

**RENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 403**  
**DEPARTMENT OF INSTRUCTION**  
**LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM FOR**  
**WRITING**  
**GRADE 3 & 4**

**ADOPTED BY THE BOARD JUNE 1998**

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**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## **A PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION FOR THE RENTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

A basic function and duty of a free society is the education of its children, youth and adults.

It is the responsibility of the schools to provide each student with the opportunities necessary to develop the scholarship, skills and attitudes which will enable the student to achieve mental, physical, emotional and social maturity.

Further, each student should, as a result of the school experience, be able to make decisions and to accept responsibility for those decisions.

POLICY: 6001

ADOPTED: February 3, 1977

Renton School District No. 403

Renton, Washington

## RENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 403

### GENERAL INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

#### Policy 6010

The Renton School District fosters an educational process which helps all students achieve at their highest potential.

The Renton School District:

#### LEARNING

- Offers a curriculum which prepares our students for the future.
- Emphasizes that diversity contributes positively to the individual and to the community
- Provides learning experiences matched to the needs, interests, and abilities of our diverse student population.
- Extends learning opportunities beyond the school.

#### INSTRUCTION

- Offers a variety of high quality instructional resources and services to students, staff, and community.
- Supports multiple instructional strategies.
- Provides resources and opportunities for continuing professional development of our staff.
- Conducts ongoing evaluations of our instructional programs
- Maintains safe and inviting facilities that are conducive to learning.

#### COMMUNITY

- Creates partnerships which involve students, parents, staff and other community members and organizations.
- Promotes effective communication.
- Values and encourages development of a spirit of community service.
- Respects the rights and responsibilities of all.

As a result of the educational process in Renton, students will understand and apply:

**Language** skills including reading, writing and communication, with opportunities to learn world languages.

**Mathematics** skills including concepts, procedures, problem solving, reasoning, and mathematical language.

**Science** skills including concepts, principles, and the scientific process.

**Social studies** skills, concepts, and processes--emphasizing history, geography, economics, international perspectives, multiculturalism, and participatory democracy.

**Arts and humanities** skills, concepts, and processes to create, perform, solve problems and respond effectively.

**Health and physical education** skills, concepts, and processes to promote lifelong physical, mental and social well being.

In order to strengthen the above curricular areas, Renton students will understand and apply:

**Thinking skills** including the ability to--gather and analyze information, think logically, critically and creatively, integrate experience and knowledge in making reasoned judgments, and solve problems.

**Career and life skills** necessary for successful and responsible participation in family, work and community.

**Technological skills** to support learning, problem solving, and communication.

**Skills** necessary to be a lifelong learner and a contributor to the general welfare and the quality of life for all.

**EVALUATION:** *The Renton School District regularly reviews, evaluates and modifies these General Instructional Goals to meet the changing needs of students, staff and community*

.POLICY ADOPTED: January 19, 1989 RENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 403 Revised May 21, 1987  
Renton, Washington

Revised: April 8, 1998

### **A History of Writing Instruction in Renton Schools**

Language Arts instruction encompasses two-thirds of the Three "R's" our schools have focused instruction upon since the days of early pioneers. The term "basic skills" also refers largely to reading and writing. To be literate, a person has to be able to read and write. Reading expectations have been relatively well defined, both nationally and within our state over the years, but writing expectations have been more vague. Not until 1992, with the passage of House Bill 1209, has Washington State begun to clearly define what basic writing skills are expected of Washington students. It has taken several years since the original bill for the state to further define the learning expectations for specific grade levels.

In Renton, during the past three years, we have reviewed our curriculum for language arts and determined our writing curriculum needs clearer, more sequential definition. Last year (1996-1997) we implemented a middle school writing program which addressed the seventh and tenth grade benchmarks. This year (1997-1998) a committee with representatives from kindergarten through high school has worked to define the writing focus of the remaining grades and also recommend instructional materials to facilitate the teaching and learning of this newly defined program. With this updated curriculum and materials, we are confident our students and teachers will be successful in reaching, and even surpassing, the expectations of our Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements for Writing.

### **Introduction to Writing**

**Writing for Today and Tomorrow** - Writing is essential to a literate society. Writing can be an act of discovery, of communication, of joy. It connects us to work, to culture, to society, to existing knowledge, and to the meanings of our lives.

**What Is Writing?** - Writing is the learned process of shaping experiences into text, allowing the writer to discover, develop, clarify and communicate thoughts and feelings. Writing requires and supports the development of thinking skills. Learning to write brings the learner into the literate community as an active participant in the conversation. Writing is our catalyst for creating the future.

