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Introduction

Background

The curriculum described in Foundation for the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum (1996) and in this curriculum overview for Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum: Grades 10–12, referred to hereafter as English 10–12 Overview, has been planned and developed collaboratively by regional committees for the Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation.

The Atlantic Canada English language arts curriculum has been developed with the intent of

- responding to continually evolving education needs of students and society
- providing greater opportunities for all students to become literate
- preparing students for the literacy challenges they will face throughout their lives
- bringing greater coherence to teaching and learning in English language arts across the Atlantic provinces

Pervasive, ongoing changes in society—for example, rapidly expanding use of technologies—require a corresponding shift in learning opportunities for students to develop relevant knowledge, skills, strategies, processes, and attitudes that will enable them to function well as individuals, citizens, workers, and learners. To function productively and participate fully in our increasingly sophisticated technological, information-based society, citizens will need broad literacy abilities, and they will need to use these abilities flexibly.

The Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum

The Atlantic Canada English language arts curriculum is shaped by the vision of enabling and encouraging students to become reflective, articulate, literate individuals who use language successfully for learning and communicating in personal and public contexts. This curriculum is based on the premise that learning experiences in English language arts should

- help students to develop language fluency not only in the school setting, but in their lives in the wider world
- contribute toward students’ achievement of the essential graduation learnings (See Foundation for Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum, pp. 5–9.)
This overview and associated course curriculum guides have been developed to support teachers in the implementation of the English language arts curriculum. It provides a comprehensive framework on which teachers of English 10–12 can base decisions concerning learning experiences, instruction, student assessment, resources, and program evaluation.

These guidelines:

- recognize that language development at the grades 10–12 level is part of an ongoing learning process
- reflect current research, theory, and classroom practice
- place emphasis on the student as a learner
- provide flexibility for teachers in planning instruction to meet the needs of their students
- suggest experiences and strategies to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the learning and teaching process

English language arts encompasses the experience, study, and appreciation of language, literature, media, and communication. It involves language processes: speaking, listening, reading, viewing, and writing and other ways of representing.

Language is the principal means through which we formulate thought and the medium through which we communicate thought with others. Thus, language in use underlies the processes of thinking involved in listening, speaking, reading, viewing, writing and other ways of representing. The application of these interrelated language processes is fundamental to the development of language abilities, cultural understanding, and creative and critical thinking.

Language is learned most easily when the various processes are integrated and when skills and strategies are kept within meaningful language contexts. The curriculum guide specifies that English language arts be taught in an integrated manner so that the interrelationship between and among the language processes will be understood and applied by students. This integrated approach should be based on students’ prior experiences with language and on meaningful activities involving speaking, listening, reading, viewing, writing and other ways of representing.

The English language arts curriculum engages students in a range of experiences and interactions with a variety of texts designed to help them develop increasing control over the language processes, to use and respond to language effectively and purposefully, and to understand why language and literacy are so central to their lives.
Principles Underlying the English Language Arts Curriculum

- Language is a primary instrument of thought and the most powerful tool students have for developing ideas and insights, for giving significance to their experiences and for making sense of both their world and their possibilities within it.
- Language learning is an active process of constructing meaning, drawing on all sources and ways of knowing.
- Language learning is personal and intimately connected to individuality.
- Language expresses cultural identity.
- Language learning develops out of students' home language and their social and cultural experiences.
- Language learning is developmental: students develop flexibility and fluency in their language use over time.
- Language is best learned when it is integrated: all the language processes are interrelated and interdependent.
- Language is learned holistically. Students best understand language concepts in context rather than in isolation.
- Students learn language through purposeful and challenging experiences designed around stimulating ideas, concepts, issues and themes that are meaningful to them.
- Students learn best when they are aware of the strategies and processes they use to construct meaning and to solve information-related problems.
- Students need frequent opportunities to assess and evaluate their own learning and performance.
- In the process of learning, students need various forms of feedback from peers, teachers and others—at school, at home, and in the community.
- Language learning is continual and multidimensional: it can best be assessed by the use of multiple types of evidence that reflect authentic language use over time.
- Students must have opportunities to communicate in various modes what they know and are able to do.
- Assessment must be an integral and ongoing part of the learning process itself, not limited to final products.

Meeting the Needs of All Students

This curriculum is inclusive and is designed to help all learners reach their potential through a wide variety of learning experiences. The curriculum seeks to provide equally for all learners and to ensure, insofar as possible, equal entitlements to learning opportunities.

The development of students' literacy is shaped by many factors including gender, social and cultural backgrounds, and the extent to which individual needs are met. In designing learning experiences for students, teachers should consider the learning needs, experiences, interests, and values of all students.
In recognizing and valuing the diversity of students, teachers might consider ways to

- provide a climate and design learning experiences to affirm the dignity and worth of all learners in the classroom community
- redress educational disadvantage—for example, as it relates to students living in poverty
- model the use of inclusive language, attitudes, and actions supportive of all learners
- adapt classroom organization, teaching strategies, assessment strategies, time, and learning resources to address learners’ needs and build on their strengths
- provide opportunities for learners to work in a variety of learning contexts, including mixed-ability groupings
- identify and respond to diversity in students’ learning styles
- build on students’ individual levels of knowledge, skills, and attitudes
- design learning and assessment tasks that draw on learners’ strengths
- ensure that learners use strengths as a means of tackling areas of difficulty
- use students’ strengths and abilities to motivate and support learning
- offer multiple and varied avenues to learning
- celebrate the accomplishment of learning tasks that learners believed were too challenging for them

In a supportive learning environment, male and female students receive equitable access to resources, including the teacher’s time and attention, technology, learning assistance, and a range of roles in group activities. It is important that the curriculum reflect the experiences and values of both male and female students and that texts and other learning resources include and reflect the interests, achievements, and perspectives of males and females.

Both male and female students are disadvantaged when oral, written, and visual language creates, reflects, and reinforces gender stereotyping. Through critical examination of the language of a range of texts, students can discover what texts reveal about attitudes toward gender roles and how these attitudes are constructed and reinforced.

Teachers promote gender equity in their classrooms when they

- articulate equally high expectations for male and female students
- provide equal opportunity for input and response from male and female students

A Gender-Inclusive Curriculum
INTRODUCTION

• model gender-fair language and respectful listening in all their interactions with students

Valuing Social and Cultural Diversity

Social and cultural diversity is a resource for expanding and enriching the learning experiences of all students. Students can learn much from the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives of their classmates in a community of learners where participants discuss and explore their own and others’ customs, histories, traditions, values, beliefs, and ways of seeing and making sense of the world. In reading, viewing, and discussing a variety of texts, students from different social and cultural backgrounds can come to understand each other’s perspectives, to realize that their ways of seeing and knowing are not the only ones possible, and to probe the complexities of the ideas and issues they are examining.

All students need to see their lives and experiences reflected in literature. To grow as readers and writers, students need opportunities to read and discuss the literature of their own and other cultures— to explore, for example, the differing conventions for storytelling and imaginative writing. Learning resources should include a range of texts that allows students to hear diverse social and cultural voices, to broaden their understanding of social and cultural diversity, and to examine the ways language and literature preserve and enrich culture.

English as a Second Language (ESL) Students

Students from language backgrounds other than English add valuable language resources and experiences to the classroom. The first language, prior knowledge, and culture of ESL students should be valued, respected, and, whenever possible, incorporated in the curriculum. The different linguistic knowledge and experience of ESL students can be used to extend the understanding of linguistic diversity of all students in the class.

While ESL students should work toward achievement of the same curriculum outcomes as other students, they may approach the outcomes differently and may at times be working with different learning resources at different levels and in a different timeframe from other students.

The learning environment and classroom organization should affirm cultural values to support ESL students and provide opportunities for individual and group learning. It is especially important for these students to have access to a range of learning experiences, including opportunities to use language for both formal and informal purposes.
Teachers may need to make explicit the ways in which different forms, styles, and registers of English are used for many different purposes. It is particularly important that ESL students make connections between their learning in English language arts and other curricular areas, and use learning contexts in other subjects to practise, reinforce, and extend their language skills.

**Students with Special Needs**

**Students with Language and Communication Difficulties**

The curriculum outcomes statements in this guide are considered important for all learners and provide a framework for a range of learning experiences for all students, including students who require individual program plans.

Some students may need specialized equipment such as braillers, magnification aids, word processors with spell checkers, and other computer programs plus peripherals such as voice synthesizers or large print to help achieve outcomes. Speaking and listening outcomes can be understood to include all forms of verbal and non-verbal communication including sign language and communicators.

Teachers should adapt learning contexts to provide support and challenge for all students, using the continuum of curriculum outcomes statements in a flexible way to plan learning experiences appropriate to students' learning needs. When specific outcomes are not attainable or appropriate for individual students, teachers can use statements of general curriculum outcomes, key-stage curriculum outcomes, and specific curriculum outcomes for previous and subsequent grade levels as reference points in setting learning goals for those students.

Diverse learning experiences, teaching and learning strategies, motivation, resources, and environments provide expanded opportunities for all learners to experience success as they work toward the achievement of outcomes. Many of the suggestions for teaching and learning in this guide provide access for a wide range of learners, simultaneously emphasizing both group support and individual activity. Similarly, the suggestions for using a variety of assessment practices provide diverse and multiple ways for students to demonstrate their achievements. Teachers may also find it helpful to refer to guides for other grade levels for additional teaching, learning, and assessment suggestions to serve and support students with special needs.
The curriculum's flexibility with regard to the choice of texts offers opportunity for supporting students who have language difficulties. Students at the lower end of the achievement continuum in a class need appropriate opportunities to show what they can do. For example, in working toward a particular outcome, students who cannot operate very successfully with particular texts should be given opportunities to demonstrate whether they can operate successfully with alternative activities or alternative texts—ones that are linguistically less complex or with which they might be more familiar in terms of the context and content.

Students with special needs benefit from a variety of grouping arrangements that allow optimum opportunities for meaningful teacher-student and student-student interaction. Diverse groupings include the following:

- large-group or whole-class instruction
- teacher-directed small-group instruction
- small-group learning
- co-operative learning groups
- one-to-one teacher-student instruction
- independent work
- partner learning
- peer or cross-age tutors

**Gifted and Talented Students**

The curriculum outcomes described in this guide provide goals and challenges for all students, including gifted and talented learners. Teachers should adapt learning contexts to stimulate and extend the learning of these students, using the continuum of curriculum outcomes statements to plan challenging learning experiences. For example, students who have already achieved the specific curriculum outcomes designated for their specific grade level(s) can work toward achieving outcomes designated for the next.

In designing learning tasks for advanced learners, teachers should consider ways that students can extend their knowledge base, thinking processes, learning strategies, self-awareness, and insights. These learners also need significant opportunities to use the general curriculum outcomes framework to design their own learning experiences that they may undertake individually or with learning partners.

Many of the suggestions for teaching and learning provide contexts for acceleration and enrichment—for example, the emphasis on
experiment, inquiry, and critical perspectives. The curriculum's flexibility with regard to the choice of texts also offers opportunity for challenge and extension to students with special language abilities.

Gifted and talented students need opportunities to work in a variety of grouping arrangements, including both mixed-ability and similar-ability co-operative learning groups, interest groups, and partner learning.

Learning Preferences

Students have many ways of learning, knowing, understanding, and creating meaning. Research into the links between learning styles and preferences and the physiology and function of the brain has provided educators with useful concepts on the nature of learning. Howard Gardner, for example, identifies seven broad frames of mind or intelligences: linguistic, logical/mathematical, visual/spatial, body/kinesthetic, musical, inter-personal, and intra personal. Gardner believes that each learner has a unique combination of strengths and weaknesses in these seven areas, but that all of them can be more fully developed through diverse learning experiences. Other researchers and education psychologists use different descriptors to categorize learning preferences.

How students receive and process information and the ways in which they interact with peers and their environment are indicated by and contribute to their preferred learning styles. Most learners have a preferred learning style, depending on the situation and the type of information the student is dealing with, just as most teachers have a preferred teaching style. By reflecting on their own styles and preferences as learners and as teachers in various contexts, teachers can

• build on their own teaching-style strengths
• develop awareness and expertise in different learning and teaching styles
• recognize differences in student preferences
• vary teaching strategies to accommodate the different ways students learn

Learning experiences and resources that engage students' multiple ways of understanding allow them to focus on their learning processes and preferences. To enhance their opportunities for learning success, students need

• a variety of learning experiences to accommodate their diverse learning styles and preferences
opportunities to reflect on their preferences and understand how they learn best
opportunities to explore, experiment with, and use learning styles other than those they prefer
opportunities to reflect on other factors that affect their learning—environmental, emotional, sociological, physical
a flexible time line within which to complete their work

Engaging All Students

One of the greatest challenges to teachers is engaging students who feel alienated from learning in English language arts and from learning in general—students who lack confidence in themselves as learners, who have a potential that has not yet been realized. Among them are students who seem unable to concentrate, who lack everyday motivation for academic tasks, who rarely do homework, who fail to pass in assignments, who choose to remain on the periphery of small-group work, who cover up their writing attempts fearing the judgements of peers, who are mortified if asked to read aloud, and who keep their opinions to themselves. These students are significantly delayed when it comes to reading, writing, and relating. Some, though not all, exhibit behaviours in classrooms that further distance them from learning. Others are frequently absent from classes. Cumulatively, these are the disengaged students.

These students need essentially the same experiences as their peers in the area of English language arts—experiences that
- engage students in authentic and worthwhile communication situations
- allow them to construct meaning and connect and collaborate and communicate with each other
- form essential links between the world of the text and their own world
- give them a sense of ownership of learning and assessment tasks

They need additional experiences as well—experiences designed to engage them personally and meaningfully, to make their learning pursuits relevant. They need substantial support in reading and writing. They need positive and motivational feedback. They need all of these experiences within purposeful and interactive learning contexts. Ultimately, the English language arts curriculum for these students should prepare them for the world they will go into after high school completion.
Preparing students means engaging them with texts and with people from whom they can learn more about themselves and their world. Many of these students feel insecure about their own general knowledge and are reluctant to take part in class discussions, deferring to their peers who seem more competent. Through the English language arts curriculum, the students described above must find their own voice. The learning environment must be structured in such a way that these students, alongside their peers, develop confidence and gain access to information and to community, and develop competence with using language for real purposes.

The greatest challenge in engaging these learners is finding an appropriate balance between supporting their needs by structuring opportunities for them to experience learning success and challenging them to grow as learners. Teachers need to have high expectations for all students and to articulate clearly these expectations.

Establishing Community

A supportive environment is crucial for students who lack confidence in themselves as learners. If a true community of learners is to be created, teachers need to demonstrate a valuing of all learners, emphasizing that diversity enhances everyone’s experience of learning. It is crucial that this happen very early in the school year and that it be continually reinforced. This kind of early intervention is vital for those students who tend not to readily engage in the lesson.

If a climate sensitive and responsive to the needs of all students is to be created, the students must come to know one another. This builds the base for peer partnerships, tutoring, sharing, and various other collaborative efforts. Through mini-lessons, workshops, and small-group dynamic exercises during initial classes, knowledge is shared about individual learning styles, interpersonal skills, and team building.

It is necessary that the teacher’s role, as facilitator, be a very active one. The teacher circulates through the room, attending to the vocal and the silent members of each group, modelling ways of drawing everyone into the dialogue as well as ways of respecting and valuing each person’s contribution, making mental notes about students to conference with them later on an individual basis.

Whenever there is a level of comfort and trust within a class, built on supportive teacher-student and student-peer relationships, the probability of the learner’s engagement is multiplied. Having
established community within the classroom, the teacher and the
students together make decisions as to appropriate groupings for
various activities. Flexibility is important for all students. It is
especially important for students who need extra support.
Whether students are working as a whole class, in small groups,
pairs, triads, or individually, teachers should consider the
following in terms of supporting the potentially disengaged:

• Ask for students’ opinions on relatively safe topics (at first)
during whole-class discussion, demonstrating that the teacher
is confident the student has something worthwhile to say on
the topic.
• Guide peers to field questions evenly around the group.
• Encourage questioning, never assuming prior knowledge on a
given topic.
• Select partners for students and also encourage students to select
different partners for different reasons—for example, when
students are revising written work, students could be selected who
will teach/share their understandings.
• Help students to establish a comfort zone, a small group in which
they will be willing to speak and take some learning risks.
• Observe students within a group, get to know their strengths, and
conference with them about the roles for which they feel most
suited.
• Assist students to move beyond their comfort zone and out of one
role into another.
• Allow students to work alone, if they choose, so long as they still
benefit from some group experience.
• Conference with students to provide mini-lessons or strategy
instruction on a one-on-one basis or with other students who have
similar learning needs.

