4TH GRADE

A FAMILY GUIDE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Ensuring a bright future for every child

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4TH GRADE

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Parents are their child's first teachers in life and know their child better than anyone else. Parents have valuable insights into their child's needs, strengths, abilities, and interests. The collaboration of parents and educators is vital in guiding each child toward success. The *Family Guide for Student Success* outlines what your child should learn at each grade level from pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. You can encourage your child's academic growth by reinforcing classroom activities at home. The *Family Guide for Student Success* booklets represent what all students should know and be able to do at the end of each grade level. The achievement of the expectations will help your child meet the assessment standards established by our state. It is only through your support and active participation in your child's education that we form a partnership for success for all the children in Mississippi.

If you have special questions regarding curriculum or school programs, please call your child's school. Do not be afraid to reach out to your child's teacher for additional activities to support mastery of the standards. This guide will help set clear and consistent expectations for your child, build your child's knowledge and skills, and help set high goals for your child.

READING

In fourth grade, your child will continue building his reading skills. In addition to reading stories and literature, he will read more texts that provide facts and information in areas including science and social studies. Your child will be expected to understand and summarize what he has learned by referring to details from the text. Activities in these areas may include:

- Reading and comprehending literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, while determining a theme and summarizing the text.
- Reading and comprehending history, social studies, science, and technical texts, while determining the main idea of a text and explaining how it is supported by key details.
- Describing the overall structure of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text.
- Using combined knowledge of all letter-sounds and syllabication patterns to accurately read unfamiliar multisyllabic words in and out of context.

Your child refers to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

- Ask questions to clarify meaning.
- Visualize key elements within the text.
- Ask and answer questions before, during, and after reading.
- Take notes based on reading with a question in mind.
- Locate the answers to specific questions within the text.
- Reference the text when answering questions.

HELP AT HOME

- Play "Question Toss." Ask a question then toss a ball to your child. Your child will refer to the text to give the answer to the question. Then, your child will ask a related follow-up question for you to answer and toss the ball back to you. Repeat this process.
- Encourage your child to ask questions about everything he is reading to ensure comprehension.

VOCABULARY

An **INFERENCE** is made by using observations and background knowledge to determine a conclusion that makes sense. For example, John hears a smoke alarm and smells burnt bacon when he wakes up. John can infer that his mom burned their breakfast.



Your child can determine the theme of a story, drama, or poem using details in the text. Your child can summarize the text.

- Identify the major character, setting, problem, and solution in retelling a story.
- Make connections to the text based on prior knowledge.
- Identify the main topic of a multi-paragraphed text.
- Demonstrate the ability to understand the main topic one paragraph at a time.
- Locate key details in the text that the author used to support the theme, lesson, or moral of the story.
- Understand that the theme of a story is the lesson or message that the author wants you to learn from the story.

VOCABULARY

The **THEME** of a story is the central message or lesson the author wants you to take away from the story. Common themes include friendship, courage, honesty, family, jealousy.

HELP AT HOME

- Use a story map to identify character, setting, problem, and solution.
- Read familiar fairy tales and discuss the themes.
- Provide your child with the possible theme of a story and let him create a short story to go with the provided theme.
- Encourage your child to create a story map of his written story.

RESOURCES

SAMPLE STORY MAP

Using a sheet of notebook paper or construction paper, make a simple story map for your child to complete as he reads a story.

BOOK TITLE: _____

AUTHOR: _____

CHARACTERS

SETTING

PROBLEM

SOLUTION

Your child can describe in depth, a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).

- Identify the characters in a story.
- Describe a character orally.
- Use prior knowledge to predict what is coming next in the text.
- Identify basic story elements as well as major events or challenges within a story.
- Monitor thinking so that he understands when meaning is lost.
- Establish a personal or real life connection that relates to the main topic.
- Identify the cause and effect or the problem and solution of the actions, events, or steps and how it relates to the main topic.

HELP AT HOME

- Choose a character from a favorite book or movie and have your child describe the character's hair color, eye color, face shape, body shape, age, temperament, personality, strengths, weaknesses, etc.
- Ask your child to explain how the character's decisions or choices changed the events or actions that occurred in the story.
- Show the front and back of a book, as well as the table of contents. Ask your child to use this information to make a list of as many outcomes for the story as possible.



Your child determines the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that refer to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean).

- Know that phrases are sequences of words intended to have meaning.
- Know that context clues are the words or phrases surrounding an unknown word that can provide hints about the meaning of the word.
- Use prior knowledge, including knowledge of significant characters found in mythology, to determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text.