Committed writers use writing for a wide spectrum of practical, economic, social, personal and aesthetic purposes. Engaged writers use a language that is alive, flexible and adaptable to the highest expression of which the human being is capable.

### **Essential Academic Learning Requirements in Writing**

#### **1. The student writes clearly and effectively.**

To meet this standard, the student will:

##### 1.1 develop concept and design

develop a topic or theme; organize written thoughts with a clear beginning, middle, and end; use transitional sentences and phrases to connect related ideas; write coherently and effectively

##### 1.2 use style appropriate to the audience and purpose

use voice, word choice, and sentence fluency for intended style and audience

##### 1.3 apply writing conventions

know and apply correct spelling, grammar, sentence structure, punctuation, and capitalization

#### **2. The student writes in a variety of forms for different audiences and purposes.**

To meet this standard, the student will:

##### 2.1 write for different audiences

##### 2.2 write for different purposes

*such as telling stories, presenting analytical responses to literature, persuading, conveying technical information, completing a team project, explaining concepts and procedures*

##### 2.3 write in a variety of forms

including narratives, journals, poems, essays, stories, research reports, and technical writing

2.4 write for career applications

**3. The student understands and uses the steps of the writing process.**

To meet this standard, the student will:

3.1 prewrite

generate ideas and gather information

3.2 draft

elaborate on a topic and supporting ideas

3.3 revise

collect input and enhance text and style

3.4 edit

use resources to correct spelling, punctuation, grammar, and usage

3.5 publish

select a publishing form and produce a completed writing project to share with chosen audience

**4. The student analyzes and evaluates the effectiveness of written work.**

To meet this standard, the student will:

4.1 assess own strengths and needs for improvement

analyze effectiveness of own writing and set goals for improvement

4.2 seek and offer feedback

**The Renton School District**

**Third Grade Writing Curriculum**

**Overview:** Third grade writers have an increasing ability to fine tune their writing by considering clarity, organization, and language. They apply the basic mechanics with fluency and are beginning to direct their own editing and revision. They have a bank of high frequency words they can spell conventionally and fluently. They can relate audience, purpose, and form in their writing. They demonstrate voice in their work. They can use prewriting and drafting strategies independently. Students self-assess writing and establish writing goals.

**Quick Check**

Does each child:

- Grow in understanding and use of grammar/parts of speech?
- Maintain focus on a topic over a sustained piece of writing?
- Use writing for communication and learning, personal and academic?
- Revise own work with a checklist?
- Seek responses to writing from peers and teacher?
- Evaluate own writing in terms of purpose and clarity? Edit own work?
- Portfolio assessment that reflects the Quick Check.

**Major Teaching Emphases:**

(appropriate list from a developmental continuum)

**The Renton School District Third Grade Writing Curriculum**

**Suggested Writing Audiences, Sources, Purposes, and Forms**

**by the End of Third Grade**

AUDIENCES AND SOURCES	PURPOSES	FORMS
Self	Learning Remembering Entertainment	Lists Logs Notes Stories (Fiction, Non-fiction, Realistic, Fantasy, Traditional, Folktales, Legends, Fables, Myths) <b>Procedures*</b> <b>Schedules</b>
Peers	Personal Communication Shared Learning Entertainment Giving Directions Information Communication Persuasion Self Expression	Logs/Journals Stories Poems Letters Plays <b>Jokes</b> <b>Directions/Procedures</b> <b>Schedules</b>
Teachers		Logs/Journals

Parents	Demonstration of Learning Information Communication Persuasion Self Expression	Stories (Fiction, Non-fiction, Realistic, Fantasy, Traditional, Folktales, Legends, <b>Fables, Myths</b> ) Reflections on Process Plays Research Projects and Reports <b>Poems</b> <b>Procedures</b> <b>Schedules</b>
Business and Government	Demonstration of Learning Personal Communication Information Communication Persuasion Entertainment Self Expression  Request for Information or Services  Expression of Opinion	Logs/Journals Stories (Fiction, Non-fiction, Realistic, Fantasy, Traditional, Folktales, Legends, <b>Fables, Myths</b> ) Letters <b>Plays</b> <b>Poems</b> <b>Schedules</b> <b>Basic Forms (Membership Applications and School Forms)</b> <b>Letters</b> <b>Schedules</b>

