



Diocese of Joliet
Catholic Schools

Kindergarten Curriculum Guide for Parents

Language Arts and Reading

For additional information, please contact:

Diocese of Joliet Catholic Schools Office

16555 Weber Rd, Crest Hill, IL 60403

Phone: (815) 221-6100

Web Site: <https://www.diojoliet.org/>



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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

- Identify examples of noble characteristics in stories with virtuous heroes and heroines.
- Identify the causes underlying why people do the things they do.
- Analyze how literature assists in the ability to make judgments about what is true, what is false, and to make choices based on these judgments.
- Use imagination to create dialogue between the readers and the characters in a story.

Language Arts

- Recite prayers and poems of substance that encourage all to strive for virtue and goodness.
- Use imagination to create dialogue between the readers and the characters in a story.
- 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.
- Share beautifully told and well-crafted works, especially those with elements of unity, harmony, and radiance of form.
- Share how literature ignites the creative imagination in healthy ways.
- Delight and wonder through reading of creative, sound, and healthy stories, poems, and plays.
- Share how beauty and cadence of poetry impacts human sensibilities and forms the soul.



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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 Kindergarten:

- Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.
- Follow words from left to right, top to bottom, and page by page.
- Recognize that spoken words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters.
- Understand that words are separated by spaces in print.
- Understand that letters are put together to make words and words are put together to make sentences.
- Recognize and name all uppercase and lowercase letters of the alphabet.
- Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).
- Recognize and produce rhyming words
- Count, pronounce, blend, and segment syllables in spoken words.
- Blend and segment onsets and rhymes of single-syllable spoken words.
- Isolate and pronounce the initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in three-phoneme (consonant-vowel- consonant or CVC) words. (This does not include CVCs ending with /l/, /r/, or /x/.)
- Add or substitute individual sounds (phonemes) in simple, one-syllable words to make new words.
- Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
- Demonstrate basic knowledge of one-to-one letter-sound correspondences by producing the primary and many of the most frequent sounds for each consonant.
- Associate the long and short sounds with common spellings (graphemes) for the five major vowels.
- Demonstrate the ability to read common high-frequency words by sight (use norm-referenced assessment lists).
- Distinguish between similarly spelled words by identifying the sounds of the letters that differ.
- Read emergent-reader texts with purpose and understanding.



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READING LITERATURE & INFORMATIONAL TEXT

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

- With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- For LITERATURE: With prompting and support, retell familiar and favorite stories, including key details. The retell should be in the correct sequence including beginning, middle, and end with prompting and support.
- For LITERATURE: With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story.
- For INFORMATIONAL TEXT: With prompting and support, identify the main topic of the text and retell key details in the text.
- For INFORMATIONAL TEXT: With prompting and support, describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.
- With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.
- Recognize common types of texts (e.g., Bible stories, storybooks, poems, fiction, realistic fiction, fantasy, fairy tales, nursery rhymes, all fiction genres, etc.)
- Identify the front cover, back cover, and title page of a book.
- With prompting and support, name the author and illustrator of a story and define the role of each in telling the story.
- Name the author and illustrator of a text and define the role for each.
- For informational text, define the role of each in presenting the ideas or information in a text.
- With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear (e.g., LITERATURE: what moment in a story an illustration depicts, or INFORMATIONAL TEXT: what the person, place, thing, or idea in the text and illustration depicts).
- With prompting and support, compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories, including Bible/religious stories.
- With prompting and support, identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text (may include religious text).
- With prompting and support, identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).
- Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.



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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 Kindergarten:

- With prompting and support, use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces in which they tell a reader the topic or the name of the book they are writing about and state an opinion or preference about the topic or book.
- With prompting and support, use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic (may include Catholic teaching/values).
- With prompting and support, use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.
- With prompting and support, respond to questions and suggestions from peers and add details to strengthen writing as needed.
- With prompting and support, explore a variety of traditional and digital tools to produce and publish writing, including collaboration with peers (may include Catholic beliefs and values).
- With prompting and support, participate in shared research and writing projects.
- With prompting and support, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.



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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 Kindergarten:

- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- Print all uppercase and lowercase letters.
- Use frequently occurring nouns and verbs.
- Form regular plural nouns orally by adding /s/ or /es/ (e.g., dog, dogs; wish, wishes).
- Understand and use question words (interrogatives) (e.g., who, what, where, when, why, how).
- Use the most frequently occurring prepositions (e.g., to, from, in, out, on, off, for, of, by, with).
- Produce and expand complete sentences in shared language activities.
- Recognize that letters are grouped to form words.
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- Capitalize the first word in a sentence and the pronoun “I”.
- Recognize and name end punctuation.
- Write a letter or letters for most consonant and short-vowel sounds (phonemes).
- Spell simple words phonetically, drawing on knowledge of sound-letter relationships.
- Understand that words are separated by spaces in print.
- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on kindergarten reading and content.
- Identify new meanings for familiar words and apply them accurately (e.g., knowing “duck” is a bird and learning the verb “to duck”).
- Use the most frequently occurring inflections and affixes (e.g., -ed, -s, re-, un-, pre-, -ful, -less) as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word.
- With guidance and support from adults, explore word relationships and nuances in word meanings.
- Sort common objects into categories (e.g., shapes, foods) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent.
- Demonstrate understanding of frequently occurring verbs and adjectives by relating them to their opposites (antonyms).
- Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., note places at school that are colorful).
- Distinguish shades of meaning among verbs describing the same general action (e.g., walk, march, strut, prance) by acting out the meanings.
- Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts.



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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 Kindergarten:

- Participate in collaborative conversations with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
- Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others with kindness, taking turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion).
- Continue a conversation through multiple exchanges that is respectful.
- Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.
- Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.
- Describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail.
- Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.
- Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.