbal and nonverbal messages, purposes, and perspectives.
- 1.3 Make inferences or draw conclusions based on an oral report.

Organization and Delivery of Oral Communication

- 1.4 Select a focus, organizational structure, and point of view for an oral presentation.
- 1.5 Clarify and support spoken ideas with evidence and examples.
- 1.6 Engage the audience with appropriate verbal cues, facial expressions, and gestures.

Analysis and Evaluation of Oral and Media Communications

- 1.7 Identify, analyze, and critique persuasive techniques (e.g., promises, dares, flattery, glittering generalities); identify logical fallacies used in oral presentations and media messages.
- 1.8 Analyze media as sources for information, entertainment, persuasion, interpretation of events, and transmission of culture.

2.0 Speaking Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)

Students deliver well-organized formal presentations employing traditional rhetorical strategies (e.g., narration, exposition, persuasion, description). Student speaking demonstrates a command of standard American English and the organizational and delivery strategies outlined in Listening and Speaking Standard 1.0. Using the speaking strategies of grade five outlined in Listening and Speaking Standard 1.0, students:

- 2.1 Deliver narrative presentations:
 - a. Establish a situation, plot, point of view, and setting with descriptive words and phrases.
 - b. Show, rather than tell, the listener what happens.
- 2.2 Deliver informative presentations about an important idea, issue, or event by the following means:
 - a. Frame questions to direct the investigation.
 - b. Establish a controlling idea or topic.
 - c. Develop the topic with simple facts, details, examples, and explanations.
- 2.3 Deliver oral responses to literature:
 - a. Summarize significant events and details.
 - b. Articulate an understanding of several ideas or images communicated by the literary work.
 - c. Use examples or textual evidence from the work to support conclusions.

Media

Use media to build background knowledge as another avenue of communication.

Use knowledge box clips to gain media information and knowledge.

Below is a narrative that describes and elaborates best practices research in English Language Arts and is the standard to which we strive.

Reading

Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development, Word Recognition

The fifth-grade curriculum continues to focus on decoding words fluently and accurately. Students are required to read aloud narrative and expository text fluently and accurately and use appropriate pacing, intonation, and expression. As in the fourth grade, students who are not reading at grade level should receive continued systematic, explicit instruction in decoding or comprehension strategies or both. (See the fourth-grade section earlier in this chapter for a discussion of systematic, explicit instruction in reading.)

Vocabulary and Concept Development

The vocabulary and concept development standards at this level require students to understand and explain words, including using figurative and metaphorical words in context and abstract roots and affixes derived from Greek and Latin to analyze the meaning of complex words. The standards continue to emphasize the use of internal, morphological, etymological, and historical word cues. In addition, students are expected to understand and explain frequently used synonyms, antonyms, and homographs. Students should continue to engage in extensive independent reading as the primary means of increasing vocabulary knowledge (Nagy 1998). Students should be given ample opportunities to read. In addition, vocabulary instruction must continue to be systematic (see the vocabulary guidelines for the fourth grade).

Reading

Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials)

The fifth-grade curriculum focuses primarily on the structural features of informational materials, comprehension and analysis of grade-level-appropriate text, and expository critique. Students are expected to understand how text structures (e.g., formats, graphics, sequences, diagrams, illustrations, charts, maps) make information accessible and usable and analyze text organized in sequential or chronological order. In addition, students should use basic comprehension strategies, such as (1) discerning main ideas and concepts in texts; (2) identifying and assessing evidence that supports ideas; (3) drawing inferences, conclusions, or generalizations about text; and (4) identifying textual evidence and prior knowledge to support those inferences, conclusions, and generalizations. The expository critique, introduced at this level, requires students to distinguish facts, supported inferences, and opinions in text.

Instruction in reading comprehension in the fifth grade should:

- Use texts in which complex linguistic and syntactical features are appropriate for the fifth-grade level. Similarly, the number of unfamiliar vocabulary words should be carefully controlled to be manageable for students.
- Ensure that students have the prerequisite knowledge and skills to comprehend the text.
- Begin with teacher-directed instruction, including modeling and guidance, and gradually shift responsibility to the student.
- Include repeated opportunities for students to answer comprehension questions during the reading of the text.
- Require students to read some of the text aloud, at least initially.
- Provide sufficient practice for students to reach a high level of performance for one level of text complexity before introducing the next level.