Learning environments for English language arts in grades 10–12 are
• participatory, interactive, and collaborative
• inclusive
• caring, safe, challenging
• engaging and relevant
• inquiry based, issues oriented
• places where resource-based learning includes and encourages the
multiple uses of technology, the media, and other visual texts as
pathways to learning and as avenues for representing knowledge

An important responsibility of the teacher is to create language-
rich environments in which learning takes place. The teacher
structures the learning situation and organizes necessary resources.
Assessing the nature of the learning task, the teacher may find that the situation calls for teacher-directed activities with the whole class, small groups of students, or individual students. Such activities include direct instruction in concepts and strategies and brief mini-lessons to create and maintain a focus for learning.

When students have developed a focus for their learning, the teacher moves to the perimeter to monitor learning experiences and to encourage flexibility and risk taking in the ways students approach learning tasks. The teacher intervenes, when appropriate, to provide support. In such environments, students will feel central in the learning process.

As the students accept more and more responsibility for learning, the teacher’s role changes. The teacher notes what the students are learning and what they need to learn, and helps them to accomplish their tasks. The teacher can be a coach, a facilitator, an editor, a resource person, and a fellow learner (for more detail about the teacher’s role, see Foundation for the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum, pp. 44–45). The teacher is a model who students can emulate, a guide who assists, encourages, and instructs the student as needed during the learning process. Through the whole process, the teacher is also an evaluator, assessing students’ growth while helping them to recognize their achievements and their future needs.

Learning environments for English language arts in grades 10–12 are places where teachers:

- integrate new ways of teaching and learning with established effective practices
- have an extensive repertoire of strategies from which to select the one most appropriate for the specific learning task
- value the place of dialogue in the learning process
- recognize students as being intelligent in a number of different ways and encourage them to explore other ways of knowing
- value the inclusive classroom and engage all learners in meaningful activities
- acknowledge the ways in which gender, race, ethnicity, and culture shape particular ways of viewing and knowing the world
- structure repeated opportunities for reflection so that reflection becomes an integral part of the learning process
Curriculum Outcomes

Introduction

This section provides
• information on the curriculum outcomes framework
• essential graduation learnings
• general curriculum outcomes statements
• key-stage curriculum outcomes statements
• an overview of the connection between essential graduation learnings and key-stage curriculum outcomes
• specific curriculum outcomes statements for speaking and listening, reading and viewing, writing and other ways of representing
• suggestions for teaching approaches, learning tasks and experiences, and assessment strategies and activities

Curriculum Outcomes Framework

Essential Graduation Learnings

Essential graduation learnings are statements describing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes expected of all students who graduate from high school, which are
• cross-curricular
• the foundation for all curriculum development
• found on pages 6–9 of the Foundation for the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum and page 15 of this curriculum guide

General Curriculum Outcomes

General curriculum outcomes are statements identifying what students are expected to know and be able to do upon completion of study in English language arts, which
• contribute to the attainment of the essential graduation learnings
• are connected to key-stage curriculum outcomes
• are found on page 14 of the Foundation for the English Language Arts Curriculum and page 16 of this curriculum guide

Key-stage Curriculum Outcomes

Key-stage curriculum outcomes are statements identifying what students are expected to know and be able to do by the end of grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 as a result of cumulative learning experiences in English language arts, which
• contribute to the achievement of general curriculum outcomes
Specific Curriculum Outcomes

Specific curriculum outcomes are statements identifying what students are expected to know and be able to do at a particular grade level, which

• contribute to the achievement of key-stage curriculum outcomes
• are found on pages 24–33 of this curriculum guide
Essential Graduation Learnings

Graduates from the public schools of Atlantic Canada will be able to demonstrate knowledge, skills, and attitudes in the following essential graduation learnings:

Aesthetic Expression
Graduates will be able to respond with critical awareness to various forms of the arts and be able to express themselves through the arts.

Citizenship
Graduates will be able to assess social, cultural, economic, and environmental interdependence in a local and global context.

Communication
Graduates will be able to use the listening, viewing, speaking, reading, and writing modes of language(s) as well as mathematical and scientific concepts and symbols to think, learn, and communicate effectively.

Personal Development
Graduates will be able to continue to learn and to pursue an active, healthy lifestyle.

Problem Solving
Graduates will be able to use the strategies and processes needed to solve a wide variety of problems, including those requiring language, mathematical, and scientific concepts.

Technological Competence
Graduates will be able to use a variety of technologies, demonstrate an understanding of technological applications, and apply appropriate technologies for solving problems.

Spiritual and Moral Development
Graduates will demonstrate understanding and appreciation for the place of belief systems in shaping the development of moral values and ethical conduct.
General Curriculum Outcomes

The general curriculum outcomes are the foundation for all English language arts curriculum guides. They identify what students are expected to know and be able to do upon completion of study in English language arts. Although the statements of learning outcomes are organized under the headings Speaking and Listening, Reading and Viewing, and Writing, and Other Ways of Representing, it is important to recognize that all these language processes are interrelated and can be developed most effectively as interdependent processes.

Speaking and Listening

- Students will be expected to speak and listen to explore, extend, clarify, and reflect on their thoughts, ideas, feelings, and experiences.
- Students will be expected to communicate information and ideas effectively and clearly, and to respond personally and critically.
- Students will be expected to interact with sensitivity and respect, considering the situation, audience, and purpose.

Reading and Viewing

- Students will be expected to select, read, and view with understanding a range of literature, information, media, and visual texts.
- Students will be expected to interpret, select, and combine information using a variety of strategies, resources, and technologies.
- Students will be expected to respond personally to a range of texts.
- Students will be expected to respond critically to a range of texts, applying their understanding of language, form, and genre.

Writing and Representing

- Students will be expected to use writing and other forms of representation to explore, clarify, and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and learnings; and to use their imaginations.
- Students will be expected to create texts collaboratively and independently, using a variety of forms for a range of audiences and purposes.
- Students will be expected to use a range of strategies to develop effective writing and other ways of representing and to enhance their clarity, precision, and effectiveness.
Key-stage Curriculum Outcomes

Key-stage curriculum outcomes for the end of grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 reflect a continuum of learning. While there may appear to be similarities in outcomes across the key stages, teachers will recognize the increase in expectations for students according to

- the nature of learning language processes
- students’ maturity of thinking and interests
- students’ increasing independence as learners
- the complexity and sophistication of ideas, texts and tasks
- the level or depth of students’ engagement with ideas, texts, and tasks
- the range of language experiences and the repertoire of strategies and skills students apply to those experiences

The following key-stage curriculum outcomes describe what students will be expected to know and be able to do in English language arts by the end of grade 12. It should be noted that students work toward achieving these outcomes in grades 10 and 11, as well as in grade 12.

Speaking and Listening

By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to

- examine others’ ideas and synthesize what is helpful to clarify and expand on their own understanding
- ask discriminating questions to acquire, interpret, analyse, and evaluate ideas and information
- articulate, advocate, and justify positions on an issue or text in a convincing manner, showing an understanding of a range of viewpoints
- listen critically to analyse and evaluate concepts, ideas, and information
- interact in both leadership and support roles in a range of situations, some of which are characterized by complexity of purpose, procedure, and subject matter
- adapt language and delivery for a variety of audiences and purposes in informal and formal contexts, some of which are characterized by complexity of purpose, procedure, and subject matter
- respond to a wide range of complex questions and directions
- reflect critically on and evaluate their own and others’ uses of language in a range of contexts, recognizing elements of verbal and non-verbal messages that produce powerful communication
- consistently demonstrate active listening and concern for the needs, rights, and feelings of others
- demonstrate how spoken language influences and manipulates, and reveals ideas, values, and attitudes
- address the demands of a variety of speaking situations, making critical language choices, especially of tone and style
Reading and Viewing

By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to

• select texts to support their learning needs and range of special interests
• read widely and experience a variety of literary genre and modes from different provinces and countries, and world literature from different literary periods
• articulate their understanding of ways in which information texts are constructed for particular purposes
• use the cueing systems and a variety of strategies to construct meaning in reading and viewing complex and sophisticated print and media texts
• articulate their own processes and strategies in exploring, interpreting, reflecting on sophisticated text and tasks
• access, select, and research, in systematic ways, specific information to meet personal and learning needs
  - use the electronic network and other sources of information in ways characterized by complexity of purpose, procedure or subject matter
  - evaluate their research process
• make informed personal responses to increasingly challenging print and media texts and reflect on their responses
• articulate and justify points of view about texts and text elements
• critically evaluate the information they access
• show the relationships among language, topic, purpose, context and audience
  - note the relationship of specific elements of a particular text to elements of other texts
  - describe, discuss, and evaluate the language, ideas, and other significant characteristics of a variety of texts and genres
• respond critically to complex and sophisticated texts
  - examine how texts work to reveal and produce ideologies, identities, and positions
  - examine how media texts construct notions of roles, behaviour, culture, and reality
  - examine how textual features help a reader and viewer to create meaning of the texts
By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to

- use writing and other ways of representing to explore, extend, and reflect on
  - their experiences with and insights into challenging texts and issues
  - the processes and strategies they use
  - their achievements as language users and learners
  - the basis for their feelings, values, and attitudes
- use note-making strategies to reconstruct increasingly complex knowledge
- explore the use of photographs, diagrams, storyboards, etc., in documenting experiences
- make effective choices of language and techniques to enhance the impact of imaginative writing and other ways of representing
- produce writing and other forms of representation characterized by increasing complexity of thought, structure, and conventions
- demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which the construction of texts can create, enhance, and control meaning
  - make critical choices of form, style, and content to address increasingly complex demands of different purposes and audiences
- evaluate the responses of others to their writing and media productions
- apply their knowledge of what strategies are effective for them as creators of various writing and other representations
- use the conventions of written language accurately and consistently in final products
- use computer and media technology effectively to serve their communication purposes
- demonstrate a commitment to the skilful crafting of a range of writing and other representations
- integrate information from many sources to construct and communicate meaning
The following English language arts grade 12 key-stage curriculum outcomes are examples of outcomes that enable students to achieve the essential graduation learnings:

**Connections**

Graduates will be able to respond with critical awareness to various forms of the arts and be able to express themselves through the arts.

**Essential Graduation Learnings**

**Aesthetic Expression**

Graduates will be able to use the listening, viewing, speaking, reading, and writing modes of language(s) as well as mathematical and scientific concepts and symbols to think, learn, and communicate effectively.

**Communication**

Graduates will be able to assess social, cultural, economic, and environmental interdependence in a local and global context.

**Citizenship**

By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to

- use writing and other ways of representing to explore, extend, and reflect on their experiences with and insights into challenging texts and issues
- make effective choices of language and technique to enhance the impact of imaginative writing and other ways of representing
- reflect critically on and evaluate their own and others’ use of language in a range of contexts, recognizing elements of verbal and non-verbal messages that produce powerful communication

**Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes**

By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to

- consistently demonstrate active listening and concern for the needs, rights, and feelings of others
- read widely and experience a variety of literary genres and modes from different provinces and countries, and world literature from different literary periods
- respond critically to complex and sophisticated texts and examine how texts work to reveal and produce ideologies, identities, and positions

- ask discriminating questions to acquire, interpret, analyse, and evaluate ideas and information
- use the cueing systems and a variety of strategies to construct meaning in reading and viewing complex and sophisticated print and media texts
- produce writing and other forms of representation characterized by increasing complexity of thought, structure, and conventions
**Personal Development**
Graduates will be able to continue to learn and to pursue an active, healthy lifestyle.

**Problem Solving**
Graduates will be able to use the strategies and processes needed to solve a wide variety of problems, including those requiring language, mathematical, and scientific concepts.

**Technological Competence**
Graduates will be able to use a variety of technologies, demonstrate an understanding of technological applications, and apply appropriate technologies for solving problems.

By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to
- select texts to support their learning needs and range of special interests
- access, select, and research, in systematic ways, specific information to meet personal and learning needs
- use writing and other ways of representing to explore, extend, and reflect on the basis for their feelings, values, and attitudes

By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to
- ask discriminating questions to acquire, interpret, analyse, and evaluate ideas and information
- analyse thematic connections among texts and articulate an understanding of the universality of many themes
- use note-making strategies to reconstruct increasingly complex knowledge to evaluate the responses of others to their writing and media production

By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to
- use the electronic network, and other sources of information, in ways characterized by complexity of purpose, procedure, or subject matter
- use computer and media technology effectively to serve their communication purposes
- respond critically to complex and sophisticated texts and examine how media texts construct notions of role, behaviour, culture, and reality
Specific Curriculum Outcomes

Specific curriculum outcomes are statements that identify what students are expected to know and be able to do at a particular grade level. It is important to note that these outcomes represent a continuum of learning.

The curriculum should be balanced to provide wide-ranging experiences in each outcome through student participation in all aspects of the program.

