

COURSE OVERVIEW: STANDARDS

1st Grade English Language Arts

BUILDING CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

Our English Language Arts units focus on building content knowledge. The Essential Questions of each unit, listed below, highlight the key understandings students learn across the 1st grade course. In-depth answers to the Essential Questions can be found in the Unit Launch for each unit.

	LITERATURE	SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES
UNIT 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What does it mean to be a good friend?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What makes each continent similar?• What makes each continent unique?
UNIT 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What lessons can we learn from reading folktales?• How can we use the lessons we learn from folktales in our own lives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do animals use their body parts to survive?• What behaviors do parents, siblings and babies engage in to help each other survive?• In what ways are individual animals of the same kind similar? In what ways do they differ?
UNIT 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do families show each other love?• What makes some families different from others?• How does having different kinds of families make the world and our classroom community a richer place?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How can a person's decisions and actions change his or her life?• What makes a person remarkable?• How can art impact a person's life?
UNIT 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What does it take to solve a problem?• Why might two people solve the same problem differently?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why are movements for equal rights important?• How have people who aren't in positions of power led the fight for equity and justice? What can we learn from them?
UNIT 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do people get access to books?• What barriers have people faced when trying to learn to read? How do they overcome them?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What did ancient Egyptians believe and value?• How did ancient Egyptian beliefs and values shape their civilization?

READING STANDARDS

Understanding the core texts and building content knowledge are the most important goals of any Fishtank ELA unit. For each unit, we have identified a few reading standards and key understandings that help readers fully understand the core texts and content. The key Understandings build from unit to unit, often matching the increase in text complexity. These understandings should not be taught in isolation, rather they should be used to help students unpack and explore the different features of complexity found in the core text(s). The key reading standards and understandings work in conjunction with the unit's spiral reading standards, standards that students use every time they read and interact with a text, and the additional unit reading standards, standards that are new to the particular unit but are not the key standards. Guidance on the key understandings can be found in the Unit Launch and Enhanced Lesson Plans for each unit.

	LITERATURE	SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES
UNIT 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To understand a text, readers ask and answer questions about key details. (RL.1.1, RL.1.2)To understand what happens in a story, readers notice a character's actions, motivations and feelings. (RL.1.3) <p><i>Spiral Standard: RL.1.10</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Readers ask and answer questions about key details in a text to learn more about a specific topic. (RI.1.1)The main topic is what a text is mostly about. Key details tell more about the main topic. (RI.1.2)Readers use text features to locate and understand information in a text. (RI.1.5) <p><i>Spiral Standard: RI.1.10</i></p>
UNIT 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To understand what happens in a story, readers notice a character's actions, motivations, feelings and traits. (RL.1.3, L.1.6)The central message of a story is the big idea or lesson the story teaches. Noticing character traits and character change can help the reader determine the central message. (RL.1.2, RL.1.3) <p><i>Spiral Standards: RL.1.1, RL.1.4, RL.1.7, RL.1.10</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To understand details in an informational text, readers think about how details are connected. (RI.1.3)Illustrations help the reader learn more about a particular idea or topic. (RI.1.7, RI.1.6) <p><i>Additional Standard: RI.1.2</i> <i>Spiral Standards: RI.1.1, RI.1.4, RI.1.10</i></p>
UNIT 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To understand what happens in a story, readers notice character relationships and feelings. (RL.1.3, RL.1.4)Readers "read" the illustrations in a text to notice clues about events, setting, and characters. (RL.1.7)Noticing character relationships and feelings can help the reader determine the central message of a story (RL.1.2, RL.1.3) <p><i>Spiral Standards: RL.1.1, RL.1.10</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To understand events in a text, readers need to think about how multiple details are connected. (RI.1.3)Authors include specific reasons in the text and illustrations to support points in a text. (RI.1.8, RI.1.7) <p><i>Spiral Standards: RI.1.1, RI.1.2, RI.1.6, RI.1.9</i></p>

UNIT 4

- When readers retell a story, they tell events from the story using a clearly sequenced order of events. (RL.1.2)
- The setting of a story is when and where a story takes place. The setting can influence a character's actions. (RL.1.3, RL.1.7)
- To compare and contrast stories, readers notice what is the same and different about the characters, setting, key events, and central message. (RL.1.9)
- To understand events in a text, readers think about how details are connected. (RI.1.3)
- Authors include specific reasons in the text and illustrations to support points in a text. (RI.1.8, RI.1.7)