Reading

Literary Response and Analysis

As they did in the fourth grade, students in the fifth grade will continue to learn about the fundamental elements of literature, including identifying and analyzing the characteristics of poetry, drama, fiction, and nonfiction and explaining the appropriateness of the literary forms chosen. In addition, the elements of narrative texts are emphasized. Students are required to (1) identify the main problem or conflict of the plot and explain how it is resolved; (2) contrast the actions, motives, and appearances of characters; (3) understand and recognize themes in sample works; and (4) describe the function and effect of common literary devices (e.g., imagery, metaphor, symbolism).

An effective instructional strategy for teaching the elements of narrative text is to employ the structure of story grammar, which has been described in previous grade-level overviews. The strategy involves (1) introducing and sequencing the elements of narrative text from easy to complex; (2) using a note sheet that allows students to record information about each story element (e.g., character information, conflict or problem, theme) as they read a story or text; and (3) using a think-aloud strategy in conjunction with the note sheet whereby the teacher summarizes and points out how to anticipate elements of story grammar in the text. This strategy can also be extended and used with contrasting information on character according to which students locate, record, and contrast the motives of two characters. However, this extension requires students to be proficient in identifying character elements before they are contrasted. Students are also required to evaluate the meaning of archetypal patterns and symbols and the author's use of various techniques (e.g., appeal of characters in a picture or book, logic and credibility of plots and settings) to influence the readers' perspectives.

Writing

Writing Strategies

Organization and Focus

As students in the fifth grade continue to progress through the stages of writing as a process, they are required to create multiple-paragraph narrative and expository compositions. To do so, they must establish and develop a topic or plot, describe the setting or details that link one paragraph to another, and present an ending or concluding paragraph that summarizes important ideas and details.

Important instructional considerations for the writing process include:

- Ensuring that students understand the text structure before they begin to employ that structure in their writing
- Using that text structure as a tool for organizing a written composition
- Demonstrating that writing is composed of several different stages: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and postwriting
- Providing examples or models of writing that make clear the important features (e.g., main problem, conflict, character motives, theme, imagery) of narrative and expository compositions
- Using strategies that make conspicuous for students exactly how to identify, comprehend, and record the critical features of compositions on a note sheet (For example, the teacher reads aloud a piece of writing and explicitly identifies it.)
- Demonstrating a range of examples of *one* particular feature at a time (e.g., conflict) in one type of text (e.g., narrative), then introducing new features (e.g., main problem or conflict, plot)

Research and Technology

Students must learn to (1) use organizational features of printed or electronic text to locate relevant information; (2) create simple documents, using electronic media and employing organizational features (e.g., passwords, entry and pulldown menus, word searchers, spell checks); and (3) use a thesaurus to identify alternative word choices and meanings.

Instruction in the research and technology standard of locating relevant information should:

- Involve a topic that is familiar and interesting to students.
- Begin with a clear and unambiguous set of examples of information relevant to the topic.
- Include examples of information obviously irrelevant to the topic.
- Consist of teacher-directed or guided instruction that reveals to students the requirements for locating relevant information.
- Progress from examples involving clearly relevant information to those that require more critical discrimination of relevant and irrelevant information.

Evaluation and Revision

Students are expected to continue to revise and edit manuscripts to improve the meaning and focus of writing by adding, deleting, consolidating, clarifying, rearranging words and sentences, and making final corrections.