The following specific curriculum outcomes form the basis of the six core English courses at the senior high level. They are provided here as an overview of the range of outcomes across the high school curriculum. Although the specific curriculum outcomes that follow are grouped according to language processes, it is recognized that classroom experiences develop these processes in an integrated manner.
Students will be expected to speak and listen to explore, extend, clarify, and reflect on their thoughts, ideas, feelings, and experiences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 10</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• examine the ideas of others in discussion to clarify and extend their own understanding</td>
<td>• follow-up on and extend others’ ideas in order to reflect upon their own interpretation of experiences</td>
<td>• examine others’ ideas and synthesize what is helpful to clarify and expand on their own understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• construct ideas about issues by asking relevant questions and responding thoughtfully to questions posed</td>
<td>• ask perceptive/probing questions to explore ideas and gain information</td>
<td>• ask discriminating questions to acquire, interpret, analyse, and evaluate ideas and information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• present a personal viewpoint to a group of listeners, interpret their responses, and take others’ ideas into account when explaining their positions</td>
<td>• address complex issues, present points of view backed by evidence, and modify, defend, or argue for their positions in response to opposing points of view</td>
<td>• articulate, advocate, and justify positions on an issue or text in a convincing manner, showing an understanding of a range of viewpoints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• listen critically to analyse and evaluate ideas and information in order to formulate and refine opinions and ideas</td>
<td>• listen critically to evaluate others’ ideas in terms of their own understanding and experiences, and identify ambiguities, and unsubstantiated statements</td>
<td>• listen critically to analyse and evaluate concepts, ideas, and information</td>
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</table>
Students will be expected to communicate information and ideas effectively and clearly, and to respond personally and critically.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 10</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• participate in a range of speaking situations, demonstrating an understanding of the difference between formal and informal speech</td>
<td>• use their awareness of the difference between formal and informal speech to interact effectively in panel discussions, formal debates, and other structured and formal situations</td>
<td>• interact in both leadership and support roles in a range of situations, some of which are characterized by complexity of purpose, procedure, and subject matter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• recognize that communication involves an exchange of ideas (experiences, information, views) and an awareness of the connections between the speaker and the listener; use this awareness to adapt the message, language, and delivery to the context</td>
<td>• effectively adapt language and delivery for a variety of audiences and situations in order to achieve their goals or intents</td>
<td>• adapt language and delivery for a variety of audiences and purposes in informal and formal contexts, some of which are characterized by complexity of purpose, procedure, and subject matter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• give precise instructions, follow directions accurately, and respond thoughtfully to complex questions</td>
<td>• ask and respond to questions in a range of situations, including those related to complex texts and tasks</td>
<td>• respond to a wide range of complex questions and directions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• recognize that oral communication involves physical qualities and language choices depending on situation, audience, and purpose</td>
<td>• critically evaluate others’ uses of language and use this knowledge to reflect on and improve their own uses of language</td>
<td>• reflect critically on and evaluate their own and others’ uses of language in a range of contexts, recognizing elements of verbal and non-verbal messages that produce powerful communication</td>
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OVERVIEW OF SPECIFIC CURRICULUM OUTCOMES: SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Students will be expected to interact with sensitivity and respect, considering the situation, audience, and purpose.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 10</th>
<th>Grade 11</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• demonstrate active listening and respect for the needs, rights, and feelings of others</td>
<td>• demonstrate sensitivity and respect in interaction with peers and others in both informal and formal situations</td>
<td>• consistently demonstrate active listening and respect for the needs, rights, and feelings of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- analyse the positions of others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• demonstrate an awareness of the power of spoken language by articulating how spoken language influences and manipulates, and reveals ideas, values, and attitudes</td>
<td>• discuss and experiment with some language features in formal, defined structures that enable speakers to influence and persuade audiences</td>
<td>• demonstrate how spoken language influences and manipulates, and reveals ideas, values, and attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• demonstrate an awareness of varieties of language and communication styles</td>
<td>• adapt language and communication style to audience, purpose, and situation</td>
<td>• address the demands of a variety of speaking situations, making critical language choices, especially of tone and style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- recognize the social contexts of different speech events</td>
<td></td>
<td>- express individual voice, enabling them to remain engaged, but be able to determine whether they will express themselves or remain silent</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Students will be expected to select, read, and view with understanding a range of literature, information, media, and visual texts.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 10</th>
<th>Grade 11</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• read a wide variety of print texts which include drama, poetry, fiction, and non-fiction from contemporary, pre-twentieth century Canadian and world writing</td>
<td>• read a wide variety of print texts recognizing elements of those texts that are relevant to their own lives and community</td>
<td>• select texts to support their learning needs and range of special interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• view a wide variety of media and visual texts, such as broadcast, journalism, film, television, advertising, CD-ROM, Internet, music videos</td>
<td>• view a wide variety of media and visual texts, comparing and analysing the structure, genre, style, and cultural diversity of the different texts</td>
<td>• read widely and experience a variety of literary genre and modes from different provinces and countries, and world literature from different literary periods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• seek meaning in reading, using a variety of strategies such as cueing systems, utilizing prior knowledge, analysing, inferring, predicting, synthesizing, and evaluating</td>
<td>• assess ideas, information, and language, synthesizing and applying meaning from diverse and differing perspectives</td>
<td>• articulate their understanding of ways in which information texts are constructed for particular purposes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• use specific strategies to clear up confusing parts of a text (e.g., reread/review the text, consult another source, ask for help) and adjust reading and viewing rate (e.g., skimming, scanning, reading/viewing for detail) according to purpose</td>
<td>• demonstrate an understanding of and apply the strategies required to gain information from complex print texts and multimedia texts</td>
<td>• use the cueing systems and a variety of strategies to construct meaning in reading and viewing complex and sophisticated print and media texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• demonstrate an understanding of impact literary devices and media techniques (editing, symbolism, imagery, figurative language, irony, etc.) have on shaping the understanding of a text</td>
<td>• articulate their understanding of the purpose of the author in relation to the impact of literary devices and media techniques on the reader or viewer</td>
<td>• articulate their own processes and strategies in exploring, interpreting, and reflecting on sophisticated texts and tasks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students will be expected to interpret, select, and combine information using a variety of strategies, resources, and technologies.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Grade 10</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• research, in systematic ways, specific information from a variety of sources</td>
<td>• acquire information from a variety of sources, recognizing the relationships, concepts, and ideas that can be utilized to generate student text</td>
<td>• access, select, and research, in systematic ways, specific information to meet personal and individual learning needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- select appropriate information to meet the requirements of a learning task</td>
<td>- select appropriate information from a variety of sources, making meaningful selections for their own purposes</td>
<td>- use the electronic network and other sources of information, in ways characterized by complexity of purpose, procedure, or subject matter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- analyse and evaluate the chosen information</td>
<td>- recognize and reflect upon the appropriateness of information for the purpose of making meaningful student text</td>
<td>- evaluate their research processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- integrate chosen information, in a way that effectively meets the requirements of a learning task and/or solves personally defined problems</td>
<td>- synthesize information from a range of sources, including the electronic network, to address a variety of topics and issues</td>
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</table>
Students will be expected to respond personally to a range of texts.

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<tr>
<th>Grade 10</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• articulate personal responses to text by expressing and supporting a point of view about the issues, themes, and situations within texts, citing appropriate evidence</td>
<td>• recognize and articulate the elements of information from a variety of sources that trigger personal responses</td>
<td>• make informed personal responses to increasingly challenging print and media texts and reflect on their responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• respond to the texts they are reading and viewing by questioning, connecting, evaluating, and extending</td>
<td>• make connections between the ideas and information presented in literary and media texts and their own experiences</td>
<td>- make connections between their own values, beliefs, and cultures and those reflected in literary and media texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• make thematic connections among print texts, public discourse, and media</td>
<td>• make connections among the themes, issues, and ideas expressed in various texts</td>
<td>- analyse thematic connections among texts and articulate an understanding of the universality of many themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• demonstrate a willingness to consider more than one interpretation of text</td>
<td>• demonstrate a willingness to explore multiple perspectives on text</td>
<td>- demonstrate a willingness to explore diverse perspectives to develop or modify their points of view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• justify points of view on various print and media texts</td>
<td>• articulate and justify points of view about texts and text elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• recognize and articulate feelings about ambiguities in complex texts, interpreting details and subtleties to clarify their understanding</td>
<td>- interpret ambiguities in complex and sophisticated texts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students will be expected to respond critically to a range of texts, applying their understanding of language, form, and genre.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 10</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- examine the different aspects of texts (language, style, tone, graphics, etc.) that contribute to meaning and effect</td>
<td>- recognize the commonalities and differences in form, structure, and ideas of various texts</td>
<td>- critically evaluate the information they access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- make inferences, draw conclusions, and make supported responses to content, form, and structure</td>
<td>- recognize how the artful use of language and the structures of genre and text can influence or manipulate the reader/viewer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- explore the relationships among language, topic, genre, purpose, context, and audience</td>
<td>- examine the relationships among language, topic, purpose, context, and audience</td>
<td>- show the relationships among language, topic, purpose, context, and audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- recognize the use and impact of specific literary and media devices (e.g., figurative language, dialogue, flashback, symbolism)</td>
<td>- examine the relationship of specific elements within and among texts</td>
<td>- note the relationship of specific elements of a particular text to elements of other texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- discuss the language, ideas, and other significant characteristics of a variety of texts and genres</td>
<td>- analyse the merits of the language, ideas, and other significant characteristics of a variety of texts and genres</td>
<td>- describe, discuss, and evaluate the language, ideas, and other significant characteristics of a variety of texts and genres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- respond critically to a variety of print and media texts</td>
<td>- respond critically to complex print and media texts</td>
<td>- respond critically to complex and sophisticated texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- demonstrate an awareness that texts reveal and produce ideologies, identities, and positions</td>
<td>- explore the diverse ways in which texts reveal and produce ideologies, identities, and positions</td>
<td>- examine how texts work to reveal and produce ideologies, identities, and positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- evaluate ways in which both genders and various cultures and socio-economic groups are portrayed in media texts</td>
<td>- reflect on their responses to print and media texts, considering their own and others' social and cultural contexts</td>
<td>- examine how media texts construct notions of roles, behaviour, culture, and reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- examine the different aspects of texts (language, style, tone, graphics, etc.) that contribute to meaning and effect</td>
<td></td>
<td>- examine how textual features help a reader and viewer to create meaning of the texts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students will be expected to use writing and other ways of representing to explore, clarify, and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and learning; and to use their imagination.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 10</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• use writing and other ways of representing to</td>
<td>• use writing and other ways of representing to</td>
<td>• use writing and other ways of representing to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- extend ideas and experiences</td>
<td>- explore, interpret, and reflect on their experiences with a range of texts and issues</td>
<td>- their experiences with and insights into challenging texts and issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- reflect on their feelings, values, and attitudes</td>
<td>- monitor the language and learning processes and strategies they use</td>
<td>- the writing processes and strategies they use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- describe and evaluate their learning processes and strategies</td>
<td>- record and assess their achievements as language users and learners</td>
<td>- their achievements as language users and learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- express their feelings, and reflect on experiences that have shaped their ideas, values, and attitudes</td>
<td>- the basis for their feelings, values, and attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• use note-making, illustrations, and other ways of representing to reconstruct knowledge</td>
<td>• use note-making strategies to document experience and reconstruct knowledge by</td>
<td>• use note-making strategies to reconstruct increasingly complex knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- paraphrasing</td>
<td>- explore the use of photographs, diagrams, storyboards, etc., in documenting experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- summarizing</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- using note cards, note-taking sheets, research grids</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- video or audio techniques</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• choose language that creates interesting and imaginative effects</td>
<td>• make informed choices of language and techniques to enhance the impact of imaginative writing and other ways of representing</td>
<td>• make effective choices of language and techniques to enhance the impact of imaginative writing and other ways of representing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students will be expected to create texts collaboratively and independently, using a variety of forms for a range of audiences and purposes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 10</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• demonstrate skills in constructing a range of texts for a variety of audiences and purposes</td>
<td>• construct increasingly complex texts using a range of forms to serve their purposes</td>
<td>• produce writing and other forms of representation characterized by increasing complexity of thought, structure, and conventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• create an organizing structure appropriate to the purpose, audience, and context of texts</td>
<td>• create a clear and coherent structure in various forms of writing and media production</td>
<td>• demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which the construction of texts can create, enhance, or control meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- select appropriate form, style, and content for specific audiences and purposes</td>
<td>- make informed choices of form, style, and content to address the demands of different audiences and purposes</td>
<td>- make critical choices of form, style, and content to address increasingly complex demands of different purposes and audiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- use a range of appropriate strategies to engage the reader/viewer</td>
<td>- use effective strategies to engage the reader/viewer</td>
<td>- evaluate the responses of others to their writing and media production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• analyse and reflect on others’ responses to their writing and audiovisual productions and consider those responses in creating new pieces</td>
<td>• use audience feedback in the process of writing and media production to improve the effectiveness of final products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students will be expected to create texts collaboratively and independently, using a variety of forms for a range of audiences and purposes.
Students will be expected to use a range of strategies to develop effective writing and other ways of representing and to enhance their clarity, precision, and effectiveness.

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<tr>
<th>Grade 10</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• demonstrate an awareness of what writing/representation processes and presentation strategies work for them in relation to audience and purpose</td>
<td>• apply a variety of writing/representation strategies to construct increasingly complex texts</td>
<td>• apply their knowledge of what strategies are effective for them as creators of various writing and other representations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• consistently use the conventions of written language in final products</td>
<td>• demonstrate control of the conventions of written language in final products</td>
<td>• use the conventions of written language accurately and consistently in final products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• experiment with the use of technology in communicating for a range of purposes</td>
<td>• make informed choices about the use of computer and media technology to serve their communication purposes</td>
<td>• use technology effectively to serve their communication purposes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• demonstrate a commitment to crafting a range of writing and other representations</td>
<td>• demonstrate a commitment to the skilful crafting of a range of writing and other representations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• use a range of materials and ideas to clarify writing and other ways of representing for a specific audience (e.g., graphs, illustrations, tables)</td>
<td>• integrate information from many sources to construct and communicate meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Senior High English Course Options

Students graduating from public schools in Newfoundland and Labrador will be required to complete a minimum of six (6) credits, three (3) courses from the core courses. Students who do not study a second language will be required to complete two (2) additional credits from the optional core courses. The list of English courses is as follows:

### CORE SENIOR HIGH ENGLISH COURSES
Students must have completed one (1) course at each level to graduate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic</th>
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<th>General</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L I</td>
<td>English 1201</td>
<td>L I English 1202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L II</td>
<td>English 2201</td>
<td>L II English 2202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L III</td>
<td>English 3201</td>
<td>L III English 3202</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### OPTIONAL SENIOR HIGH ENGLISH COURSES
If they do not study a second language, students must have completed one (1) of the following courses to graduate

- English 1200
- Writing 2203
- Literature 3206
- Theatre Arts 2205
- Language 3204
- Canadian Literature 3205
To challenge all students to develop their language abilities and knowledge base, a broad range of content is essential in *English Language Arts Curriculum: 10–12*. The following elements of the knowledge base for English language arts are all essential to the development of students’ competencies in English language arts and to their achievement of curriculum outcomes:

### Knowledge of and Experience with a Broad Range of Texts, Spoken and Visual as Well as Written

Although it is important that students study some texts in detail, it is essential that students have opportunities to understand and enjoy texts and to explore diverse works independently. Students also need opportunities to compare the ways in which ideas and information are presented in different media. These include:

- techniques of production
- interpretations
- social and cultural embeddedness and effects

### Knowledge about Language Strategies

Students need to build the repertoire of strategies they use in speaking, listening, reading, viewing, writing, and other ways of representing. Activities and experiences focus on helping students to develop, select, and apply appropriate strategies in interpreting and creating various types of texts. Rather than learning a single way of approaching a language task, students need to acquire a range of strategies and to know how to choose, apply, and reflect on those that best fit the language task or situation at hand.

As students build their repertoire of strategies, they will gain confidence and facility in responding to recognizable contexts, situations, or demands. This repertoire includes:

- speaking strategies such as tailoring information or tone of voice to a listener’s reaction
- listening strategies such as screening out irrelevant information
- reading strategies such as scanning information texts for selected topics, looking for keys and symbols when reading a diagram
- viewing strategies such as making predictions about plot in film and TV productions
- strategies such as notetaking, webbing, and outlining to explore, record, and organize ideas and information
- writing strategies such as deleting or adding words to clarify meaning, and rearranging sections of text to improve the organization of ideas
strategies for spelling unknown words such as using knowledge of word parts and derivations
strategies to assist small-group discussion such as inviting other group members to contribute, asking questions to help clarify others’ viewpoints, and volunteering relevant ideas and information
research strategies such as using subject/key word/author/title searches to identify and locate resources

It is essential that students have opportunities to examine and critique the properties and purposes of different texts and their social and cultural contexts and traditions. Students also need to know how to use this information as they engage in various language endeavours.

Areas of inquiry will include
- purposes: to plan, inform, explain, entertain, express attitude/emotion, compare and contrast, persuade, describe, experience imaginatively, and formulate hypotheses
- genre: novels, novellas, poetry, plays, short stories, myths, essays, biographies, fables, legends, comics, documentaries, and films
- forms: encyclopedia entries, instruction manuals, news reporting, advertising copy, feature articles, appeals, campaign brochures, memos, résumés, tributes, eulogies, obituaries, political speeches, and debates
- structure: approaches to organizing text; particular structural patterns; and how specific genres and forms are shaped and crafted, what characteristics and conventions they share, and wherein lies their uniqueness

In grades 10–12, students should extend their understanding of the processes, history, forms, and functions of language itself and of the visual and linguistic systems out of which texts are created. Aspects of study will include
- vocabulary
- grammar and usage
- spelling and punctuation
- rhetorical techniques
- stylistic devices
The Language Processes

Integrating the Language Processes

Speaking, listening, reading, viewing, writing, and other ways of representing are interrelated and complementary processes. It is important that teachers plan learning experiences that integrate all of the language processes, building on and extending prior experiences.

Drama, or publishing a school newspaper, for example, allows learners to work toward all the general curriculum outcomes by

• making connections among areas of knowledge and experience, both within English language arts and with other curriculum areas
• making critical and aesthetic decisions and choices as thinkers, speakers, listeners, readers, viewers, writers, and presenters
• developing skill and confidence in creative self-expression
• applying and communicating information and ideas in a purposeful way
• exploring and clarifying their own ideas and responses
• clarifying issues, including those that are emotional or controversial, by exploring the feelings, attitudes, understandings, and beliefs of others
• developing skill and confidence in working independently
• developing skill and confidence in working with others, in a variety of social roles and structures

English Language Arts Curriculum: 10–12 is based on the principle that language learning is active and social. Central to this learning process is the importance of talk (speaking and listening). Talk is the starting point and a major means of learning in the classroom. Through talk, students can express, adjust, rethink, reshape, validate, or reject ideas and information. Opportunities for talk will allow students to refine their thinking through exploration, clarification, and resolution of issues.