\*Bold print denotes elements new to grade level

<b>Writing Focus For Third Grade</b>	
Narrative	Descriptive
Friendly Letter	Expository

Summary/Retelling	Poetry Writing
Journal Writing	Business Letter
<b>Drama</b>	<b>Research Projects and Reports</b>

**The Renton School District**

**Fourth Grade Writing Curriculum**

**Overview:** By the end of fourth grade, children are familiar with the steps of the writing process and can move through them independently. They organize their drafts in paragraphs. They revise for elaboration, organization, clarity, varied sentence structure, and effect. They edit for syntax and grammar. Their spelling is usually conventional and they check spelling using dictionaries, glossaries, and word lists. They apply a knowledge of varied genres. They have confidence in their knowledge and skills as writers.

**Quick Check of Fourth Grade Progress**

Does each child:

- Grow in understanding and use of grammar/parts of speech?
- Use the writing process with facility?
- Revise for a variety of aspects?
- Consider the audience?
- Write fluently in familiar genres?

**The Renton School District Fourth Grade Writing Curriculum**

**Suggested Writing Audiences, Sources, Purposes, and Forms**

**by the End of Fourth Grade**

<b>AUDIENCES AND SOURCES</b>	<b>PURPOSES</b>	<b>FORMS</b>
Self	Learning Remembering Entertainment	Lists Logs Notes Stories Procedures

Peers	Personal Communication Shared Learning Entertainment Giving Directions Information Communication Persuasion Self Expression Explanation	Schedules <b>Poems*</b> <b>Plays</b> <b>Articles/Essays</b> <b>Summaries</b>  Logs/Journals Stories Poems Letters and <b>Memos</b> Plays Jokes Directions/Procedures Articles <b>Summaries</b> <b>Literary Analyses /</b> <b>Responses</b>
Teachers	Demonstration of Learning  Information Communication  Persuasion  Self Expression  Explanation	Logs/Journals Stories Reflections on Process Plays Research Projects and Reports Poems Procedures Schedules <b>Speeches</b> <b>Essays/Articles</b> <b>Summaries</b> <b>Literary Analyses /</b> <b>Responses</b>
Parents	Demonstration of Learning Personal Communication Information Communication Persuasion Entertainment Self Expression Explanation	Stories Letters and <b>Memos</b> Poems
Business and Government	Requesting Information or Service Offering Opinion Explanation	Basic Forms Letters and <b>Memos</b>

\*Bold print denotes elements new to grade level

<b>Writing Focus For Fourth Grade</b>	
Narrative	Descriptive
Friendly Letter	Expository
Summary/Retelling	Poetry Writing
Journal Writing	Business Letter
Drama	Research Projects and Reports
<b>Essays</b>	<b>Memos</b>

**Renton School District Writing Curriculum**

**1. The student writes clearly and effectively.**

To meet this standard, the student will:

<b>Components</b>	<b>TEACHING FOCUS FOR 3rd grade</b>	<b>TEACHING FOCUS FOR 4TH GRADE</b>
<b>1.1 develop concept and design</b>  <b>Develop a topic or theme;</b>  <b>Organize written</b>	Organize ideas to fit purpose and content Select, focus and/or expand topics for writing  Maintain the focus addressed by the topic	1.1.1, 1.1.3,1.1.4 Write a main idea paragraph with a topic sentence, a body which contains at least four supporting details, and a closing sentence  1.1.2 Choose own topic; write in more than one genre

<p><b>thoughts with a clear beginning, middle, and end;</b></p> <p><b>Use transitional sentences and phrases to connect related ideas;</b></p> <p><b>Write coherently and effectively.</b></p>	<p>Extend topic to more than one paragraph using details and transitions sentences</p> <p>Write clear, relevant introduction, body, and conclusion in content areas</p> <p>Use basic menu icons and keyboard to produce text on a computer</p>	<p>1.1.5 a. Organize text with a clear beginning, middle, and end (spatial, sequential); use transitions to construct logical order</p> <p>1.1.5 b. Start sentences in a variety of ways to aid with transitions</p>
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<p><b>Components</b></p>	<p><b>teaching focus for 3RD GRADE</b></p>	<p><b>TEACHING FOCUS FOR 4TH GRADE</b></p>
<p><b>1.2 use style appropriate to the audience and purpose</b></p> <p><b>Use voice, word choice, and sentence fluency for intended style and audience</b></p>	<p>Use a range of style, form and voice to fit audience and purpose</p>	<p>1.2.1 Communicate own perspective and ideas</p> <p>1.2.2 Demonstrate awareness of the audience by using the three traits of voice, word choice, and sentence fluency appropriate to audience and style</p> <p>1.2.3 Use patterns and vocabulary from literature and non-fiction</p> <p>1.2.4 Use figurative language and imagery (simile, metaphor, and personification)</p> <p>1.2.5 Use words in more than one context</p> <p>1.2.6 Use a variety of sentence lengths and types (i.e., simple, compound, complex)</p>
<p><b>1.3 apply</b></p>	<p>Use correct subject/verb agreement</p>	<p>1.3.1 Write complete sentences</p>