Spiral Standards: RI.1.1, RI.1.2, RI.1.4, RI.1.10

Additional Standard: RL.1.6

Spiral Standards: RL.1.1, RL.1.4, RL.1.10

UNIT 5

- To determine the central message of a story, readers notice character feelings, traits, relationships, and change. (RL.1.2, RL.1.3, RL.1.7)
- Readers use text features and pictures to locate and understand information in a text. (RI.1.5, RI.1.6)
- When describing a character, readers notice a character's actions, motivations, traits, feelings, and relationships. (RL.1.3, RL.1.7)
- Identifying similarities and differences between two texts on the same topic helps a reader understand why authors write different texts. (RI.1.9)
- To understand events in a text, readers need to think about how key details are connected. (RI.1.3, RI.1.8)

Spiral Standards: RI.1.1, RI.1.2, RI.1.4, RI.1.7, RI.1.10

Additional Standard: RL.1.9

Spiral Standards: RL.1.1, RL.1.4, RL.1.10

SENTENCE-LEVEL AND PARAGRAPH-LEVEL FOCUS AREAS

Fishtank ELA units focus on teaching students how to write coherent sentences and towards the end of the year, cohesive paragraphs. In both Literature and Science and Social Studies units, students learn how to construct coherent sentences in order to show a deeper understanding of texts and content. As the year progresses, students learn how to use more complex and nuanced types of sentences to show understanding of key content. These Writing Focus Areas work in conjunction with the additional unit language standards, language standards that are new to the particular unit but are not key standards, and standards that are taught in the structured phonics block. Guidance on how to teach sentence-level and paragraph-level writing is included in the Enhanced Lesson Plans and Unit Launch of each unit.

	LITERATURE Sentence-Level and Paragraph-Level Focus Areas	SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES Sentence-Level and Paragraph-Level Focus Areas
UNIT 1	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write and speak in complete, simple sentences. (L.1.1.j) Use specific details to describe something, particularly proper nouns. (L.1.1.b)
UNIT 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write and speak in complete, simple sentences. (L.1.1.j) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write complete sentences. (L.1.1.j) Write different types of sentences (statements, questions, exclamations, and commands). (L.1.1.j, L.1.2.b) Use different question words when writing questions (who, what, where, when, why, and how) (L.1.1) <p><i>Spiral Standard: L.1.1.f</i></p>
UNIT 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write complete sentences. (L.1.1.j) Write different types of sentences (statements, questions, exclamations, and commands). (L.1.1.j, L.1.2.b) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write simple and complex sentences. (L.1.1.j) Use frequently occurring conjunctions “because,” “but,” and “so.” (L.1.1.g, L.1.6) Use frequently occurring adjectives. (L.1.1.f) <p><i>Spiral Standards: L.1.1.c, L.1.1.e, L.1.1.i</i></p>
UNIT 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write complete sentences. (L.1.1.j) Include details that describe “who,” “what,” “where,” “when,” and “why.” (L.1.1) Use conjunctions “because,” “but,” and “so.” (L.1.1.g, L.1.6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write simple and complex sentences. (L.1.1.j) Use frequently occurring conjunctions “because,” “but,” and “so” (L.1.6, L.1.1.g) Brainstorm using a Single Paragraph Outline. Write a single paragraph.
UNIT 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write simple and complex sentences. (L.1.1) Include details that describe “who,” “what,” “where,” “when,” and “why.” (L.1.1) Use conjunctions “because,” “but,” and “so.” (L.1.1g) Brainstorm using a single paragraph outline. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use frequently occurring conjunctions “because,” “but,” and “so” (L.1.6) Brainstorm using a Single Paragraph Outline. Write a single paragraph.

GENRE-BASED WRITING FOCUS AREAS

All Fishtank ELA units include longer, process-based writing assignments. These assignments challenge students to use what they learn about coherent sentence structure while also exploring the different genres of writing. In Literature units, students engage with a range of narrative writing and opinion writing that builds from unit to unit. In Science and Social Studies units, students engage with a range of research projects and opinion writing that also build from unit to unit. By the end of the year, students are able to write well-crafted narratives, informational texts, and opinion pieces as a way of showing understanding of key unit content. All longer research and opinion projects also require students to present and share what they have learned with others.

