



**Diocese of Joliet**  
Catholic Schools

# Fourth Grade Curriculum Guide for Parents

## Language Arts and Reading

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# **DIOCESE OF JOLIET CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Academic excellence is a pillar of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Joliet. To assist schools in maintaining academic excellence, the Catholic Schools Office has developed curriculum guides for grades preschool through eight. The purpose of the curriculum guide is to identify what we want our students to know and be able to do at the end of each grade based on Catholic faith standards and content standards. With these guides as a template, each individual school develops a plan to clearly articulate what is taught, how it is taught, and how student achievement is assessed for each grade.



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### CARDINAL NEWMAN STANDARDS

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Committee on Catholic Education released a [document](#) in 2014 to guide Catholic schools in their approach to educational standards. The Cardinal Newman Society responded to this call by creating the Cardinal Newman Catholic Curriculum Standards with support from more than eight Catholic universities and colleges.

This curriculum guide is aligned to those standards. The Cardinal Newman Catholic Standards for reading and language arts in this curriculum guide are:

#### Reading

- Analyze literature that reflects the transmission of a Catholic culture and worldview.
- Share how the literature can contribute to strengthening one's moral character.
- Analyze the author's reasoning and discover the author's intent.
- Use language as a bridge for communication with one's fellow man for the betterment of all involved.
- Accept and value how literature aids one to live harmoniously with others.

#### Language Arts

- Articulate how spiritual knowledge and enduring truths are represented and communicated through fairy tales, fables, myths, parables, and stories.
- Analyze the author's reasoning and discover the author's intent.
- Use language as a bridge for communication with one's fellow man for the betterment of all involved.
- Write in various ways to naturally order thoughts, align them with truth, and accurately express intent, knowledge, and feelings.
- Use grammar as a means of signifying concepts and the relationship to reason.
- Accept and value how literature aids one to live harmoniously with others.



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### **READING FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS**

The following standards outline what foundational skills of reading the Diocese of Joliet expects students to know and do by the end of Fourth Grade:

- Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words to accurately read unfamiliar words in and out of context.
- Use knowledge of letter-sounds correspondences in decoding words to accurately read unfamiliar words both in and out of context.
- Use knowledge of syllabication patterns in decoding words to accurately read unfamiliar words both in and out of context.
- Use knowledge of morphology (e.g., roots and affixes) in decoding words to accurately read unfamiliar words both in and out of context.
- Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
- Read on-level text with purpose and understanding.
- Read on-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings.
- Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.



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### READING LITERATURE

The following standards outline what the Diocese of Joliet expects students to know and do in reading literature by the end of Fourth Grade:

- Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- Determine a theme of a story, Bible story, drama, or poem from details in the text. Summarize the text.
- Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama. Use specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions). Include teachings of Jesus when appropriate.
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text or Scripture when appropriate, including figurative language and those words/phrases that allude to significant characters in the text.
- Explain major differences between poems, drama, prose, and scripture and refer to the structural elements of poems (e.g., rhyme, verse, rhythm) and drama (e.g., casts of characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) when writing or speaking about a text.
- Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations. Compare and contrast with Catholic values when appropriate.
- Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text including religious images, identifying where versions differ.
- 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 and link to Catholic teaching when appropriate.
- By the end of the year, read and comprehend grade-level literature representing a variety of genres that is reflective of diversity.



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### READING INFORMATIONAL TEXT

The following standards outline what the Diocese of Joliet expects students to know and do in reading informational text by the end of Fourth Grade:

- Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- Determine the main idea of a text including a Scripture passage when appropriate and explain how it is supported by key details. Summarize the text. Paraphrase the passage.
- Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, Biblical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text and reflect on Catholic teachings when appropriate.
- Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a Fourth Grade topic or subject area.
- 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.
- Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic. Describe the key difference in the perspective of the narrator and the information each account provides.
- Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.
- Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text. Critique the author's point of view from a Catholic perspective when appropriate.
- Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably. Link religious materials to other literary works when appropriate.
- By the end of year, read and comprehend grade-level informational texts, including religion, history/social studies, science, and technical texts.



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### WRITING

The following standards outline what the Diocese of Joliet expects students to know and do in writing by the end of Fourth Grade:

- Write **opinion pieces** on topics or texts (including but not limited to Catholic/religious topics), supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
  - Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer's purpose.
  - Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details.
  - Link opinion and reasons using words and phrases (e.g., for instance, in order to, in addition).
  - Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.
- Write **informative/explanatory texts** to examine a topic (including but not limited to Catholic/religious topics) and convey ideas and information clearly.
  - Introduce a topic clearly and group related information in paragraphs and sections; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful in aiding comprehension.
  - Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.
  - Link ideas within categories of information using words and phrases (e.g., another, for example, also, because).
  - Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
  - Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.
- Write **narratives** to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
  - Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
  - Use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.
  - Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events.
  - Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.
  - Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.



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### **WRITING (CONTINUED)**

**The following standards outline what the Diocese of Joliet expects students to know and do in writing by the end of Fourth Grade:**

- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience (include prayers and meditations).
- With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.
- With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of one page.
- Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
- Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.





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### LANGUAGE

The following standards outline what the Diocese of Joliet expects students to know and do in language arts by the end of Fourth Grade:

- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- Use relative pronouns (who, whose, whom, which, that) and relative adverbs (where, when, why).
- Form and use the progressive (e.g., I was walking; I am walking; I will be walking) verb tenses.
- Use modal auxiliaries (e.g., can, may, must) to convey various conditions.
- Order adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns (e.g., a small red bag rather than a red small bag).
- Form and use prepositional phrases.
- Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.
- Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., to, too, two; there, their).
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- Use correct capitalization.
- Use commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text.
- Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.
- Spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed.
- Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.



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### LANGUAGE (CONTINUED)

The following standards outline what the Diocese of Joliet expects students to know and do in language arts by the end of Fourth Grade:

- Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.
- Choose punctuation for effect.
- Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion).
- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on Fourth Grade reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
- Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- Use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., telegraph, photograph, autograph).
- Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- Explain the meaning of simple similes and metaphors (e.g., as pretty as a picture) in context.
- Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs.
- Demonstrate understanding of words by relating them to their opposites (antonyms) and to words with similar but not identical meanings (synonyms).
- Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).



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### **SPEAKING & LISTENING**

**The following standards outline what the Diocese of Joliet expects students to know and do in speaking and listening by the end of Fourth Grade:**

- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led), building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- Prepare for discussions (having read or studied required material); explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.
- Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles.
- Pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information, and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to the remarks of others in a respectful manner.
- Review the key ideas expressed and explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.
- Paraphrase portions of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
- Identify the reasons and evidence a speaker provides to support particular points.
- Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience including but not limited to Catholic/religious topics, in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes. Speak clearly at an understandable pace.
- Add audio recordings and visual displays to presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.
- Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion); use formal English when appropriate to task and situation.