<b>writing conventions</b>  <b>Know and apply correct spelling, grammar, sentence structure, punctuation, and capitalization</b>	in sentence word order	1.3.2 Use correct subject-verb agreement
	Use correct use of end punctuation, commas, apostrophes, quotation marks, and capitalization, personal and possessive pronouns	1.3.3 Know and apply correct spelling, grammar/parts of speech sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, personal and possessive pronouns in the final draft
	Use language rules, patterns, and phonemic awareness to spell correctly	1.3.4 Spell high frequency words 1 through 400 correctly in the final draft
	Demonstrate mastery of high frequency spelling words 1 through 265 in everyday writing	Use language rules, patterns, and phonemic awareness to spell correctly
	Use dictionaries and word lists as spelling reference tools in everyday writing	1.3.5 Indicate paragraphs consistently
	Write fluently and independently in manuscript	1.3.6 Use correct cursive letter formation and legible handwriting
Write in cursive, upper and lower case, using models		

### Renton School District Writing Curriculum

#### 2. The student writes in a variety of forms for different audiences and purposes.

To meet this standard the student will:

Components	TEACHING FOCUS FOR 3rd grade	TEACHING FOCUS FOR 4th GRADE
<b>2.1 write for different audiences</b>	Use a range of style, form and voice to fit audience and purpose	2.1.1 Write for self, teacher, and other personally known audience  2.1.2 Show some awareness of audience needs
<b>2.2 write for different purposes</b>	Organize ideas to fit purpose and content	2.1.3 Write for different purposes including:

<p><b>Such as telling stories, presenting analytical responses to literature, persuading, conveying technical information, completing a team project, explaining concepts and procedures.</b></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to respond to teacher's prompt</li> <li>• to tell about something</li> <li>• to name something</li> <li>• to describe something</li> <li>• to direct</li> <li>• to imagine</li> <li>• to learn</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.3 write in a variety of forms Including narratives, journals, poems, essays, stories, research reports, and technical writing.</b></p>	<p>Continue to explore ideas through learning logs and/or journals</p>	<p>2.3.1 Write in a variety of forms and genres (narratives, journals, poems, essays, reports, stories, etc.)</p>
<p><b>2.4 write for career applications</b></p>		<p>2.4.1 Identify the kinds of documents one might be required to write in a career setting</p> <p>2.4.2 Write non-technical documents that could be used in a career setting such as memos, letters, and directions</p>

**Renton School District Writing Curriculum**

**3. The students understands and uses the steps of the writing process.**

To meet this standard the student will:

<p><b>Components</b></p>	<p><b>TEACHING FOCUS for</b></p>	<p><b>TEACHING FOCUS FOR</b></p>
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	<b>3rd grade</b>	<b>4th GRADE</b>
<p><b>3.1 prewrite</b></p> <p><b>Generate ideas and gather information.</b></p>	<p>Use prewriting strategies such as graphic organizers, discussing the topic, gathering information, and taking notes</p> <p>Draft own appropriate research question and select resources to answer the question</p> <p>Use appropriate organizers for information (i.e., webs, note cards)</p> <p>Use information to write a report summary using research from at least one source</p>	<p>3.1.1 Generate own ideas (brainstorm); organize and plan writing (outlines, webbing, story mapping, listing, jotting, free writing, etc.)</p> <p>3.1.2 Use available tools and technology such as simple word processor constantly through the writing process</p> <p>3.1.3 Use resources in schools, libraries, and community</p>
<p><b>3.2 draft</b></p> <p><b>Elaborate on a topic and supporting ideas.</b></p>	<p>Draft with purpose and meaning</p>	<p>3.2.1 Write using own vocabulary, spelling, and drawings</p> <p>3.2.2 Form complete phrases, thoughts, and sentences</p>
<p><b>3.3 revise</b></p> <p><b>Collect input and enhance text and style.</b></p>	<p>Revise to clarify meaning, improve organization, elaborate on ideas, and respond to critiques</p> <p>Revise for improved word choice</p>	<p>3.3.1 Collect input from others</p> <p>3.3.2 Add appropriate language and/or graphics to enhance text and style</p>
<p><b>3.4 edit</b></p> <p><b>Use resources to correct spelling, punctuation, grammar and usage.</b></p>	<p>Edit for subject/verb agreement in sentence word order</p> <p>Edit for correct use of end punctuation, commas, apostrophes, quotation marks, and capitalization</p> <p>Proofread for high frequency words 1 through 265</p>	<p>3.4.1 Use a dictionary as a reference</p> <p>3.4.2 Correct errors with assistance</p> <p>3.4.3 Add missing or necessary words</p> <p>3.4.4 Correct common errors in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization</p> <p>Proofread for high frequency words 1 through 265</p>