English Language Arts Curriculum: 10–12 will involve students in informal and formalized talk including public forums. Building upon the cornerstone of talk, English Language Arts Curriculum: 10–12 will increase students language awareness and facility. Students will have opportunities to formulate and articulate oral responses to various language experiences and to enrich their oral language through reading and listening to a variety of engaging and effective texts.
Speaking and listening are the main communication modes in everyday life. Speaking and listening are essential for relating to others and for effective participation in society. Furthermore, as students develop their speaking and listening abilities, they will become more proficient in writing and reading. The interdependence of these language processes has been demonstrated both in research and practice. Both teachers and students should recognize that speaking and listening are just as important as reading and writing and of particular importance in English 10.

The term *talk* integrates speaking and listening.

- Talk is the flexible interchange of ideas, feelings, and experiences created by the individuals participating in any talk event.
- Talk is the creation of verbal and non-verbal language in a social context.
- Talk includes exploration, questioning, giving of information, and the building of relationships.
- Through talk ideas are constructed and adapted.
- Talk is an immediate vehicle for mediation and resolution of conflict.
- The structures of talk are defined by the speaker’s communicative ability to respond meaningfully in the context of a social event.
- Talk is one of the most powerful tools in determining and developing individual and collective relationships as well as our social positions in the world.

Talking is more than communication. We need to talk in order to express ourselves, to reveal ourselves, and to identify ourselves.

Exploratory talk is important for questioning, suggesting solutions, reflecting on experience, and sorting ideas into a meaningful order. Learning experiences will include

- whole-class discussions
- co-operative groups
- one-to-one discussion
- student reports
- creating audiotape programs
- creating video cassette programs
- performing drama
- interviewing
- storytelling
- debating
Learning experiences in English 10–12 involve students in exploring the power and the resources of spoken English. In a supportive environment, where listening to others is expected and tolerance for others’ views encouraged, students should make use of oral language for exploration, co-operation, and communication. In such an environment, where risk taking is safe, individuals should grow more confident of their abilities, the group more supportive and tolerant of diversity. Gradually, all students should become clearer and more effective speakers as well as efficient and judicious listeners.

An Overview of Speaking and Listening: Grades 10–12

The structure of the speaking and listening component of the English language arts curriculum in grades 10–12 will be developmental in nature, progressing from talk for the individual to the individual as participant in the conversation of the world in a meaningful context.

Grade 10

The focus in grade 10 is on the role of informal talk in social contexts. Students will have opportunities to

- build on the speech of others
- recognize varying points of view
- adapt and modify ideas through conversation
- question, elaborate, and restate
- develop skills in mediating and resolving conflicts
- analyse their experiences in the context of their roles as participants in an act of talk

See the curriculum guides for English 1201 and 1202.

Grade 11

The focus in grade 11 is on the varieties and forms of social discourse in the context of varying social events and venues. Grade 11 also focusses on the development of skills in more formal talk. Students will have opportunities to

- develop awareness of the constructive elements of talk
- develop awareness of the subtleties and power of persuasive talk
- analyse the effect of individual positioning or social biases in conversation
- develop their skills in academic talk
- examine and analyse talk in media such as film, videos, and audiotapes
- examine the structures of formal debate and discussion

See the curriculum guides for English 2201 and 2202.
**Grade 12**

The focus in grade 12 is on talk in the global context and the power of speech in formal contexts. Students will have opportunities to

- examine the message and the intent of formal speech
- examine and analyse how the most formal of speeches such as parliamentary debate, oratory, and press releases/conferences, create forms for persuasion
- research and formulate an academic presentation
- participate in debates on complex global issues
- analyse, synthesize, refine, and produce speeches
- lead a discussion in social contexts
- become familiar with great speeches and orators and investigate the writing of speeches

See the curriculum guides for English 3201 and 3202.

**Reading and Viewing**

**Reading**

Literature continues to play an important role in the curriculum, alongside a variety of other texts that contribute to the development of literacy and critical thinking in our multimedia culture. *English Language Arts Curriculum: 10–12* will engage students in reading poetry, drama, and many varieties of prose. Literature selected for study should offer students a rich range of language models and demonstrate the power of language and the possibilities it offers for communicating ideas and experiences with eloquence and conviction. Such literature will also provide a source for vocabulary, idioms, images, and ideas for the students’ own writing.

In a student-centred classroom, approaches to the study of literature should focus on response-centred learning. The response-to-literature strategies suggested in *English Language Arts Curriculum: 10–12* will help students to learn to *read like a writer* and to understand the relationships among the reader, author, text, and context. Students will be encouraged to respond personally and critically to what they read, and to build upon the responses of others. In this way, learning is drawn naturally out of the students as they help each other move toward deeper awareness and insight, with judicious assistance and guidance, as needed, from the teacher.

Reading is essentially a problem-solving process in which the reader interprets or constructs meaning from a text by applying language knowledge and meaning-making strategies, as well as
personal experience. *English Language Arts Curriculum: 10–12* requires students to read often and to read a range of texts in order to develop their abilities to read increasingly complex and varied materials. *English Language Arts Curriculum: 10–12* should help students to develop increasingly sophisticated skills in understanding, appreciating, and evaluating what they read.

Learning experiences should help students develop a repertoire of strategies that enable them to negotiate an ever-growing array of genres, forms, and purposes. Instruction should focus on helping students to develop appropriate reading strategies for fiction and information texts, and to make appropriate cross-curriculum connections. For all students, understanding and appreciation of text are priorities over text analysis.

For students of all degrees of reading expertise, time must be made available for both intensive and extensive reading. Students should read a rich variety of texts including narrative genres and information and persuasive texts written by traditional and contemporary authors who represent a range of cultural traditions. Students should be allowed considerable freedom of choice in reading matter and be encouraged to develop and widen their own tastes in reading.

It is important that students have opportunities for tentative, exploratory reading. Reading should sometimes be an end in itself, while at other times it will lead to other activities such as discussion, writing, and drama. Students must have opportunities to reflect on their reading individually, in response journals or logs, for example, and in small-group situations in which they share insights, exchange opinions, and use dialogue and deliberation to express and discover meaning.

**Viewing**

The primary purpose of including viewing experiences is to increase the visual literacy of students so that they will become critical and discriminating viewers who are able to understand, interpret, and evaluate visual messages. Visual images pervade the world, and students need opportunities to study their impact and relevance in context.

Personal and critical responses to visual texts and the continued development of a sense of appreciation for visual communication are important components of *English Language Arts Curriculum: 10–12*. Texts will include still images (such as photographs, advertising, posters, cartoons), moving images (such as film and TV), and other technological and symbolic displays. As with
literature, students should have opportunities to appreciate masterpieces of visual communication.

Learning experiences will involve students in examining the role and influence of mass media and other visual arts in their lives. Students’ viewing experiences should help them to develop a repertoire of strategies that will enable them to negotiate meaning from an ever-growing array of mass media. Students will investigate how various mass media and visual arts have characteristic ways of conveying ideas and will examine the complex relationships between audiences and media messages. Students will also examine the nature and value of ideas presented through mass media and visual arts. Students will interpret, analyse, and evaluate visual information and apply it to new situations.

Reading and viewing are meaning-making processes. They include making sense of a range of representations including print, film, TV, technological, and other texts. Reading print texts has always been an essential component of English language arts curriculum and of other disciplines and is becoming increasingly important in a complex, global, information-based, technical society.

Graphic and visual messages also exert a powerful influence in an increasingly high-tech society, and students need to learn how the form, style, and language of visual texts communicate and shape ideas and information. For this reason English Language Arts Curriculum: 10–12 includes experiences that help students to interpret visual texts such as illustrations, charts, graphs, electronic displays, photographs, narrative and documentary films, and videos.

The Reading Process

Reading is a dynamic interactive process of constructing meaning by combining the reader’s prior knowledge with information in the text and within the context of the reading situation.

Comprehension is determined by two main sources of meaning: what the reader brings to the text and what the text brings to the reader. This is true for any reading situation, from functional to aesthetic. Comprehension of what is read can be developed only when the information to be conveyed is already partially known to the reader. In other words, the reader must possess language, information, and experience that can be applied to the matter read and utilized to construct meaning.
Learning experiences should be planned to help students
• recognize and use any prior knowledge that is pertinent to the reading task at hand
• see reading as a conversation with text
• realize the importance of their own ideas, perspectives, and purposes in reading, as in any communication situation
• activate relevant prior knowledge and bring it to bear on the reading task, constantly predicting; reading to confirm, modify, or discard predications
• think and talk about how they construct meaning as they read, paying close attention to the strategies they use to do so
• apply appropriate reading strategies to different situations, varying their approaches according to the nature of the text, their purpose for reading it, and their own knowledge and experiences
• articulate their interpretations and relate them to other experiences

Strategies

It is important that teachers provide focused instruction and explicit demonstration of reading and viewing strategies and ways to apply those strategies to various texts and learning tasks in other subject areas. The reading strategies students need to develop and use include the following:
• reading and viewing with a purpose
• generating their own questions before, during, and after reading and viewing
• using and integrating a number of sources of information to construct meaning
• visualizing and imaging during reading
• drawing upon their prior knowledge, connecting new items to items in their store of prior knowledge, and reconsidering and organizing new information in relation to their own prior knowledge
• drawing upon their interactions with other readers and viewers
• drawing upon their knowledge of word meanings and ways to construct and identify words
• drawing upon their knowledge of other texts and their understanding of textual features such as sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, and graphics
• predicting, adjusting predictions during reading and viewing, and evaluating predictions after reading and viewing
• effectively sampling visual information
• adjusting reading rate and approach, depending on purpose
• monitoring comprehension, focusing on meaning and
checking themselves to see if they are understanding
• resolving a lack of understanding
• reflecting on the meaning of print and visual texts from their own perspectives
• considering information and ideas from alternative perspectives
• identifying important concepts and recording important information about those concepts
• reviewing and retaining needed information and concepts
• applying appropriate strategies to a wide range of texts, including print and electronic texts characterized by complexities of structure and ideas

Instruction in Reading Process and Strategies

How teachers help students explore what might actually engage them as readers is a multifaceted task. Providing a wide range of texts is part of it, allowing for varied response is another aspect, and there is still another facet more fundamental. Teachers must be knowledgeable of the reading process and must be able to articulate information about how readers read to students who are not accessing print in constructive ways.

Not all readers think, on a conscious level, about how they construct meaning from print. English teachers should help students to become aware of the strategies they already use and demonstrate other strategies that they need to apply to help them grow as readers. These strategies will be most useful if teachers have first reflected on a conscious level about how they themselves operate as readers.

Most people who feel alienated from reading feel that way because they are too focussed on the words in the text. Efficient readers hear and/or see the characters and visualize the setting while struggling readers simply see the words.

Students should be made aware of the following strategies in order to create their own repertoire of strategies that work for them:

Visualizing/Imaging

Good readers take for granted that everyone creates pictures in his/her mind as they read. Many disengaged readers are completely unaware that this is something readers do and that good readers do it fairly automatically. Students can be encouraged and walked through a process of making movies in their minds. There is no one prescription on how to teach this strategy. The more shared experiences of reading there are, the more opportunities there will be for students to hear descriptions of the images their peers are
creating. Teachers need to prompt students as they share by modelling the sorts of questions that elicit vivid visualizations. Visualizing forces readers to make meaning from the words on a page. When students are cued to make movies in their heads, they are led into becoming meaning-makers. This is an important strategy to emphasize and reinforce.

**Self-Monitoring**

Students need to recognize when they become lost, to be aware of when their reading stops making sense. Self-monitoring can be explained in the simplest terms to students as learning to trust their *huh?* reaction, at which time they must stop their reading and reread so that it makes sense.

Strategies include rereading from the point where comprehension broke down, paraphrasing all the way along to make the text their own, hearing their own voice in their heads, jotting notes in their own style, and illustrating their own understandings.

Teachers should speak very directly to students about what reading is and is not. It is not reading page after page and chapter upon chapter of an information text expecting something to be absorbed. Nor is it reading a novel, expecting technicolour inspiration and relevance to be built in. Reading demands engagement. Disengaged readers often assume that their presence is all that is required; they view reading as a passive activity. It is this lack of understanding of what makes the process work that keeps them alienated from reading. Many weaker readers are puzzled by the fact that they read pages of words fluently, yet do not understand the concepts and do not remember the ideas.

Reading is an active process at all stages. It is what happens between the reader and the text when a reader is actively involved. Meaning is constructed within the individual from the interplay between the words or images on the page/screen and what is in the reader’s mind. A reader makes connections, interprets, visualizes, all in his/her own unique way based on prior knowledge and experiences. Classroom talk, modelling, and a range of shared reading experiences assist disengaged readers to reassess their prior assumptions about their own role in the process. With new knowledge of the process and a relevant text in their hands, their likelihood of engagement is heightened. There is a maturity quotient working as well with new readers at the secondary level; some seem ready to read for the very first time. These students require significant support both within and beyond the regular English language arts classroom.
Predicting

Class- and/or small-group discussions expose the disengaged reader to the inner dialogues of readers who are engaged. As avid readers share their involvement in books, as they think-aloud, predict, and wonder about what they are reading, their more reluctant peers often pick up on what others do in their heads. Teachers may choose to structure assignments for and/or direct questions to those students who are not thinking beyond what is given in print.

Think-Alouds

Teachers should demonstrate through think-alouds what they do as they read passages from particular novels or information texts. The teacher chooses a relatively short text but one with some challenging parts within it. As the teacher reads the excerpt aloud, the students follow along. The teacher interrupts her reading to make predictions, describe the pictures he/she is forming, share analogies/links to prior knowledge, verbalize confusing points, and demonstrate the strategies he/she uses to correct comprehension difficulties.

Students are asked to add their thoughts to the teacher’s meaning-making process. After several experiences with the teacher modelling the process, students are asked to practise with partners their own think-alouds. Finally, students are asked to continue the process independently using their own school materials of various types and lengths.

Making Decisions about Words

Students who experience difficulty reading often rely on a single strategy rather than choosing from a repertoire of strategies. They need to be shown that in different instances, efficient readers choose one strategy over another. It is important that teachers model for students the decision-making process that readers go through at the word/sentence level.

Students need to see that there are times when it is appropriate to leave words out, to substitute words, to guess at words and self-correct those guesses, to look words up in the dictionary or to ask someone. They need to be shown why and when one strategy works better than another. This strategy teaching can best be done through one-to-one shared oral reading experiences.
Supporting Students’ Development as Readers

To make students enthusiastic, lifelong readers, it is not enough to equip them with an arsenal of reading strategies. Teachers must create opportunities for students to select texts they want to read and to share their learning and enjoyment with others. Modelling desired behaviour and attitudes, the teacher should read with the students, occasionally reading aloud to them so that they can enjoy the beauty and the power of language.

Teachers need to assess the degree and kind of support necessary to help learners build and broaden their knowledge base for comprehending and interpreting written and visual texts. A high level of interest in the subject matter can make difficult texts accessible to eager readers and viewers; many students, however, will need help in coping with complex and sophisticated texts and tasks.

Students should realize that even the skilled reader experiences difficulty from time to time, whether because of limited prior knowledge, unfamiliarity with helpful strategies, or poorly written text. Through informal questioning or the use of analytical techniques such as cloze procedure and miscue analysis, the teacher can help the student identify a specific difficulty at hand. Reading difficulties should never be treated as evidence of a shameful deficiency. Recognition of the nature of the problem is the first step towards its solution.

Students must be helped to feel secure when reading: they must feel safe enough to hazard a guess, to make mistakes, to correct themselves without fear of failure or ridicule. Readers who have been made anxious and insecure in their reading are greatly hindered in their progress. Since a student’s self-concept and reading ability are closely related, reading activities must be designed to establish and reinforce in the student a positive self-concept, one marked by self-respect and openness.

Valuing Reading

When they find text is stimulating and inspiring, students have a compelling reason to read—to satisfy their curiosities, to answer their own questions, to fire their imaginations. It is important that students engage in activities that emphasize the joy as well as the usefulness of reading, to read for the lived-through experience as well as for information.