HELP AT HOME

- Expose your child to several characters and words from mythology. Look at the unknown words and discuss the origin and meanings of the words.
- Help your child complete a short research project on someone from mythology (e.g., Zeus, Hercules, Poseidon). Have your child write down any unknown words he encounters during his research and discuss the meaning of the words with him.

VOCABULARY

MYTHOLOGY is stories about gods, goddesses, heroes, monsters, and their interactions with humans. These stories are also used to explain natural phenomena (e.g., why there are stars, earthquakes, storms).

Your child can explain major differences between poems, drama, and prose, and can refer to the structural elements of poems (e.g., verse, rhythm, meter) and drama (e.g., casts of characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) when writing or speaking about a text.

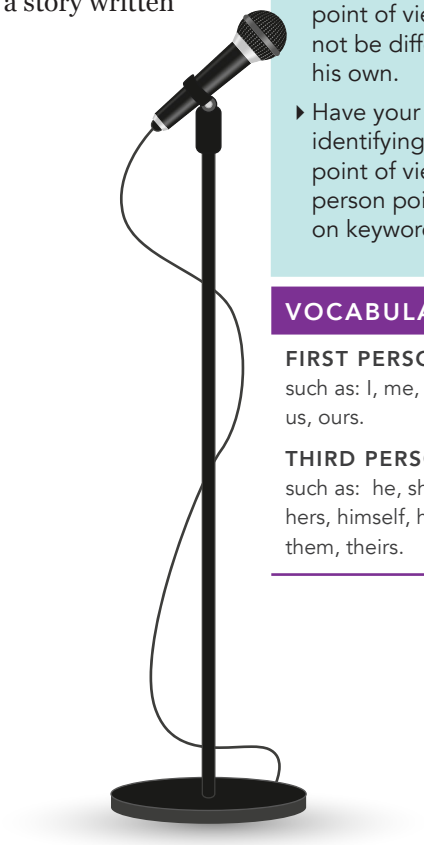
- Use the terms chapter, scene, and stanza when writing or speaking about a text.
- Describe how events in stories, dramas, and poems build upon each other.
- Discuss the differences between poems, drama, and prose.

HELP AT HOME

- Introduce poetry and drama vocabulary to your child (e.g., verse, rhythm, meter, dialogue, stage direction).
- Use a story map to identify the different parts of the story, drama, or poem. Map out the chapters, scenes, or stanzas.

Your child can compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first and third person narrations.

- Identify the point of view from which a story is being told.
- Compare and contrast stories that use the same point of view.
- Compare and contrast stories that use different points of view.
- Find similarities and differences in narration between a story written in first person and a story written in third person.



HELP AT HOME

- Read a familiar text and have you and your child read different parts aloud, using different voices and emotions for each character. Discuss the point of view of the characters you are playing and then have your child tell how the characters' point of view may or may not be different from his own.
- Have your child practice identifying third person point of view from first person point of view based on keywords.

VOCABULARY

FIRST PERSON uses keywords such as: I, me, mine, myself, we, us, ours.

THIRD PERSON uses keywords such as: he, she, it, him, her, his, hers, himself, herself, itself, they, them, theirs.

Your child can make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text.

- Make connections between written, visual, and oral versions of a text to improve comprehension.
- Know that making connections requires considering both the information from text and the reader's background knowledge.
- Identify descriptions and directions in a written, visual, or oral presentation of a text.
- Compare different presentations of a text using concrete details, quotations, and other information from each presentation of the work.

HELP AT HOME

- Read a story aloud to your child while having him sketch a picture of what you are reading. After your child's picture is complete, have him explain the sketch and how it relates to specific parts of the story.



Your child can compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics (e.g., opposition of good and evil) and patterns of events (e.g., the quest) in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures.

- Compare and contrast themes and topics in stories, myths, and traditional literature from a variety of different cultures.
- Compare and contrast patterns of events in stories, myths, and traditional literature from a variety of different cultures.
- Explain how themes and topics are revealed by characters, settings, and events in stories.
- Explain how stories, myths, and traditional literature reflect the values and beliefs of the culture from which they come.