Writing

Writing Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)

Students are expected to write narrative, expository, persuasive, and descriptive texts of at least 500 to 700 words for each text and continue to demonstrate a command of standard English. They are also required to write narratives; responses to literature; research reports about important ideas, issues, or events; and persuasive letters or compositions. General instructional guidelines for teaching the different types of text structures include:

1. Providing students with ample opportunities to compose each text structure and receive written, systematic, and instructive feedback on their writing
2. Using procedural facilitators such as think sheets or note sheets to help structure and organize information
3. Modeling each stage of the writing process (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, postwriting) and providing ample opportunities for students to become proficient at each stage.
4. Providing explicit, clear criteria (e.g., use of an editor's checklist) for students to follow in editing written compositions

Written and Oral English- Language Conventions

Students are expected to have a command of the communication conventions, including sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. The conventions can be conceptualized as discrete skills and taught in strands. Instruction by strand employs an incremental and progressive approach to teaching specific skills and strategies within and across a larger domain. For example, a writing lesson might include separate and individual strands of instruction in punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure. Each strand is specific to the particular written convention (e.g., conventions for grammar and punctuation) and is related to the larger domain of writing applications (e.g., persuasive letter or composition).

The parts of speech can be confusing to students if instruction is not clear. Teaching demonstrations should include an adequate number of examples, both positive and negative, of a part of speech that the student is able to identify. For example, students must learn that the words *eat*, *ate*, *has eaten*, and *will eat* are all verbs. Verbs in the present and past tenses can be presented first and followed at a later time by two-word verbs, such as *has eaten*, *will eat*, and *is eating*.

When teaching students to identify the parts of speech, the teacher should sequence the instruction so that the students can learn that many words can serve as different parts of speech according to how the word is used in a sentence. For example, the word *running* may function as a noun (e.g., *Running* is fun); as an adjective (e.g., The *running* water in the stream moved us along quickly); or as part of a verb (e.g., We were *running*). Cumulative review is particularly important in teaching the parts of speech.

Once students learn a new part of speech, they should be given exercises in which sentences include examples of the new part of speech along with previously introduced and taught parts of speech. Review and practice should be frequent enough to provide for understanding and retention. When showing students how to use a particular word or phrase or other structure, the teacher should include a range of positive examples and carefully selected and sequenced negative examples. The negative examples serve to rule out likely misinterpretations.

When introducing a new type of sentence structure, the teacher should provide adequate practice in writing sentences before requiring students to use the new sentence type in writing passages. Those assignments should be structured to prompt usage of the new sentence type. In addition, the teacher should provide adequate cumulative review to facilitate understanding and retention as well as exercises requiring the students to revise existing passages by combining sentences and thereby create a new type of sentence structure. Students should be taught not only *how* to create new sentence types but *when* to use them. For example, some students will need careful instruction to determine when words, phrases, or clauses should be joined by *and*, *or*, or *but*. When a new mark of punctuation is introduced, exercises should be included that provide adequate practice first in *how* to use the new mark and then in *when* to use it. For example, when students learn how to write sentences that begin with a clause that tells *when* (e.g., *After the sun went down*, the mosquitoes became unbearable), some students are likely to begin using commas even when the clause comes at the end of the sentence. Students need adequate practice to determine when *not* to use the new punctuation.

Listening and Speaking

Listening and Speaking Strategies

Like fourth-grade students, fifth-grade students are expected to continue to listen critically and respond appropriately to oral communications. However, they are also expected to be more engaged as listeners and speakers by asking questions that seek information already discussed; interpreting a speaker's verbal and nonverbal messages, purposes, and perspectives; and making inferences or drawing conclusions based on an oral report. The standards for the organization and delivery of oral communication are the same as those for the fourth grade (i.e., select a focus, organizational structure, and point of view for an oral presentation). Students are also expected to identify, analyze, and critique persuasive techniques (e.g., promises, dares, flattery, glittering generalizations) and identify logical fallacies used in oral presentations and media messages. Finally, they are to take an active role in analyzing the media as sources of information, entertainment, persuasion, interpretation of events, and transmission of culture.