LITERATURE AND SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES

	Narrative Writing	Informational Writing	Opinion Writing
UNIT 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a narrative with a beginning, middle and end. (W.1.3) Include details about what happened with each event (W.1.3) Use unit vocabulary words to describe what happened. (W.1.3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name a topic. (W.1.2) Supply facts about the topic. (W.1.2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State an opinion. (W.1.1) Include two to three reasons to support the opinion. (W.1.1)
UNIT 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a narrative with a beginning, middle and end. (W.1.3) Include details about what happened with each event. (W.1.3) Provide a sense of closure. (W.1.3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name a topic. (W.1.2) Supply facts about the topic. (W.1.2) Provide closure. (W.1.2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State an opinion. (W.1.1) Include two to three reasons to support the opinion. (W.1.1)
UNIT 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a narrative with a beginning, middle and end. (W.1.3) Include details about what happened with each event. (W.1.3) Provide a sense of closure. (W.1.3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name a topic. (W.1.2) Supply facts about the topic. (W.1.2) Provide closure. (W.1.2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State an opinion. (W.1.1) Include two to three reasons to support the opinion. (W.1.1) Provide some sense of closure. (W.1.1)
UNIT 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write narratives with a beginning, middle and end. (W.1.3) Include details about what happened with each event. (W.1.3) Use temporal words to signal event order. (W.1.3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name a topic. (W.1.2) Supply facts about the topic. (W.1.2) Provide closure. (W.1.2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State an opinion. (W.1.1) Include two to three reasons to support the opinion. (W.1.1) Provide some sense of closure. (W.1.1)
UNIT 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write narratives with a beginning, middle and end. (W.1.3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name a topic. (W.1.2) Supply facts about the topic. (W.1.2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State an opinion. (W.1.1) Include two to three reasons to support the opinion. (W.1.1)

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- Include details about what happened with each event. (W.1.3)
 - Use temporal words to signal even order. (W.1.3)
 - Provide a sense of closure. (W.1.3)
 - Provide closure. (W.1.2)
 - Provide some sense of closure. (W.1.1)

SPEAKING AND LISTENING FOCUS AREAS

All Fishtank ELA units require students to use discussions and oral discourse as a way of deepening content understandings. Learning how to have productive discussions, either in small groups, partners, or as a whole class, is something students need to be taught. All Fishtank Literature and Science and Social Studies units include Speaking and Listening Focus Areas that progress and build from unit to unit. More guidance on the different Speaking and Listening Focus Areas can be found in our Academic Discourse Teacher Tool.

LITERATURE AND SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES

UNIT 1

- Follow agreed upon-rules for discussions (SL.1.1.a)
 - Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media. (SL.1.2)
 - Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation (SL.1.6)
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UNIT 2

- Follow agreed upon-rules for discussions (SL.1.1.a)
 - Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media. (SL.1.2)
 - Use specific vocabulary. Use vocabulary that is specific to the subject and task to clarify and share thoughts. (L.1.6)
 - Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation (SL.1.6)
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UNIT 3

- Build on others' talk in conversations by responding to the comments of others. (SL.1.1.b)
- Ask questions to clear up any confusion about the topics or texts under discussion (SL.1.1.c, SL.1.2, SL.1.3)
- Use specific vocabulary. Use vocabulary that is specific to the subject and task to clarify and share thoughts. (L.1.6)

Spiral Standards: SL.1.1.a, SL.1.6

UNIT 4

- Build on others' talk in conversations by responding to the comments of others through multiple exchanges. (SL.1.1b)
- Use specific vocabulary. Use vocabulary that is specific to the subject and task to clarify and share thoughts. (L.1.6)

Spiral Standards: SL.1.1.a, SL.1.2, SL.1.3, SL.1.6

UNIT 5

- Build on others' talk in conversations by responding to the comments of others through multiple exchanges. (SL.1.1b)
- Use specific vocabulary. Use vocabulary that is specific to the subject and task to clarify and share thoughts. (L.1.6)

Spiral Standards: SL.1.1.a, SL.1.2, SL.1.3, SL.1.6

VOCABULARY FOCUS AREAS

Vocabulary development is an essential part of all Fishtank ELA units. The vocabulary focus of a unit varies depending on the vocabulary demands of the particular text(s). We do not identify priority focus areas for vocabulary in each unit; all of the following vocabulary focus areas are spiraled across all Fishtank ELA units. More guidance on how to teach vocabulary in Fishtank ELA can be found in our Vocabulary Teacher Tool.

LITERATURE AND SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES

ALL UNITS

- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 1 reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.
 - Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. (L.1.4.a)
 - Use frequently occurring affixes as a clue to the meaning of a word. (L.1.4.b)
 - Identify frequently occurring rout words (e.g. look) and their inflectional forms (e.g., looks, looked, looking). (L.1.4.c)
- With guidance and support from adults, demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.
 - Sort words into categories (e.g. colors, clothing) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent. (L.1.5.a)
 - Define words by category and by one or more key attributes (e.g. a duck is a bird that swims; a tiger is a large cat with stripes). (L.1.5.b)
 - Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g. note places at home that are cozy). (L.1.5.c)
 - Distinguish shades of meaning among verbs differing in manner (e.g. look, peek, glance, stare etc.) and adjectives differing in intensity by defining or choosing them or by acting out the meanings. (L.1.5.d)
- Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts, including using frequently occurring conjunctions to signal simple relationships. (L.1.6)