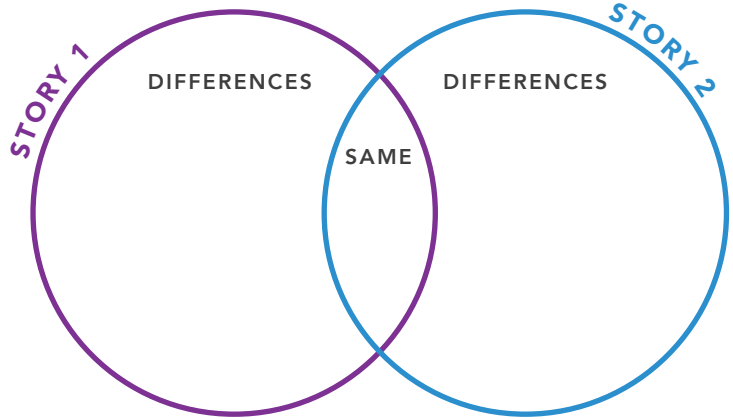
HELP AT HOME

- Read with your child the original tale of "The Three Little Pigs" and the fractured tale "The True Story of the Three Little Pigs" and have your child create a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting the similarities and differences between the two versions of the story.
- Discuss the differences between the good characters (the pigs) and the evil characters (the wolf).

RESOURCES

SAMPLE VENN DIAGRAM

Using a sheet of notebook paper or construction paper, make a simple Venn diagram for your child to complete after he reads two stories.



By the end of the year, your child will read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in the grades 4–5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

- Comprehend grade level text proficiently.
- Read grade level text independently and proficiently.

HELP AT HOME

- Make sure your child is being exposed to quality literature and nonfiction text on their grade level.
- It is important to read to your child from different genres. Choose from a variety of books, on grade level and beyond, when you are looking for something to read aloud.

GENRES

Different genres include, but are not limited to:

- fantasy
- realistic fiction
- mystery
- traditional literature
- historical fiction
- science fiction
- informational
- biography
- autobiography
- poetry



Your child can determine the main idea of an informational text and can explain how it is supported by key details. Your child can summarize the text.

- Know the main idea of an informational text is the message the author is trying to make.
- Understand that the main idea of a text is often stated in a topic sentence.
- Understand a summary contains only the most important details of the text.
- Identify key details from the text and explain how they support the main idea.
- Use details and the main idea to summarize the text.



HELP AT HOME

- Provide your child with informational magazine or newspaper articles. Have your child read an article and complete a graphic organizer to determine the main idea and supporting details.
- After determining the main idea, have your child write a paragraph summary of only the most important points on the article he just read.

VOCABULARY

An **INFORMATIONAL TEXT** is nonfiction writing, written with the intention of informing/teaching the reader about a topic.

INTERNET RESOURCES

A graphic organizer helps the reader visually sort out his ideas and information from the text. Many useful graphic organizers can be found at http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/.

Your child can explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in an historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

- Understand that an author's organizational techniques affect the overall meaning of the text.
- Know that what happens in an informational text is as important as why it happens.
- Explain the events by describing what happened, why it happened, and how it happened.

HELP AT HOME

- Have your child read nonfiction newspaper or magazine articles. Spend time listing cause/effect relationships and/or the sequence of events in the passage.

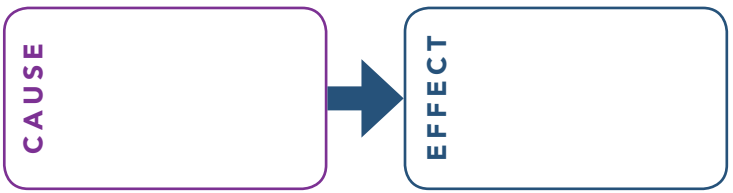
TEXT FEATURES

Examples of text features of informational text include:

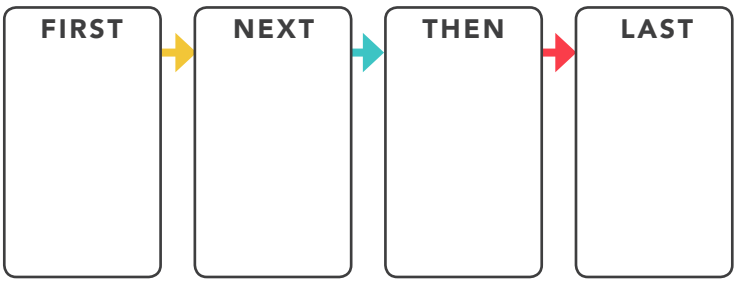
- title
- sidebar
- glossary
- pictures
- captions
- table of contents
- index

RESOURCES

CAUSE AND EFFECT



SEQUENCING



Your child can determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area.