Students’ lifelong concepts of the function and value of reading are shaped by the reading they do in school. Thus students need to learn not only how to read (in the traditional sense of skills and strategies), but also why to read. Students bring to their learning
diverse experiences, interests, ideas, problems, worries, and attitudes, all of which preoccupy them. If the text touches on some of their preoccupations, then students have a reason to read: they will read because they are interested in themselves.

It is crucial that teachers provide students with opportunities to read widely for a variety of purposes in a variety of contexts, demonstrate what it means to be a reader, share their own responses to reading experiences, and consistently display the attitudes and values of reflective readers.

**Responding to Text**

Because the fluent reader constructs meaning by interaction with the text in a personal and individual way, a response-based approach is more compatible with the nature of the reading experience than is the answering of teacher-made or textbook questions. Articulating response to text increases the reader’s understanding of the text.

Personal response fuses talking, reading, viewing, writing and other ways of representing in an integrated and interactive process. By talking and writing and in response to text, students become engaged in the underlying processes of composing and comprehending. The use of reading conferences, response journals, dialogue journals, listening logs, and booktalks guides students to wider reading and more reflective writing. Personal response to text should include dramatic interpretations as well as expressive and exploratory talking and writing.

Critical response helps students see themselves as free to agree with the text, to accept only parts of the text, or to actively disagree with it. Thinking critically about text will help students to recognize and evaluate human experience as well as the text in which those experiences are represented. Learning experiences should provide opportunities for students to think about and question their own and others’ perspectives and to assume a critical stance towards events, circumstances, and issues.

**Encouraging Response**

The teacher’s role with all students in a response-based classroom is to elicit the fullest responses from students that they are able to give. The teacher must have high expectations for all students. Some students may need more support than others and may be drawn deeper into discussion through requests to explain more, to elaborate, and to share more fully. Teachers should provide positive feedback to even very brief responses if the content reveals
genuine effort and thoughtfulness. There may be one thread attesting to personal interpretation and understanding, and from there the student can be encouraged to expand his/her insight.

Providing students with choices about ways to respond brings forth better efforts than limiting their mode of response. Impressing upon students that they may choose the way to express their best efforts (their personal best) allows them to see that the teacher has confidence in their individual styles. Similarly, providing students with multiple opportunities to revise expressed thoughts, be they oral or written, minimizes fear of failure. Students should continually be in the process of creating, evaluating, and revising their own responses through reflection upon their own and others’ responses.

Teachers and students should recognize that silence may be a valid form of initial response—reflection takes time. Possible ways to respond include the following:

- dramatization
- drawing or illustrating
- writing a poem, a song, a script
- finding other related pieces on a theme/topic
- writing an entry in a response journal
- researching background information

Strategies for providing support include the following:

- pausing during read-alouds to invite response
- inviting students to retell/dramatize a story that others may not have understood so that all can then be on the same ground for discussion
- making posters of terms used to talk about text—for example, metaphor, symbol, plot, irony, voice, point of view
- providing opportunities for small groups of students to create maps/outlines/sets of questions to be used as tools to construct meaning from text
- providing students with words that might trigger response: boredom, laughter, longing, horror, hope, fear, despair, tension, imagining, affirmation, etc.

Students need to be rewarded for effort and participation because response is risk taking for them. The teacher’s role is to help students feel secure in their own response and interpretation by validating their responses and communicating to the class that people differ in experiences, in their concepts of things, and in their attitudes and interests. In this way, all responses become equal contributions.
Writing and Other Ways of Representing

Writing and other ways of representing ideas and information can take many forms. With the ever-increasing integration of electronic media, clear divisions between the processes of representing and writing are becoming difficult to define. With access to quality visual text provided by electronic technology, the ability to create in multimedia has become an important element in the development of literacy.

Students participating in a meaningful English language arts curriculum need to have exposure to numerous models of writing and representing. They also need a range of experiences in creating products for a variety of purposes in different forms of expression.

Writing

Writing is a complex process that involves the processes of thinking and composing, the consideration of audience and purpose, the use of standard written forms, and the use of conventions of written language. The writing process as a learning strategy will be fundamental to the students’ learning in all aspects of English Language Arts Curriculum: Grades 10-12. Students will have many opportunities to use writing as a tool for learning—for example, as a means for gaining insight, developing ideas, and solving problems.

Learning activities should build on writing experiences gained in prior grades. It is important that students have opportunities to write in many modes with genuine and varied purposes for real audiences—sometimes, only for themselves.

Although the process of writing is discursive rather than linear, it has general identifiable stages: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing. In planning learning experiences, teachers should recognize that the ways in which individual students work in and with these stages will vary. Instructional time must be made available for students, with the help of the teacher and their peers, to take at least some pieces of writing through all stages of the process.

In crafting their work, students must have structured opportunities to seek response and assistance in conferences with the teacher and their peers. Focussed discussion in such conferences is one of the most important parts of the writing process in helping students to adjust, clarify, and extend their thinking on specific aspects of writing.

Students need to have opportunities to write not only to be read by an audience, but also to be presented orally to an audience—
for example, in the form of monologues, speeches, plays, or seminars. Students need to become increasingly aware of how the competence, style, intent, or interpretation of the speaker can enhance, diminish, or change the meaning of written text.

Instruction on the conventions of written language should provide students with sufficient knowledge to revise and edit their writing for clarity, precision, and correctness. Instruction will also focus on how to manipulate conventions to achieve a particular effect or impact. Learning experiences will help students to understand how to match language and style to purpose, audience, and situation and to identify and meet the different demands of speech and writing.

As students move toward full membership in the community of writers, they will become less dependent upon the teacher: they will feel a sense of achievement in their work, be able to reflect on their writing more knowledgeably, and will take responsibility for their own personal growth as writers.

Students should keep individual writing folders, tracking their own progress as they become more mature and competent writers. Assessment must be ongoing throughout the writing stages, not only to provide a guide to the students as they progress, but also to confirm the importance of each stage in developing a final product of quality. Students will be required to select from their writing folders representative pieces to include in a writing portfolio for assessment purposes.

Essential Experiences

The English Language Arts Curriculum: 10-12 provides writing experiences in which learners

- use expressive, transactional, and poetic writing
- have regular opportunities to write for reasons stemming from their own interests and needs—on topics that they find meaningful, such as their own concerns and experiences
- make decisions about the form the writing will take, what information they will include, and the readers and listeners with whom they will share their writing
- make decisions about the pieces of writing they will put aside and those they will shape through several drafts
- have frequent opportunities to write in the first person
- write in role to explore others’ perspectives and voices
- develop an explicit knowledge of their own writing process for particular tasks
- develop an understanding of the conventions of written language and the appropriateness of their use
• make use of a range of conventions in creating texts for different audiences and purposes
• over time, make a collection of various pieces of writing and talk about their writing goals, progress, and achievements

Writing may emerge naturally and purposefully from any starting point, for example, in reaction to a point argued in class; in response to music, drama, poetry; in imitation of a model piece of writing.

What is often productive use of good ideas and interesting prose is to invite students to rewrite the ending of a short story, remaining true to the characterization, action and/or the style of the original. The teacher reads all but the last few paragraphs of this story, and the students, independently and in pairs, write their versions of the ending. Later the class will look at the alternative endings, including the original, trying to decide which one is the most effective and why. Not only does this assignment require careful listening to the reading of the original story, it also gives the student a solid base on which to construct an ending (complete freedom can be paralysing to student writers) and will call on the critical judgment of classmates as they argue the relative merits of proposed endings.

Expressive, Transactional, and Poetic Writing

Expressive writing explores one’s own experiences through experimenting with forms and words, catching a thought before it is crowded out by others, recording events important to oneself. In the classroom setting, sustained silent writing and journal writing are opportunities for personal writing. Writing for oneself is exactly that: it is not to be shared without permission, corrected by others, or held up for scrutiny.

Writing helps learners not only to explore and express their feelings and ideas but to rethink, reassess, and restructure them. Using writing to learn, as a thinking tool, is an important component of an English language arts program and of other disciplines. It is important that teachers provide abundant opportunities for students to use expressive writing.

Transactional writing is impersonal and structured. The writing is intended to accomplish a specific task for an intended audience. Transactional writing includes directions for games, recipes, or activities; recording and reporting on science and social studies; general narratives, letters of inquiry, rules, petitions, editorials, and arguments.
Poetic writing is writing that is a carefully patterned arrangement of the author’s feelings and ideas. Poetic writing includes stories, poetry, songs, and play scripts. The writing can stand alone as a work of art.

Students should be given many opportunities to engage in expressive and poetic writing as well as in transactional writing to ensure a well-rounded program.

Process

Writing is a process through which writers constantly hypothesize, rethink, and revise. In the beginning, writers may have only a general idea of the purpose for a particular piece of writing. As they write, ideas are gradually refined and such factors as form, audience, and conventions are taken into consideration. Writers constantly write, revise, and rewrite. Teachers can encourage and support writers throughout the process.

Students follow individual routes in their pursuit of writing competence. This competence is developed principally through the purposeful use of writing, not through exercises divorced from context. Competence is developed through writing that originates in some personal purpose rather than through exercises based on technical concerns.

Writing, reading, talking, and planning are essential for generating ideas and building upon prior knowledge. Teachers should encourage writers to discuss their initial ideas, to read or explore resources, and to develop a tentative plan for implementing their ideas.

Revising and editing are opportunities for further thought and clarification—not merely the ritual of recopying the text and correcting mechanical errors. An understanding and appreciation of paragraphing, variety in sentence structures, syntax, spelling, punctuation, and word order and usage lead to the improvement of individual style. Students should use the simplest words appropriate to the meaning; construct clear, easily understood paragraphs; enhance accurate, factual information with vigorous, effective writing; and avoid obscuring meaning by breaches of spelling and language conventions.

When proofreading and polishing pieces of writing are important to their purposes and audience, students should review writing line by line, often reading aloud, to make sure that each word, each mark of punctuation, and each space between words contribute to the effectiveness of the piece of writing.
As problems arise in their writing, students will need guidance in specific areas. At any point in the process of writing, students may need to confer with the teacher or with peers, or to consult reference works.

Characteristics of an Effective Writing Program

It is important that teachers write frequently with their classes, demonstrating the processes involved; discussing the specific purpose, the form, and the intended audience for the writing; and reinforcing students’ understanding that writing is not a linear process, but a recursive one. Understanding the stages involved in developing various pieces of writing helps students to become independent writers and to transfer this knowledge to different kinds of writing. Teachers should structure frequent opportunities for prewriting, drafting and redrafting, revising, editing, and proofreading. The amount of time spent on each activity should be determined by the kind and purpose of the writing task as well as by the students’ maturity and experiences.

Students will be expected to demonstrate increasingly complex levels of thought and imagination, as well as increasing fluency and competence. While the creation, exploration, and communication of ideas are paramount, teachers should plan learning experiences that promote students’ growth as capable and confident writers who recognize the need for legibility, precision, and clarity of expression, and who can manipulate the language, forms, structures, and conventions of writing to suit various writing tasks.

Supporting Students’ Development as Writers

Learners need frequent opportunities to select their own topics, to write for real audiences, to make decisions about content and style and form, and to use writing for purposes that are real and important to them. When writers write in a context that has personal significance, they reach for the necessary skills to explore both content and form.

Learners need to write in a positive, supportive environment so that they feel free to explore and experiment with a variety of forms and structures. They need to talk about and discuss their work, to share ideas in the initial exploratory stage of writing, to share their work in progress, to get feedback and revise accordingly, and to take responsibility for editing and proofreading. Good writing occurs in the completion of real tasks,
in the pursuit of real goals. Writing for an audience with whom
the writer genuinely wishes or needs to communicate tends to
improve motivation, performance, and quality.

Responding to students’ first-draft writing provides opportunities
for teachers to focus on meaning, content, and ideas; to encourage
risk taking with structures and techniques; and to model questions
and comments that help writers to clarify their ideas, consider
their options, and move ahead with their writing.

Whatever the technical proficiency of a student’s writing, the
teacher’s primary response should be to meaning; response only to
surface features of writing implies that meaning is less important
than mechanics. The conventions of written language are
important, but they should not eclipse meaning as the focus of
writing.

Teachers should provide students with focussed instruction in
specific skills, strategies, and techniques appropriate to the needs
of the individual. Instruction focussed on the conventions of
written language (including usage, spelling, capitalization, and
punctuation) should occur in appropriate contexts of meaningful
activities, including the editing and proofreading phases of formal
writing, related mini-lessons, and the analysis of engaging
literature and language models.

English Language Arts Curriculum: 10–12 recognizes the
importance of giving students options that allow them to
approach their learning and knowing in ways that will allow them
to unlock their full potential. The course offers students a range of
ways to create meaning. Forms and processes of representation
students use to explore and communicate their understandings
include, in addition to spoken and written language, visual
representation, drama, music, movement, and multimedia and
technological production.

Drama is an important component of English Language Arts
Curriculum: 10–12. Learning experiences will focus on the
examination, development, and articulation of students’ thinking
on a range of issues and will include role-playing and skill
building. Language and literature can be approached through
drama. Students should also have opportunities to develop their
skills in using language to accompany music and movement.
Experiences may integrate drama with other media in the writing
and crafting of productions, for example, the scripting of a
dramatic production specifically for videotaping.
When students are exposed to a variety of forms of expression, they have the opportunity to select ways other than print texts to express themselves and their thinking. Students need to be exposed to numerous media and visual texts. Through the examination of different forms of media, students can refine their thinking about the intent of the maker and the medium and the construction and genres or forms of media expression. Media texts can be viewed in the context of meaning, technical construction, issue, or historical perspective.

Students need opportunities to create meaningful expression in visual, media, and multimedia texts. These texts may take a variety of forms including

- video or film—TV or film drama, TV documentary, storyboard, animation framechart
- sound/voice presentation—radio interview, news item, documentary, play
- photography—audiovisuals, photo-essay, photo narratives
- illustrated text—figurative and literal interpretations
- painting, sculpture, collage, drawing—-independent of written text

Students also need opportunities to

- reflect upon their experiences with media texts—indeed independently or collaboratively in small-group discussion immediately after viewing a model
- reflect upon their own processes of creating media texts both during and after construction of their products so that reflection becomes a natural and integral part of the process of creating
- document their creative processes
- document developments in the construction of text
- experiment with different forms of documentation—sketch books, journals, videos, audiotapes, computer products

It is essential that students have opportunities to work collaboratively as well as independently in planning, constructing, and reflecting on their representation of ideas. The construction of a multimedia product or event is particularly well suited to the collaborative development of ideas, vision, and products.

Static visual text merging with word text has always been an important component in the development of texts. In literature, visual text has been used to support the written text. In other forms of texts—such as pictorial histories, books on art, photography, and manuals—the words support the static visuals.
Readers adjust their reading pace as they move between words and images. Students who are familiar with numerous forms of texts can understand and construct text that integrates the static visual and written text to communicate.

In the making of non-static or moving text—for example, videos, films, TV—the writing of the spoken or written text plays a supportive role to the visual imagery. In drama, the text is spoken or sung, but another element is added—two-dimensional moving visual text. As in the writing of print text, the visual construction of film has rules of convention, genres, and limitation of construction.

Through multimedia construction, students can become aware of the qualities and conventions of non-static text of computers, TV, and film. By making a product in multimedia text, the student becomes an author in a medium other than print. Through this process, students broaden their understanding of the manipulative qualities and the limitations of a particular text.

Many of the conventions of TV and film have their roots in traditional drama and storytelling. It is important that students explore and construct a range of texts—tele-drama, comedy, newscasts, for example—to make connections among the various texts and to discover what conventions apply specifically to the particular medium.

The layering of audio, visual, and print text is becoming increasingly important in the production of forms of communication. The curriculum should include experiences in which students interpret, examine, and construct such texts and evaluate the effectiveness of layering audio, visual, and print text.
The Role of Literature

Literature plays a vital role in the English language arts curriculum. Literature shapes our conceptions of the world and is an unlimited resource for insights into what it is to be human.