Listening and Speaking

Speaking Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)

Fifth graders are expected to use speaking strategies to deliver narrative and informative presentations and oral responses to literature. Specific skills to be integrated include establishing a situation or plot, showing the listener what happens; framing questions to direct an investigation; establishing a controlling idea or topic; developing a topic with simple facts, details, examples, and explanations; summarizing significant events and details; articulating an understanding of several ideas or images; and using examples or textual evidence from the work to support conclusions. A systematic schedule for introducing, teaching, and linking speaking strategies with similar standards in reading and writing should be developed. Students will require clear examples of each type of presentation and adequate practice and feedback for each of the requirements of the presentations (e.g., establishing a situation or plot; showing the listener what happens, framing questions to direct an investigation, and establishing a controlling idea or topic).

Content and Instructional Connections

The teacher can help students integrate mastery of standards across domains, strands, and academic disciplines by having students:

1. Read aloud narrative and expository text fluently and accurately and with appropriate pacing, intonation, and expression.
2. Use knowledge of word origins to determine the meaning of unknown words.
3. Demonstrate how print and electronic text features (e.g., format, graphics, sequence, diagrams, illustrations, charts, maps) make information accessible and usable.
4. Create multiple-paragraph narrative compositions, using electronic media and employing organizational features.
5. Add, delete, consolidate, clarify, and rearrange words and sentences.
6. Use topics and examples for speaking, writing, and editing assignments that relate to grade five history–social science and science content standards.

Corequisite standards. Fifth-Grade Literary Response and Analysis:

Contrast the actions, motives, and appearances of characters in a work of fiction and discuss the importance of the contrasts to the plot or theme.

Fifth-Grade Writing Strategies: Create multiple-paragraph narrative compositions.

Identify the main problem or conflict of the plot, explain how it is resolved, and employ that analysis in written and oral presentations.

The identification of conflict and resolution in the plots of novels and short stories is fundamental for more sophisticated aspects of literary analysis. In addition, those elements of plot are central to quality narrative compositions and oral presentations.

Following the suggested sequence for systematic instruction, the teacher might:

1. Begin the sequence with Literary Response and Analysis, analyzing and evaluating conflict and resolution in narratives.
2. Teach students explicitly, through direct instruction or guided discussion, the basic critical attributes of a good plot: a protagonist with a problem (conflict), an antagonist who interferes with the protagonist's attempts to solve the problem, some unsuccessful efforts (because of the antagonist's interference) to solve the problem, and a final successful solution (conflict resolution).

3. Note that at this level the antagonist should be concrete (e.g., a “bad person”). Students will learn the elements better *initially* if they do not have to analyze abstract conflicts, such as mental conflict within the protagonist.
4. Focus as much on unsuccessful attempts to resolve the conflict as on the final resolution. Students should note the ways in which the protagonist learns from the lack of success.
5. Emphasize the importance of a *satisfying* resolution for readers. One way to do so is through examples of *unsatisfying* resolutions.
6. Have the students apply the basic elements in their own writing once they have mastered them.
7. Provide students with an overt strategy for planning their narrative compositions (prewriting). For instance, you might have the students first identify the protagonist and antagonist and the conflict between them, then skip to planning a satisfying resolution, and finally go back to outline unsuccessful attempts to resolve the conflict. This strategy should be implemented flexibly to capture the reiterative process of planning narratives.
8. Require students to develop plots that are promising as they draft a piece of writing. Because drafting is a difficult task at this level, a good plan will help ensure a successful draft.
9. Incorporate other standards into the instruction.
10. Once students have successfully written and revised a narrative with strong plot elements, have them modify their stories for oral presentation.
11. Compare and contrast the written and oral presentations of the same story. Emphasize, for example, how plot elements are the same for both but that oral presentations allow for rhetorical devices that cannot be used in written documents. Students can *show* their audience some elements of a story that have to be *told* in written documents.

Some standards presented in the earlier grades address the basic elements of story grammar. Therefore, students should be assessed initially to determine the extent to which they might have already mastered the key elements of plot (see “Assessment” following).