<p><b>3.5 publish</b></p> <p>Select a publishing form and produce a completed writing project to share with chosen audience</p>	<p>Select pieces to share or publish</p>	<p>3.5.1 Select a display form and publishing options such as a book or poster</p> <p>3.5.2 Produce a legible final project</p> <p>3.5.3 Use technology when needed</p>
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**Renton School District Writing Curriculum**

**4. The publisher analyzes and evaluates the effectiveness of written work.**

To meet this standard the student will:

<p><b>Components</b></p>	<p><b>TEACHING FOCUS FOR</b></p> <p><b>3rd grade</b></p>	<p><b>TEACHING FOCUS FOR</b></p> <p><b>4th GRADE</b></p>
<p><b>4.1 assess own strengths and needs for improvement</b></p> <p>Analyze effectiveness of own writing and set goals for improvement</p>	<p>Analyze own writing for strengths and areas to improve</p> <p>Set goals for improving own writing (concept and design, style, and conventions)</p>	<p>4.1.1 Use established criteria for concept and design, style, and conventions, to reflect on and improve writing</p>
<p><b>4.2 seek and offer feedback</b></p>	<p>Analyze writing of peers for strengths and areas for revision</p> <p>Note writing strengths and weaknesses, style and strategies of other authors</p>	<p>4.2.1 Accept and employ feedback on own writing when appropriate</p> <p>4.2.2 Offer positive and constructive feedback on others' writing</p>

**RENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Language Arts Materials for Writing**

## **Third and Fourth Grade**

### **BASIC TEXT:**

Grade 3:

*Write on Track*, Write Source, Kemper, Nathan and Sebranek, Great Source Education Group, 1996

Grade 4:

*Writers Express*, Write Source, Kemper, Nathan and Sebranek, Great Source Education Group, 1995

### **TEACHER RESOURCE :**

Grade 3:

*Write on Track*, Write Source, Kemper, Elsholz and Nathan, Great Source Education Group, Teacher's Edition, 1996

*Language Series Program Guide (3)*, Great Source Education Group, 1996

*Daily Oral Language*, Level Three, Vail Papenfuss Evanston: McDougal, Littell & Co., 1989.

Grade 4:

*Writers Express*, Write Source, Kemper, Nathan and Sebranek, Great Source Education Group Teacher's Edition, 1995

*Language Series Program Guide (4)*, Great Source Education Group, 1995

*Daily Oral Language*, Level Four, Vail Papenfuss Evanston: McDougal, Littell & Co., 1989.

### **SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS:**

Dictionaries and Thesaurus

## **Language Arts Materials for Spelling**

## **Third and Fourth Grade**

### **BASIC MATERIALS:**

*REBECCA SITTON'S SPELLING SOURCEBOOK 1*, (How-To book) Rebecca Sitton, Egger Publishing, Inc., 1997

*REBECCA SITTON'S SPELLING SOURCE BOOK 2*, (Activities for Words 1-400) Rebecca Sitton, Egger

Publishing, Inc. 1997

*SPELLING SOURCEBOOK REVIEWS*, (For High-Use Writing words 1 -400) Rebecca Sitton, Egger Publishing, Inc., 1997

*The QUICK-WORD™ Handbook for Everyday Writers*, Rebecca Sitton and Robert Forest, Curriculum Associates, Inc., 1990

*Words I Can Use*, Renton School District, 1983

**RESCIND:**

*Building Spelling Skills*, Bohlen & Huycke, McDougal, Littell & Company, 1985

*World of Language*, Ragno, Toth and Gray, Silver Burdett & Ginn Publishing Company, 1990