- The primary value of reading literature is the aesthetic experience itself—the satisfaction of the lived-through experience, the sense of pleasure in the medium of language, the complex interaction of emotion and intellect as the reader responds to the images, ideas, and interpretations evoked by the text.

- Literature provides a unique means of exploring the spectrum of human experience. It offers students the opportunity to experience vicariously times, places, cultures, situations, and values vastly different from their own. The reader takes on other roles and discovers other voices. Absorbed in a compelling book, students may, for a while, rise above immediate concerns, losing themselves in other identities, living through strange adventures, wandering roads long vanished, and entering worlds that never were. Transcending the limitations of personal life experiences, they can try on new personalities and philosophies.

- In literature students can see reflections of themselves: their times, their country, their age, their concerns. Literature helps students to give shape to their own lives and to tell their own stories as they participate in the stories of literature and in conversations about those stories. Such conversations help students to discover, for example, how their own ideas—of friendship, love, hate, revenge, envy, loyalty, generosity, identity, ethnicity, otherness, alienation, brotherhood, sisterhood, honesty, dishonesty, hope, despair—are similar to or different from those of others. Identifying and assessing the ideas and values inherent in contemporary, adolescent, regional, national, and world literature helps students to explore, clarify, and defend their own ideas and values.

- Wide reading of literature provides exemplary models for students’ writing as they internalize the structures and conventions of particular genres, get ideas for themes and topics, and notice interesting techniques they can try out in their own writing. Reading literature helps students to develop a sense of the importance of craft and awareness of audience in their own writing.
In this curriculum, literature is offered as a live tradition that students can enter into and renew, rather than as a fixed body of information about specific texts, authors, and terminology. Literature is experience, not information, and students must be invited to participate in it, not simply observe it from the outside. Students should be encouraged to experience literature, allowing it to stimulate images, associations, feelings, and thoughts, so that the literature becomes personally significant to the students.

While it is important that learners study some works in detail, a key aspect of the curriculum is that students select and explore diverse works independently.

Students need opportunities to reflect on the great issues of literature—which are likely the great issues of life—both to give them pleasure and to extend their understanding. Small-group discussion can foster students’ insights into varied readings and perspectives, deepen their capacities to respond to literature, and sharpen their powers of analysis. Students should be encouraged to talk to each other about their readings and analyse them together.

Knowledge of literary terminology and techniques is never an end in itself—to identify figures of speech and label literary forms is pointless unless it serves a larger purpose. Knowledge about the features of various types of texts can enable students to evaluate the effectiveness of the use of a particular technique in a specific circumstance, to appreciate the richness of the resources of language, and to grow increasingly confident in their abilities to make valid critical and aesthetic judgments. The focus should be on investigating technical elements in order to deepen students’ understanding as they think and talk about their interactions with texts.

Meaning is central to literature study. Knowledge of genre, for example, develops from and supports the search for meaning. In exploring the features of various genres, teachers should keep in mind that their purpose is not to teach the technicalities of genre analysis, but to bring students and texts together in intellectually and emotionally productive ways.

This curriculum offers students many and varied opportunities to experience and respond to a wide range of literature, enabling them to

- construct and elaborate upon their own interpretations
• understand that the world of the text and the world of the reader intersect in complex ways
• increase their awareness of form and technique
• appreciate the range and power of language
• speculate on the nature and the use of language as a medium of artistic expression
• extend their personal, aesthetic, and cultural awareness
• develop as critical readers, writers, and thinkers
• develop a lifelong habit of reading as a rewarding leisure-time pursuit

The broad range of literature read and studied in English language arts 10–12 encompasses classic and contemporary texts in a variety of genres including poetry, plays, novels, short stories, essays, biographies, and autobiographies. This range should

• include texts that deal with issues and ideas related to the students’ experiences and their evolving understanding of themselves and the world—texts that students perceive as relevant to their own lives such as adolescent literature
• balance traditional works with more contemporary ones, including works that bring new or previously neglected voices into the classroom
• allow students to explore their own and others’ cultural and literary heritage
• offer perspectives that contrast and conflict with students’ own experiences and invite them to reflect critically on alternative ways of knowing and being
• include works that can be paired to provide for intertextual connections

Learning Experiences

Students need learning experiences that emphasize

• developing their own strategies for and approaches to the reading of literature
• discussions that begin by engaging each student in an extended exploration of his/her own ideas, developing those ideas by comparing them with the views of others
• their abilities to develop and defend their interpretations of literary selections
• juxtaposition and comparison of texts that have some elements in common—for example, the same author, from the same period, on the same theme, in the same genre

Learning experiences should help students to

• connect the way they read to the way they write
• learn about the concerns and issues that cause people to read
• learn about the concerns and issues that cause people to write
• respond to literature and ponder their own and others’ understandings
• explore the cultures of the community of readers in the classroom
• read the writer in a cultural context and understand themselves as culturally situated readers

The ways students are asked to respond to literature in school influences their development as readers, writers, and thinkers as well as their enjoyment of reading. In their response to literature, students can develop their abilities to think imaginatively, analytically, and critically. The response approach to literature invites students to explore

• themselves
• the content of the work
• the culture of the writer
• the ways in which the writer has shaped and refined language in order to make the reader respond

*English 10–12* requires both personal and critical response to literature and offers students choice in both modes of response and selection of texts. These elements of choice and decision making are important in fostering both creative and critical thinking.

Personal responses, including spoken, written, and dramatic interpretations, are an important component of literature study. Personal responses focus on the students’ perspectives on the text and on the reading experience.

Critical response is the other half of the reader-text transaction, developing students’ understanding of what the author brings to the reading experience. Critical response focusses students’ attention on the text, requiring analytical and critical thinking about the writer’s craft and ideas. Critical response requires students to evaluate the text. Learning experiences involve students in

• thinking about how texts are constructed and how texts position them
• interrogating their own experiences
• questioning the validity of the text from the perspective of their own realities and experiences
• exploring issues underlying text
The Role of Drama

Rationale

Drama can be a powerful medium for language and personal growth and is an integral part of the interactive English 10–12 curriculum.

- Drama is an art. In drama, students draw upon their expertise in all modes of communication and use dramatic skills and the power of metaphor to enter the world of the imagination to create, entertain, and enlighten. Drama is a form of artistic expression, deeply embedded in the oral tradition of every culture. It leads students to a deeper appreciation for the arts and helps them to understand how they construct and are constructed by their culture.

- Drama provides opportunities for personal growth. Students can choose from a range of forms of dramatic representation to clarify their feelings, attitudes, and understandings. With opportunities to develop and express their ideas and insights through drama, students grow in confidence and self-awareness.

- Drama is a social process in which all students can work together to share ideas, solve problems, and create meaning. Students extend their experiences with a variety of social interactions, which continue to be part of their daily lives, by practising the skills of collaborative interaction and by recognizing and valuing the feelings and ideas of others, as well as their own. Students come to recognize how reactions and relationships are dynamic, rather than static.

- Drama is a process for learning. Drama engages all learners by building on the uniqueness and diversity of the experiences of individuals. Students have opportunities to acquire and synthesize learning in all curriculum areas. Learning experiences in drama illustrate a powerful application of what is known about how we learn and how we can best teach.

### Drama vs. Theatre

The essential distinction is that, in theatre, the dramatic representation is intended to be viewed by an audience and is, therefore, characterized by the need to communicate with others and a consideration of their responses, whereas in drama, the purpose may be to explore, to clarify, or to develop ideas, issues, or emotions.

### Role vs. Characterization

Being in role means representing the attitude or point of view of someone else in all aspects of thought, emotion, memory, speech, and action whereas a characterization focusses on representing the significant aspects of a character.

### Text

In drama, the range of language events can be much more than words (including their tone and inflection) and should be taken to include gesture, facial expression, and body language.
Key Concepts

Learning in drama is not sequential; this has two implications for curriculum planning: first, students of all ages can engage in similar drama activities and, second, the skills are interrelated and interdependent. In *English Language Arts Curriculum: 10–12*, the drama processes with which students are involved are

- improvisation
- role and character development
- movement
- voice
- presenting and staging
- script writing and responding to scripts
- analysis and application of key elements of dramatic narrative including, for example, purpose, imagery, motif, motivation, mood, place, tension, pace

Learning Experiences

At each grade level, drama experiences should be extensions of previous experiences. While these experiences may vary, they have some common elements: students need to

- work co-operatively
- assume roles
- make creative use of personal experience
- offer and accept feedback
- shape and refine their work

Learning experiences are organized into three groups:

- role-playing
- skill building
- performance and working with scripts

While experiences in all three groups can be used in grades 10, 11, and 12, role-playing is a focus for grade 10, skill building for grade 11, and performance and working with scripts for grade 12.
Overview of Drama Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 10</th>
<th>Grade 11</th>
<th>Grade 12</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will engage in drama activities that work toward the speaking and listening outcomes as well as some outcomes from the other English language arts processes. Drama activities will focus on the examination, development, and articulation of students’ thinking on a range of issues related to themselves, their relationships with others, and their experiences and feelings. Many strategies will be based on role-playing and skill-building learning experiences.</td>
<td>Students will engage in drama activities that work toward the viewing and representing of outcomes as well as some outcomes from the other English language arts processes. Drama activities will focus on analysis of and response to media, drama, and other texts. Many strategies will be based on skill building and working with scripts.</td>
<td>Students will use drama activities to work all of the outcomes, especially reading and writing outcomes. Drama activities will focus on response to texts, considering purposes, ideas, images, and strategies. Drama activities will also provide opportunities for students to develop and apply insights and skills in creating texts and dramatic events. Many strategies will be based on working with scripts</td>
</tr>
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**Appropriate experiences include**

- mantle of the expert
- hot-seating
- interview
- improvisation
- theatre games
- masks
- tableau
- mime
- storytelling

- theatre games
- debate
- interview
- choral speaking/Story Theatre
- puppetry
- dance
- song
- ritual
- ceremony
- hot seat
- video theatre
- radio theatre
- meetings
- production meeting
- re-enactment

- collective creation
- production meeting
- scripts
- response journals
- the moment before
- before-beside-beyond
- anthology
- artifacts
- actor’s/director’s book
- design
- video or radio theatre
The Role of Media Literacy

Today’s students live in an information and entertainment culture that is dominated by images, both moving and static. Information, visual, and media literacy are critical elements of English language arts 10–12. They have a significant role to play in helping students to select, assimilate, evaluate, and control the immense amount of information and the diverse messages produced every day in a complex information and entertainment culture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Literacy</th>
<th>the ability to access, interpret, evaluate, organize, select, produce, and communicate information in and through a variety of media technologies and contexts to meet diverse learning needs and purposes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media Literacy</td>
<td>the ability to understand how mass media, such as TV, film, radio, and magazines, work, produce meanings, are organized, and used wisely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Literacy</td>
<td>the ability to understand and interpret the representation and symbolism of a static or moving visual image - how the meanings of the images are organized and constructed to make meaning and to understand their impact on viewers</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Rationale

Media study is relevant to students. Media literacy deals with the culture and lifestyle of students. Students enjoy thinking and talking about media productions. For teachers, it is an opportunity to have students examine how they are influencing and being influenced by popular culture.

The media is a major source of information. Young people are increasingly getting their information from mass media sources such as magazines, TV, and Web sites. For teachers, media literacy is an opportunity to examine the reliability, accuracy, and motives of these sources.

Media study allows students to investigate issues of power and control. Mass media information, more and more, is being consolidated into the hands of a few people. There are relatively few decision makers or gatekeepers to decide what and who gets heard. Local information is often overlooked because it is expensive to produce compared to buying a prepared article, broadcast, program, or newsgroup. For teachers, media literacy is an opportunity for students to investigate issues on a local level in relation to the wider world.
Mass media is usually produced somewhere else for general consumption. It rarely reflects the culture of smaller groups of people. This is especially true in Canada due to the geographic proximity to the USA and its huge media production capacity. It is necessary for young people to see themselves and hear their own voices in order to validate their culture and place in the world. For teachers, media literacy is an opportunity to encourage young people to find ways into the discourse and decision making that are affecting the world that they will live in. A major part of this is producing their own media and finding ways to get it to an audience. The mass media can then become a pathway from the local level and a means of personal influence in the wider world.

All forms of media have format and structures that are identifiable and open to critique. When media products are well produced they can contribute to students’ aesthetic awareness. For teachers, media literacy is an opportunity for students to understand and recognize quality in media productions and thus become informed and demanding consumers of the media.

Key Concepts

The key concepts provide the framework for designing activities for a media literacy curriculum. These concepts are often organized or stated in different ways, but the intent is similar. For example, there may be some confusion about the interchangeable use of the terms media studies, media education, and media literacy. For the purposes of this document, the term media literacy will be used. It is wise to note, however, that media literacy is a cross-curricular area of study.

• Media are produced by people who are following a format for a purpose.
• Media present a construction of reality.
• Media consist of narrative with identifiable texts.
• Audiences interpret the meaning of media texts individually.
• Media have commercial implications.
• Media contain the ideological and social messages of the dominant culture.
• Media both influence and are influenced by the social/political structure in which it operates.
• The codes, conventions, and characteristics of media influence the content it produces.
• Media have an aesthetic quality and style that can be critiqued.
Media literacy is a form of critical thinking that is applied to the messages being sent by the mass media. Therefore, media literacy is more about good questions than correct answers. Media-literate people become self-filterers of the messages of the media. Here are key questions for discussion in promoting media literacy:

- What is the message?
- Who is sending the message?
- Why is it being sent?
- How is the message being sent?
- Who is the intended audience?
- Who benefits from the message?
- Who or what is left out of the message?
- Can I respond to the message?
- Does my opinion matter?
- Do I need the information?

**Learning Experiences**

Teachers need to plan learning experiences in which students

- develop and apply strategies for accessing information
- access and interpret data, information, and ideas from a variety of information sources
- select information from numerous texts from a critical perspective
- evaluate the reliability of information
- develop a range of transferable skills and strategies that they can apply to their learning in other areas of the curriculum

Experiences in *English Language Arts Curriculum: 10–12* should balance student involvement in both personal and critical response to media texts and the production of their own texts in a range of media. It is important that teachers plan learning experiences that

- relate language and literacy development to the media-intensive environment in which most students participate
- integrate visual media with other dimensions of the curriculum
- include hands-on activities involving the creation of media products

Experiences in the *English Language Arts Curriculum: 10–12* should give students access to a wide range of visual images and provide them with opportunities to respond to the visual imagery of numerous texts in a variety of media. It is important that teachers plan learning experiences that

- integrate visual imagery with other elements of the curriculum
- involve students in the critical examination of the symbolism of visual images
- encourage students to question the validity of the purpose of visual imagery in the texts they read and view
Many teachers are intimidated by the scope of media literacy and media education. It is not necessary to have a complete curriculum before starting. Indeed, most media literacy teachers have started with one small activity and gradually expanded it. Students should be encouraged to develop their own ideas and do their own investigating and producing of media products. Because of the pace of change in an expanding communication industry, teachers will have difficulty assuming an expert role; it is important that teachers not be intimidated by the technology.

The media world is one in which most students are very comfortable; this can be an advantage if the teacher encourages reflection and examination of media without being negative or critical. Some media productions may be hard to experience, even shocking, and these issues can and should be debated and critiqued in class by students. Teachers should try to lead the process rather than impose their own values. Teacher expertise and knowledge of students’ beliefs and values as well as those of the larger community will help to determine what issues are appropriate.

A Caution About Copyright

Currently, it is an offense to use most materials from the mass media in the classroom without the permission of the publisher or distributor. A new copyright law has just been passed in Parliament. Teachers should familiarize themselves with this law as it applies to educational use of mass media in schools. There are some avenues that educators can pursue regarding the classroom use of media materials. Cable in the Classroom contains a listing of copyright-cleared TV programming available through local cable companies. This magazine lists the times of programs and includes lesson plans to accompany some programs. It is available from the cable companies for a fee. Some movie distributors offer copyright-cleared packages of movies for a yearly fee. Many newspapers offer excellent teaching packages along with copies of the newspaper for a small fee. Some TV programming for young people have already been copyright cleared for teachers, such as Street Sense and YTV News (which also comes with an excellent teacher’s guide and lesson plans). Most computer programs and sites available in schools have already been copyright cleared. Teachers can also assign activities to be done at home by the students and brought to school. It is also possible for teachers to write directly to TV stations and ask for personal copyright clearance.
The Role of Critical Literacy

Rationale

Critical literacy is the awareness of language as an integral part of social relations. It is a way of thinking that involves questioning assumptions; investigating how forms of language construct and are constructed by particular social, historical, cultural, political, and economic contexts; and examining power relations embedded in language and communication. Critical literacy is based on an awareness of the diversity of values, behaviours, social structures, and their forms of representation in the world.