Assuming that most students will need more instruction or more in-depth instruction in the elements of plot, teachers should:

1. Have students examine several short stories to learn the commonality of plot elements across stories. One or more stories should be weak, especially as to conflict resolution.
2. Walk through a few stories with students, beginning with very strong hints about the plot elements in each but gradually reducing the hints to ensure that students can recognize the elements on their own.
3. Consider establishing cooperative work groups, especially during the planning phase of writing a narrative. Serving as an audience for one another, the students should tell their story to their peers in their group, working off their plot outline. In that way they are likely to learn whether the plot resolution they have in mind is satisfying before they commit themselves too much to their stories. Cooperative work is most appropriate either before students begin to write or between the drafting and revising stages of the writing process.
4. Present students with a strategy for developing a good plot outline and assist students liberally during the plot-planning phase of writing.

Assessment

1. *Entry-Level Assessment for Instructional Planning.* The most important pretest information for this standard is the extent to which students are already familiar with the

- fundamentals of narrative plots. Students might be asked to work from a good short story to identify the fundamentals present in that story.
2. *Monitoring Student Progress Toward the Instructional Objective.* Assessing students' achieving the objectives of narrative plots will be facilitated greatly if instruction follows well-differentiated steps as outlined previously. Teachers can use the work produced at each step to evaluate whether to spend a little more time on that step or to move forward confidently.
 3. *Post-test Assessment Toward the Standard.* Usual state- formal assessments contribute to part of the picture of student achievement toward standards. In addition, the types of assignments teachers routinely use in determining a major part of student grades serve an important role toward giving a complete picture of achievement. For example, a final written composition in published form should be part of the summative evaluation for students. However, a summative evaluation should assess individual accountability. Writing assignments that students complete on their own meet that requirement better than assignments in which students work cooperatively.

Meeting Students' Diverse Needs

1. *Students with Reading Difficulties or Disabilities*
 - a. Some reading selections used to illustrate plot elements can be taken from below-grade-level discourse. At this stage the most important goal is for students to learn the fundamental elements of plot (rather than demonstrate grade-level reading ability).
 - b. Some lower-performing students might lack the ability to create a good conflict and resolution on their own. To facilitate the inclusion of such students in the regular curriculum, teachers can provide those students with more prompting.
 - c. Students who do have difficulty in making oral presentations should (1) be allowed to read their presentations; and (2) be given ample opportunities to practice the delivery of their presentations (with constructive feedback) before being required to make a final presentation to the entire group.
2. *Students Who Are Advanced Learners.* Because these students are more likely to have a good command of plot elements, they may be encouraged, after the teacher has determined the extent of their competence, to work with examples in which conflict and resolution are more subtle. Note that high-achieving students may be given opportunities to interact with each other in homogeneous cooperative groups. Advanced learners may also occasionally serve from time to time as mentors in mixed-ability groups. These students may read stories above their grade level that have more sophisticated plots (e.g., stories based upon a psychological conflict within a single character.) Note that creating a good plot can be challenging for any student at any level. (One form of professional writer's block is the inability to come up with a satisfying plot resolution.) Although advanced learners should be challenged, the teacher should base expectations for achievement on observed performance and information gained from periodic teacher-student conferences regarding the difficulty of the material, the pacing, and the level of student motivation.
3. *Students Who Are English Learners.* In classes with English learners, teachers should consider reading aloud from one or two of the models used to teach fundamental plot elements. The students may experience no difficulty in learning plot elements conceptually but may be limited in their ability to comprehend the written material and express their conceptual knowledge in writing. To assist English learners in their work, teachers should:

- a. Simplify the task for English learners by focusing more attention initially on the plot elements in a narrative composition and less on other aspects of writing.
- b. Note that although all students have difficulty in focusing on all aspects of written discourse at once, English learners especially may need additional time to complete tasks and additional practice.
- c. Teach students how to switch between past and present tenses to develop narrative plots. (“This is a story about a girl who fell in love with a toad.”)
- d. Provide corrective feedback to students on their compositions to help them with standard English conventions. The feedback needs to be shaped to the specific needs of English learners and should always be presented gently and positively.
- e. Encourage English learners to practice their English speaking skills. They should be allowed to practice their oral presentations before presenting them in class and should be allowed to use visual aids as prompts if necessary.