- Identify common prefixes, suffixes, and roots and their meanings.
- Use context such as definitions, examples, and restatements found in text to determine the meaning of a word.
- Use common Greek and Latin affixes and roots to determine the meaning of a word.
- Use a glossary, dictionary, or thesaurus to determine the meaning of a word.
- Know a thesaurus is a book of synonyms and antonyms alphabetically arranged.

HELP AT HOME

- Choose nonfiction books to read aloud with your child (e.g., biographies, autobiographies, books on specific events in history, science experiments, and technical texts). Explore unfamiliar words and phrases together. Write down questions your child has about the topics and help him complete extended research to answer the questions.



VOCABULARY

A **BIOGRAPHY** is a text written to inform a reader about a real person's life. The author is someone other than the person featured in the text.

An **AUTOBIOGRAPHY** is a text written by the author of the text to inform you about his life.

Your child can describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.

- Determine the overall text structure by using signal or sequence words and how events or ideas relate to one another.
- Evaluate how the text structure connects the events, ideas, concepts, and information presented in the text.
- Determine why an author chose a particular text structure.
- Describe the order of events when they are written chronologically.
- Describe a cause and explain why it led to a specific effect.
- Describe the problem and possible solution(s) to the problem from a text.

HELP AT HOME

- Provide your child with different informational texts written in a variety of different text structures. Make note cards with different text structures on them (e.g., description, cause and effect, sequence, compare/contrast). Provide examples of each text structure on the back of the note card.
- As your child reads articles and other informational texts, have him match the texts with the different structures on the note cards.

COMMON TEXT STRUCTURES

Text structures are the way in which a text is arranged.

Common text structures include:

DESCRIPTION
Tells or describes a specific thing.

PROBLEM/SOLUTION
States a problem and provides a solution.

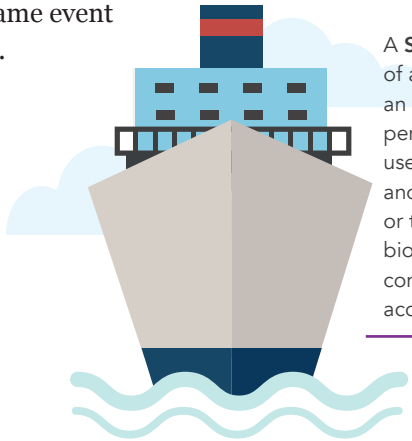
CAUSE/EFFECT
Shows why something happened and the result from it.

CHRONOLOGICAL/SEQUENTIAL
Shows events or procedures in time order.

COMPARE/CONTRAST
Shows how two or more things are alike and different.

Your child can compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic. Your child can describe the differences in the accounts and focus on the information provided.

- Identify important details from the text that reveal the author's purpose.
- Identify the focus of both firsthand and secondhand accounts of an event or topic.
- Describe the similarities and differences between the information provided in different accounts of the same event or topic.
- Identify the focus of both firsthand (primary source) and secondhand accounts (secondary source) of an event or topic.
- Contrast the details and information provided in different accounts of the same event or topic.
- Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic.



HELP AT HOME

- Provide your child with articles written on the same topic by different people (e.g., The Oregon Trail, The Civil War, The Titanic). Have your child compare and contrast the differences in the way the articles are written and how people view the same events in different ways.

VOCABULARY

A **FIRSTHAND ACCOUNT** of an event or topic is based on an author's personal experience. The author uses pronouns such as I, me, and we to describe the event or topic. Diaries, autobiographies, and letters are considered to be firsthand accounts.

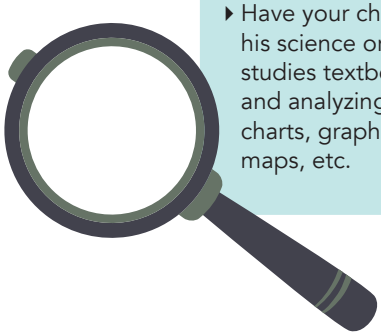
A **SECONDHAND ACCOUNT** of an event or topic is based on an author's research, rather than personal experience. The author uses pronouns such as he, she, and they to describe the event or topic. Encyclopedia entries, biographies, and textbooks are considered to be secondhand accounts.

Your child can interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, interactive elements on web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

- Identify informational text features such as: charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on web pages.
- Know the purpose of each text feature (e.g., charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, interactive elements on web pages).
- Read and interpret charts, graphs, diagrams, timelines, legends, etc.