Our students live in a world of intense social and cultural change. Language is a powerful medium through which learners develop social awareness and cultural understanding, empowering them as citizens and members of society. Critical literacy equips students with the capacities and understanding which are preconditions for effective citizenship in a pluralistic and democratic society. Critical literacy can be a tool for addressing issues of social justice and equity, for critiquing society and attempting to effect positive change.

Key Concepts

- Language is constructed, used and manipulated in powerful ways to influence others.
- Power is not shared equally in society, and this is reflected in language and in texts.
- Expression and interpretation are never simply personal; rather, they are embedded in a network of social relationships based on gender, age, class, race, ethnicity, culture, perceived ability, and other characteristics through which the individual’s positions in society are defined.
- Texts are crafted objects with specific intents.
- There is no one way to read texts—readers have multiple points of view, and texts have a multiplicity of readings.
- Meaning is constructed. It can be deconstructed and then reconstructed differently.

Learning Experiences

Learning experiences should be planned to help learners think critically about a wide range of written, oral, and visual texts, including literature, media images, speeches, non-verbal communication, and objects or artifacts that have social or cultural meanings (such as toys, clothes, CDs). Learning experiences should help students to recognize that ideas, concepts, opinions,
and interpretations come from particular perspectives and take shape from the assumptions and values inherent in those perspectives.

To develop as critical thinkers, students need to recognize that all speakers, writers, and producers of visual texts are situated in particular contexts with significant personal, social, and cultural aspects. Learning experiences should invite students to

- reflect on the different social assumptions that different people bring to text construction and interpretation
- investigate language use and change in different social contexts
- recognize how language positions them in different social situations
- explore ways in which language and texts construct personal, social, and cultural identities
- recognize language as an integral part of social relations and practices
- examine the role of language in the political, economic, social, and cultural forces that impinge upon their lives
- examine the choices that are made in the construction of texts and the implicit values and beliefs that are found in texts
- examine the ways texts work to produce ideologies and identities
- examine issues of power, privilege, social justice, and equity both within the learning community and beyond
- reflect on their identities to examine those which give them membership of a dominant group and those which make them feel disempowered
- use language to empower themselves and others
- critically analyse and evaluate language, including their own

To develop as critical readers and viewers, students need to become aware of the ways texts work to construct their lives and realities. A critical reading of a text challenges the taken-for-granted assumptions found in the linguistic choices. They need to become aware that texts can be adopted (they may agree with the text), resisted (they may actively disagree with the text and provide alternative readings), or adapted (they may accept parts of the text but modify the way it positions them as readers or viewers). Learning experiences should offer learners opportunities to

- question and analyse the text
- read resistantly
- rewrite texts in ways that are socially just
- write oppositional texts or texts representing the views of disadvantaged groups
• identify the point of view in a text and consider what views are missing
• examine the processes and contexts of text production and text interpretation

As readers and viewers reflect critically on texts, they need to ask questions such as the following:

• Who constructed this text? (age/gender/race/nationality?)
• What are the writer’s/producer’s views/beliefs?
• For whom is the text constructed? To whom is it addressed?
• Where did it appear?
• For what purpose could the text be used?
• What does the text tell us that we already know?
• What does the text tell us that we don’t already know?
• What is the topic?
• How is the topic presented? (What themes and discourses are being used?)
• What are other ways in which this topic could be presented?
• What has been included and what has been omitted?
• Whose voices and positions are being expressed?
• Whose voices and positions are not being expressed?
• What is the text trying to do to the reader/listener/viewer? How does it do it?
• What other ways are there to convey this message?
• Should the message be contested or resisted?

The Role of Information Literacy

Information can be used to examine critically knowledge and understandings. Through the research process of critically questioning ideas, points of view, and cultural perspectives, students can revise their understandings, perceive weaknesses in information, and make better sense of the world.

Teachers provide curricular opportunities and experiences through which students can define, investigate, and develop solutions to problems, and can learn to make informed, wise decisions as they assume responsibility for their learning and their lives. Students’ questions are pursued through original research and investigation, and by questioning and using information in a range of media. With direction and support, students are able to define reasonable research expectations in the context of the curriculum program and their personal interests. Through personally meaningful curricular assignments, students develop effective ways to pursue their curiosities about stimulating curricular topics and to develop effective information-processing skills and strategies.
The skills and strategies required to effectively process and use information available in a range of media and information technologies should be developed within a systematic framework or process for learning. Topics selected by students for research that are relevant to their interests and to the curriculum cause learners to examine the assumption of arguments, values, and ideas.

Information technologies allow teachers and students to create and employ novel and alternative ways of reaching learning goals. For some students, information technologies provide access to the curriculum that they previously could not access. Changes in pedagogy and student and teacher access to a rich range of information resources in media provide all learners with sophisticated and cross-curricular learning opportunities. Information technologies include basic media such as audio and video recordings and broadcasts, still images and projections, computer-based media, data and information systems, interactive telecommunications systems, curriculum software, and of course, print publications.

Students, supported by teachers and library professionals, can identify problems; define their research and information needs; create, gather, and make decisions about information; discover, apply, and make sense of patterns and relationships; and reach original, realistic decisions faster and better than ever before. The body of knowledge they can access continues to grow exponentially. For these reasons, the development of students’ higher-order decision-making and problem-solving skills are essential if the interconnections among ideas and areas of learning are to be understood, and the volume of information is not to overwhelm learners. The use of information technologies within well-designed learning activities supports students’ search for extensive information on an idea under study, provides students with satisfying tools with which to solve some types of problems, and provides them with opportunities to identify more readily and understand the complexity of relationships among individual pieces of information. The result is a richer knowledge base for the student, the development of critical thinking, a more subtle affective understanding of the implications of information and decision possibilities, and the recognition of the importance of making wise learning decisions.

When students use technologies within the learning program, the teacher acts as facilitator, mentor, coach, and guide in a mediated learning environment rich in exploration, information,
communications, and decision-making possibilities. Teachers support learning and performances in students that involve the evaluation and application of knowledge to define and to solve problems rather than to facilitate a simpler factual recall of information. Students engage with diverse, complex information sources and human expertise beyond the traditional classroom. Teachers can develop and use more flexible and demanding forms of learning assessment to measure students’ progress. Learning assessment practices can incorporate the use of technologies and experiences that genuinely reflect students’ understanding and performance in relation to the expected learning outcomes.

As students develop technological competence, an essential graduation learning, they will be able to

• use a variety of technologies, demonstrate an understanding of technological applications, and apply appropriate technologies for solving problems
• locate, evaluate, adapt, create, and share information using a variety of sources and technologies
• demonstrate an understanding of and use existing and developing technologies
• demonstrate an understanding of the impacts of technology on society
• demonstrate understanding of ethical issues related to the uses of technology in a local and global context

The Research Process

The research process involves many different skills and strategies grouped within phases or stages. Each part of the process builds on a previous part, laying the groundwork for the next part. The phases or stages are commonly identified as

• Planning (or Pre-Research)
• Gathering Information (or Information Retrieval)
• Interacting with Information
• Organizing Information
• Creating New Information
• Sharing and Presenting Information
• Evaluation

Students’ use of the information process is not linear or purely sequential. A new piece of information may lead a student to either revise a question under consideration, or help determine a perspective or point of view from which to examine critically the information available, to come to a conclusion different from that of the author of an information product.
Planning

During this introductory stage of the research process, students are usually involved in a classroom theme, unit of study, or a personal interest.

- Topics are identified for further inquiry. These often arise from the discussion that surrounds a purposeful activity. Students and teachers decide on a general topic or problem that requires information to be further explored, or possibly even answered. The topic or problem is then clarified or narrowed to make it more manageable and personal for students.
- Questions are developed and students use individual or group questions to guide information processing. As they begin to ask questions, students also develop a growing sense of ownership for the problem or topic.
- Sources of information that could be used by students are considered.
- Methods for recording information, data, or notes are demonstrated or reviewed; strategies for keeping track of the materials they used are gradually introduced.

Gathering Information

At this stage, students access appropriate learning resources (print, non-print, information technology, human, community). The actual resource is located, and the information is found within the resource. Students will need to learn and practise several important skills:

- search (with direction) a card catalogue, electronic catalogue, the World Wide Web to identify potential information resources in a range of media such as books, journals, videos, audios, electronic files, or databases
- locate resources (e.g., World Wide Web sites) and determine appropriate ways of gaining access to them
- select appropriate resources in a range of media using criteria such as the currency of the information, and the appropriateness of the medium of the resource
- use organizational tools and features within a resource (e.g., table of contents, index, glossary, captions, menu prompts, knowledge tree for searching electronically, VCR counter to identify video clips of specific relevance)
- Skim, scan, view, and listen to information to determine the point of view or perspective from which the content is organized/told
  - whether the content is relevant to the topic questions
  - whether the information can be effectively shaped and communicated in the medium the student will use to create a product
Teachers need to help students realize that fewer appropriate resources are better than a multitude of inappropriate resources.

Interacting with Information

Students continue to evaluate the information they find to determine if it will be useful in answering their questions. Students will practise specific reading/viewing, listening skills:

- question, skim, read (QSR)
- use text features such as key words, bold headings, and captions
- use navigation features of software
- use pause points, scene changes, or topic shift points in video
- read and interpret simple charts, graphs, maps, and pictures
- listen for relevant information
- compare and evaluate content from multiple sources and mediums

They will also record the information they need to explore their topic, attempting to answer their guiding questions. Simple point-form notes (facts, key words, phrases) should be written or recorded symbolically (pictures, numerical data) in an appropriate format, such as, a Web site, matrix sheet, chart, computer database or spreadsheet, or concept map.

Students will cite sources of information accurately and obtain appropriate copyright clearances for images, data, sounds, and text they reference or include in their work.

Organizing Information

Students use a variety of strategies to organize the information they have collected while exploring their topics and answering their guiding questions:

- numbering
- sequencing
- colouring, highlighting notes according to questions or subtopic/categories
- establishing directories of files
- create a Web page of annotated links to relevant Internet resources
- archive e-mail collaborations using subject lines and correspondents’ names
- create a database of images and sound files using software such as ClarisWorks

Students will also review their information with regard to their guiding questions and the stated requirements of the activity, to determine whether they need additional information, further
clarification before creating their products, or to reframe the assignment in light of information now known.

Some activities or projects do not require a product beyond this point in the process just as some writing does not proceed to publishing. *Spontaneous* information problem-solving activities often result in students simply sharing what they have processed and organized at this point.

**Creating New Information**

Students are to be assisted to decide how best to convey their understanding as a result of the research process for a particular audience. Is the idea they wish to communicate visual? Would sound assist the audience to understand their message? When would a written report be appropriate? Would a storyboard, HyperCard stack, interactive Web page, brochure, flyer, poster, video, audio cassette, or quicktime movie be appropriate and why?

**Sharing and Presenting Information**

Students should have many opportunities to share what they have learned, discovered, and created with a variety of audiences and to examine carefully the responses of those audiences to their work.

Students will develop graphic, design, text, sound-editing, and visual-editing skills as they develop multimedia and other resources using technological productivity tools to communicate their understanding to defined audiences.

**Evaluation**

Students should reflect on the skills and learning strategies they are using throughout activities. They should be able to examine and discuss their learning processes.

Teachers and library professionals can help students with evaluation by

- providing time and encouragement for reflection and metacognition to occur (e.g., What did we/you learn about gathering information?)
- creating a climate of trust for self-assessment and peer assessment of process and products (Students tend to be realistic, and have high expectations for their own work.)
- asking questions, making observations, and guiding discussions throughout the process
  - conferencing
  - tracking (e.g., checkpoints for completed skills at key stages)
  - anecdotal comments (e.g., demonstrated ability to organize notes)
• involving students in *creating portfolios*, which contain samples of students’ use of skills, strategies, as well as their products, as evidence of developing information literacy

The Role of Visual Literacy

Visual literacy is the ability to respond to a visual image based on aesthetic, emotive, and affective qualities. Since response is a personal expression, it will vary from student to student. A climate of trust and respect for the opinions of all students must be established to ensure that everyone feels free to express his/her own personal point of view. The unique perspectives of many different student voices will enhance the understanding of all and will help students to appreciate the importance of non-verbal communication.

If the viewing of a visual image is to be a meaningful experience, it should consist of more than merely eliciting a quick reaction. Teachers can help students by guiding them through the viewing experience. In a visual response activity students could engage in dialogue about elements of design and colour, for example, and discuss how the artist/illustrator uses these effectively to convey a message. They could also discuss the feelings that a visual image evokes in them, or associations that come to mind when they view a visual image.

Visual literacy also encompasses the ability to respond visually to a text. Students may be asked, for example, to create their own interpretation of a poem doing a visual arts activity (drawing a picture, making a collage, creating their own multimedia production).

The intent in focusing on visual literacy in the English language arts program is threefold:

• to assist students in analysing visual images to understand the creator’s technique and intent
• to enable students achieve a considered response to a visual image
• to enable students to achieve a considered response to a text through creating a visual image
As information technology shifts the ways in which society accesses, communicates, and transfers information and ideas, it inevitably changes the ways in which students learn.

Students must be prepared to deal with the growing access to and exponential growth of information, expanding perceptions of time and space in a global context, new ways to interact and interconnect with others, and a technologically oriented environment characterized by continuous, rapid change.

Because the technology of the information age is constantly and rapidly evolving, it is important to make careful decisions about its application, and always in relation to the extent to which it helps students to achieve the outcomes of the English language arts curriculum.

Technology can support learning in English language arts for specific purposes.

**Inquiry**

**Theory Building**

- Students can develop ideas, plan projects, track the results of changes in their thinking and planning, and develop dynamic, detailed outlines, using software designed for simulation, representation, integration, and planning.

**Data Access**

- Students can access documents integrating print text, images, graphs, video and sound using hypertext and hypermedia software, commercial CD-ROMs, and World Wide Web sites.
- Students can access information and ideas through texts (including music, voice, images, graphics, video, tables, graphs, and print text) and citations of texts through Internet library access, digital libraries, and databases on the World Wide Web, or on commercial CD-ROMs.

**Data Collection**

- Students can create, collect, and organize information, images, and ideas using video and sound recording and editing technology, databases, survey making/administering software, scanners, and robot Web searchers.

**Data Analysis**

- Students can organize, analyse, transform, and synthesize information using spreadsheets, exploratory and statistical analysis software, software for the creation of graphs and tables, and image processing technology and software.
Communication

**Document Preparation**
- Students can create, edit, and publish documents (articles, letters, brochures, broadsheets, magazines, newspapers, presentations, and presentation aids) using word processing, desktop publishing, and Web-site development software.

**Interaction/Collaboration**
- Students can share information, ideas, interests, and concerns with others through e-mail, Internet audio and video conferencing software, Internet relay chat servers and groups, information listservs, newsgroups, student-created hypertext and hypermedia environments, and shared document preparation software.

**Teaching and Learning**
- Students can acquire, refine, and communicate ideas, information, and skills using computer and other communication tutoring systems, instructional simulations, drill and practice systems, and telementoring systems and software.

**Expression**
- Students can shape the creative expression of their ideas, feelings, insights, and understandings using drawing/painting software, music making/composing/editing technology, interactive video and hypermedia, animation software, multimedia composition technology, sound and light control systems and software, and video and audio recorders/editors.
Assessing and Evaluating Student Learning

Using a Variety of Assessment Strategies

Assessment is the systematic process of gathering information on student learning.

Evaluation is the process of analysing, reflecting upon, and summarizing assessment information, and making judgements or decisions based upon the information gathered.

Assessment is the systematic process of gathering information on student learning. Evaluation is the process of analysing, reflecting upon, and summarizing assessment information, and making judgements or decisions based upon the information gathered.