HELP AT HOME

- Send your child on a text feature scavenger hunt. (For a list of common text features, see page 14.) Provide your child with a list of text features he has to locate. Provide him with magazines and newspapers. Have your child hunt for the text features in the magazines and newspapers, cut them out, and label them with the correct text feature name.
- Have your child explore his science or social studies textbook, locating and analyzing all the charts, graphs, timelines, maps, etc.



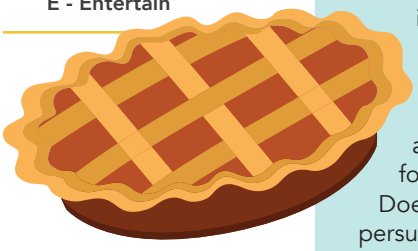
Your child can explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in an informational text.

- Identify reasons and evidence used to support particular points in a text.
- Know that reasons and evidence are pieces of information that support particular points within a text.

AUTHOR'S PURPOSE

Three possible purposes for writing a text, or the author's purpose, can be remembered by using the acronym "P.I.E."

P - Persuade
I - Inform
E - Entertain



HELP AT HOME

- Provide your child with an informational text. Ask him to identify and summarize the author's main point and supporting points.
- Have your child find and make note of key words. Direct him to the opening sentences in paragraphs to find the point(s), then to the closing sentence of the text to find the main point.
- Explain to your child that sometimes the main point is also conveniently spelled out in the title.
- Talk about the author's purpose for writing the text. Does the text inform, persuade, entertain, or some combination? Next, have your child get specific about the purpose of each point made.
- Understanding the author's purpose will help your child identify the author's points as well as his reasons for making the points.

Your child can integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

- Know that information from two texts can be combined to create a more complete understanding of a topic.
- Identify key and relevant details on a single topic from two texts.
- Categorize key details from the two texts.
- Eliminate nonessential information.
- Combine information from two texts on a single topic.

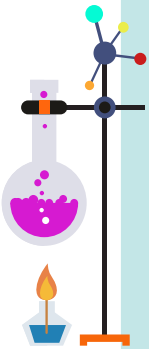


HELP AT HOME

- Have your child pretend to be a reporter and interview two people about a specific topic or major event (e.g., Hurricane Katrina, the events of 9/11).
- Then have your child write a newspaper article on the topic summarizing both points of view of the people he interviewed.

By the end of the year, your child reads and comprehends informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grades 4–5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

- Read a variety of informational texts.



HELP AT HOME

- Choose nonfiction books to read aloud with your child (e.g., biographies, autobiographies, books on specific events in history, science experiments, and technical texts). Explore unfamiliar words and phrases together. Write down questions your child has about the topics help him complete extended research to answer the questions.

Your child can apply grade level phonics and word analysis skills to decode words.

- Understand that letter sound correspondence can help determine the spelling of a word.
- Know grade level high frequency words.
- Apply spelling sound rules to determine an unknown word.

HELP AT HOME

- Print "Fry's High Frequency Word List" for your child's grade level and write them on index cards. You can play games with these words until your child has memorized them, taking just five words at a time.

FRY'S FOURTH 100-WORD LIST

LIST 1	body	questions	horse	knew	usually
	music	fish	birds	since	didn't
	color	area	problem	ever	friends
	stand	mark	complete	piece	easy
	sun	dog	room	told	heard
LIST 2	order	top	short	hours	measure
	red	ship	better	black	remember
	door	across	best	products	early
	sure	today	however	happened	waves
	become	during	low	whole	reached
LIST 3	listen	fast	five	true	table
	wind	several	step	hundred	north
	rock	hold	morning	against	slowly
	space	himself	passed	pattern	money
	covered	toward	vowel	numeral	map
LIST 4	farm	cold	sing	town	field
	pulled	cried	war	I'll	travel
	draw	plan	ground	unit	wood
	voice	notice	fall	figure	fire
	seen	south	king	certain	upon

Your child can read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.

- Understand grade level vocabulary.
- Determine how to read grade level words accurately and repeatedly.
- Read text with fluency and expression.
- Check for understanding of comprehension before, during, and after reading.

HELP AT HOME

- Have your child read a familiar poem or nursery rhyme to you. Encourage him to read it fluently and with expression. You can model fluency and good expression for your child.



VOCABULARY

FLUENCY is the ability to read words in the text effortlessly and accurately with meaningful expression.