What learning is assessed and evaluated, how it is assessed and evaluated, and how results are communicated send clear messages to students and others about what is really valued—what is worth learning, how it should be learned, what elements or qualities are considered important. For example, if teachers value risk taking in learning, then it is important to reward risk as part of determining marks or grades.

Assessment involves gathering information on the full range of student learning in a variety of ways so that a clear and valid picture emerges of what students know and are able to do in English language arts. This assessment process should provide a rich collection of information that reflects students’ progress in working toward achievement of learning outcomes thereby guiding future instruction.

Teachers are encouraged to use assessment and evaluation practices that are consistent with student-centred instructional practices, for example,

• designing assessment tasks that help students make judgments about their own learning and performance
• designing assessment tasks that incorporate varying learning styles
• individualizing assessment tasks as appropriate to accommodate students’ particular learning needs
• negotiating and making explicit the criteria by which performance will be evaluated
• providing feedback on student learning and performance on a regular basis

Assessment activities, tasks, and strategies include, but are not limited to, the following:

• anecdotal records
• artifacts
• audiotapes
• checklists
• conferences
• demonstrations
• examinations
• exhibitions
• holistic scales
Involving Students in the Assessment Process

When students are aware of the outcomes they are responsible for and the criteria by which their work will be assessed, they can make informed choices about the most effective ways to demonstrate what they know and are able to do.

It is important that students participate actively in the assessment of their own learning, developing their own criteria and learning to judge different qualities in their work. To get an idea of some possible criteria, students may benefit from examining various scoring criteria, rubrics, and sample pieces of work.

To become lifelong learners, students need to wean themselves from external motivators like grades or marks. They are more likely to perceive learning as its own reward when they are empowered to assess their own progress. Rather than asking teachers, What do you want? students should be asking themselves questions such as, What have I learned? What can I do now that I couldn’t do before? What do I need to learn next? Assessment must provide opportunities for students to reflect on their progress, evaluate their learning, and set goals for future learning.
Assessment practices should accept and appreciate learners' linguistic and cultural diversity. Teachers should consider patterns of social interaction, diverse learning styles, and the ways people use oral and written language across different cultures. Student performance on any assessment task is not only task dependent, but also culture dependent.

It is crucial that assessment practices be fair and equitable, as free as possible of biases, recognizing that no assessment practice can shore up the differences in educational experiences that arise from unequal opportunities to learn.

Teachers are encouraged to be flexible in assessing the learning success of all students and to seek diverse ways in which students might demonstrate their personal best. In inclusive classrooms, students with special needs are expected to demonstrate success in their own way. They are not expected to do the same things in the same amount of time as their peers; indeed, the assessment criteria and the methods of achieving success may be significantly different from those of their classmates.

Valid assessment of speaking and listening involves recognizing the complexities of these processes. Informal assessment, for example, the use of observation and checklists by both the teacher and the students, can be used to assess achievement of many of the speaking and listening outcomes. Students can use checklists and journal entries to explore and reflect on their own and others' perceptions of themselves as speakers and listeners. Scales or rubrics may also be helpful for teachers and students to use in scoring individual or group assessment tasks. When students are to be evaluated on their performances in formal speaking situations, most students will need opportunities in a small-group situation to rehearse, receive feedback, and revise their presentations.

Reflections on discussion and performance, listener and observer responses, peer assessments and self-assessments of speaking and listening can be included in the student's portfolio. Teachers might also consider the inclusion of audiotapes and videotapes in students' portfolios to document their growth and achievements.
Assessing Response to Text

A major function of the English language arts curriculum is to help students develop preferences or habits of mind in reading and viewing texts. In devising ways to assess learners' interactions with texts and responses to their reading and viewing experiences, teachers might consider asking students the following questions:

- Did you enjoy reading/viewing the text? Can you identify why you did or did not?
- Did the text offer any new insight or point of view? If so, did it lead you to a change in your own thinking? If not, did it confirm thoughts or opinions you already held?
- Did the discussion reveal anything about the text, about other readers/viewers, or about you?

These questions ask students to evaluate their own interactions with text and with other readers/viewers, rather than focusing only on the details of the text.

In analysing students' comments on texts over time, both written and oral, teachers might consider the following questions to determine how the students are progressing:

- Do the students seem willing to express responses to a text?
- Do the students ever change their minds about aspects of a text?
- Do the students participate in discussions, listening to others, considering their ideas, and presenting their own thoughts?
- Do the students distinguish between the thoughts and feelings they bring to a text and those that can reasonably be attributed to the text?
- Are the students able to distinguish between fact, inference, and opinion in the reading/viewing of a text?
- Are the students able to relate the text to other human experiences, especially their own? Are they able to generalize and abstract?
- Do the students accept responsibility for making meaning out of a text and discussion on the text?
- Do the students perceive differences and similarities in the visions offered by different texts? Are they aware of the subtleties?
- Do the students understand that each text, including their response to a reading or viewing experience, reflects a particular viewpoint and set of values that are shaped by its social, cultural, or historical context?

In developing criteria for evaluating response, for example through examination of students' response logs or journals, teachers and students might consider evidence of students' abilities to
• generate, articulate, and elaborate on responses and perceptions
• describe difficulties in understanding a text
• define connections or relationships among various log/journal entries
• reflect on the nature or types of responses
• reflect on the range of voices or styles they use in their responses
• reflect on the meaning of their response to texts or reading/viewing experiences, inferring the larger significance of those responses

In developing criteria for evaluating peer dialogue journals, teachers and students might consider

• the extent to which students invite their partners to respond and to which they acknowledge and build on those responses
• the extent to which students demonstrate respect for each other’s ideas, attitudes, and beliefs
• the abilities of the students to collaboratively explore issues or ideas

Assessing Reading and Viewing

In the preliminary assessment of reading ability, teachers can use informal assessment to discover students’ specific reading strengths and needs and plan appropriate learning experiences. For example, the teacher might ask the student to read orally a short selection (perhaps a section from two or three texts of varying difficulty). While listening to the reading, the teacher makes observations to determine whether the student is reading for meaning or simply decoding words, and notes what strategies the student employs to construct meaning. Through story-making, through conversation, or through the student’s writing, the teacher gathers information about the student’s interests, reading background, strengths, needs, and learning goals in English language arts.

Such assessment practices

• build a rapport between teacher and students
• reassure students who are experiencing difficulties that whatever their individual starting points, progress will build from there
• assure students that the teacher will be supportive in recommending or approving appropriate reading materials and in negotiating assignments that will permit them to demonstrate their personal best
• set the tone and the expectation for individual conferencing on an as-needed basis
Assessing and Evaluating Student Writing

In the preliminary assessment of writing abilities, teachers might ask students to provide writing samples on topics of their own choice or in response to a selection of short articles on controversial issues. As well as valuing what the writing communicates to the reader, teachers can use a student's writing samples to identify strengths and weaknesses, analyse errors, and detect the patterns of errors. Such an analysis provides a wealth of information about an individual learner. Similarly, what is not written can tell as much about the learner as what has been included. The following is a list of the kinds of information the teacher should address:

- limited vocabulary
- literal interpretation (only surface response)
- spelling patterns revealing lack of basic word knowledge
- non-conventional grammatical patterns
- inconsistent use of tense
- absence of creative detail, description, figurative language
- length of piece and overall effort in light of the time provided to complete the assignment

In responding to the student, the teacher should speak about what the writing reveals. The emphasis should be on helping the student to recognize and to build on writing strengths and to set goals for improvement. The students should

- record these goals
- use these goals as a focal point in building an assessment portfolio
- update goals on an ongoing basis
- use these goals as a reference point during teacher-student writing conferences

Rather than assigning marks or grades to an individual piece of writing, some teachers prefer to evaluate a student's overall progress as seen in a portfolio, specifying areas where improvement is evident or needed.

Students benefit from the opportunity to participate in the creation of criteria for the evaluation of written work and to practise scoring pieces of writing, comparing the scores they assign for each criterion. Such experiences help students to find a commonality of language for talking about their own and others' writing.
**Portfolios**

A major feature of assessment and evaluation in English language arts is the use of portfolios. Portfolios are a purposeful selection of student work that tells the story of the student’s efforts, progress, and achievement.

Portfolios engage students in the assessment process and allow them some control in the evaluation of their learning. Portfolios are most effective when they encourage students to become more reflective about and involved in their own learning. Students should participate in decision making regarding the contents of their portfolios and in developing the criteria by which their portfolios will be evaluated. Portfolios should include:

- the guidelines for selection
- the criteria for judging merit
- evidence of student reflection

Portfolio assessment is especially valuable for the student who needs significant support. Teachers should place notes and work samples from informal assessments in the student’s portfolio and conference with the student about his/her individual starting points, strengths, and needs. Students, in consultation with the teacher, set goals and then select pieces that reflect progress toward their goals.

Students who have difficulties in English language arts also need to see samples of work done by their peers—not to create competition, but to challenge them as learners. They need to see exemplars in order to understand and explore more complex and sophisticated ways of expressing their own thoughts and ideas.

Multiple revisions of assignments saved all together in the students’ portfolios allow them to examine how they have progressed to more complex levels of thought.

**Tests and Examinations**

Tests and examinations are important means of measuring the learning required by this curriculum but, evaluation must be balanced and consistent with the philosophy articulated in this English language arts curriculum guide and in Foundation for the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum.

Some teachers have designed tests and examinations that reflect key aspects of the curriculum, such as collaborative small-group work, the process approach to writing, and response-based approaches to text. For example, in constructing a co-operative response to an exam question, students might work in pairs or small groups to negotiate meanings and achieve consensus in their
responses. An essay test based on the reading of a novel or play might consist of several questions from which students select one to write on over a two- or three-day period, using the text to find quotes or examples as evidence to support their answers. Students may be given opportunities to discuss their ideas with classmates and to seek response to their draft writing.

Alternatively, students might be given three to five essay questions a few days before the test or examination. Students would use the class time before the test or examination to rehearse possible responses to each question with their classmates. On examination day they would be asked to respond to one of these questions.

Process-based examinations allow students time to apply a range of skills and strategies for prewriting (brainstorming and freewriting, for example), drafting, conferencing, revising, editing, and proofreading. The examination might comprise a single comprehensive question requiring the production, through the stages of the writing process, of a polished essay making reference to several of the texts studied during the year. Alternatively, teachers might design a range of questions or invite students to submit questions from which the teacher will make the final selection.

Some process-based examinations involve class periods over several days. Students might be permitted to make free use of texts, including dictionaries and other reference tools during the examination, but have to pass in all notes and drafts produced during these class periods to be filed and retained by the teacher each day. The teacher could structure particular activities for each day. On day one, for example, students might read and select questions, brainstorm, discuss in small groups, make rough outlines or notes, and begin their first drafts. On the next day, students might complete the first drafts and revise them in peer conferences. Day three might involve further revision, peer editing and self-editing. On the last day, students might use notes and drafts from days one to three to produce and proofread the final pieces. Points could be awarded for notes and early drafts as well as for the final drafts.
Effective Assessment and Evaluation Practices

Effective assessment improves the quality of learning and teaching. It can help students to become more self-reflective and feel in control of their own learning, and it can help teachers to monitor and focus the effectiveness of their instructional programs.

Assessment and evaluation of student learning should recognize the complexity of learning and reflect the complexity of the curriculum. Evaluation should be based on the range of learning outcomes addressed in the reporting period and focus on general patterns of achievement rather than single instances in order for judgements to be balanced.

Some aspects of English language arts are easier to assess than others—the ability to spell and to apply the principles of punctuation, for example. Useful as these skills are, they are less significant than the ability to create, to imagine, to relate one idea to another, to organize information, to discern the subtleties of fine prose or poetry. Response, reasoning, and reflection are significant areas of learning in English language arts, but do not lend themselves readily to traditional assessment methods such as tests.

In reflecting on the effectiveness of their assessment program, teachers should consider to what extent their assessment practices

• are fair in terms of the student’s background or circumstances
• are integrated with instruction as a component in the curriculum rather than an interruption of it
• require students to engage in authentic language use
• emphasize what students can do rather than what they cannot do
• allow them to provide relevant, supportive feedback that helps students move ahead
• reflect where the students are in terms of learning a process or strategy and help to determine what kind of support or instruction will follow
• support risk taking
• provide specific information about the processes and strategies students are using
• provide students with diverse and multiple opportunities to demonstrate what they are capable of
• provide evidence of achievement in which the student can genuinely take pride
• recognize positive attitudes and values as important learning outcomes
• encourage students to reflect on their learning in productive ways and to set learning goals
• aid decision making regarding appropriate teaching strategies, learning experiences and environments, groupings, and learning materials
• accommodate multiple responses and different types of texts and tasks
• involve students in the development, interpretation, and reporting of assessment
• enable them to respond constructively to parents/caregivers and student inquiries about learning in English language arts
Program Design and Components

Introduction

This section includes

• unifying ideas for English language arts
• organizational approaches
• an overview of content
• the role of media literacy
• the role of drama
• the role of literature
• the role of critical literacy
• the role of visual literacy
• the role of information literacy
• the research process
• integration of technology with English language arts
• the speaking/listening component
• the reading/viewing component
• the writing/other ways of representing component

The senior high English curriculum is designed to engage students in a range of experiences and interactions across the curriculum. It is built on the understanding that the language processes are interrelated and can be developed most effectively as interdependent rather than discrete processes.

The program includes choice and flexibility in classroom organization, teaching practices, resources, and assessment. Teachers can organize and structure teaching and learning in a variety of ways to meet student needs in many different contexts.

Unifying Ideas: English Language Arts 10-12

The unifying ideas underlying the *English Language Arts Curriculum: 10–12* are those that underlie the entire English language arts curriculum. They centre on students’ purposeful use of the language processes to

• think and learn
• communicate effectively and clearly with a range of audiences for a variety of purposes
• gain, manage, and evaluate information
• explore, respond to, and appreciate the power of language, literature, and other texts, and the contexts in which language is used

In the *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum*, the term text is defined as, “any language event, whether oral, written or visual. In this sense, a conversation, a poem, a novel, a poster, a music video, a TV program and a multimedia production, for example, are all texts.”
Using Language to Think and Learn

Language is a powerful instrument for thinking and learning; students who are encouraged to use language to pursue their own interests and questions are likely to recognize this potential. From this perspective, language enables learners to communicate not only with others, but also with themselves. Students need frequent opportunities to think for themselves, to build on their own ideas through communication, and to talk and write about themselves as learners and thinkers.

Students in grades 10–12 need frequent opportunities to use language for thinking and learning in order to function effectively as learners not only in English language arts, but in other curriculum areas. They also need experiences that help them to develop creative and critical-thinking skills. Among the creative and critical-thinking skills that students develop through their experiences in English language arts are the abilities to talk, write, and think about language itself. Reflecting on language and its uses in different contexts—social contexts, for example—further enhances students’ language awareness and enables them to value varieties of their own and others’ language as a means of communication and expression.

Students develop the abilities to use language for learning and thinking through the process of obtaining information, and interpreting and communicating this information to others. In order to see the information they gather as meaningful, students need not only to connect it to their own ideas, experiences, and feelings, but also to talk and write about it using their own language.

Students also need frequent opportunities to articulate what they have learned from their reading or viewing of a text and to share it with others in order to clarify, assess, and extend their interpretations as well as their appreciation of a text. Such an exchange of ideas and views will lead students to analyse and reflect on issues raised. Student journals, writers’ notebooks, and learning logs, as well as small-group discussion, may be especially productive in this regard.

Using Language to Communicate Effectively and Clearly with a Range of Audiences for a Variety of Purposes

Through abundant and varied experiences in creating their own texts by speaking, writing, and visual representation of ideas and information, students learn to attend to the subtleties of language use. These experiences also build their confidence and competence as thinkers, planners, and communicators.
Students become competent at communicating ideas or information to others by learning to be sensitive to the different needs of different audiences and to the ways in which the purpose and nature of the task influence language choices. All of these factors shape the kinds of ideas and information they present and the way in which they present them. Depending on whether students are describing or explaining something, arguing, persuading, or telling a story, they learn how to vary their organizational and rhetorical strategies. They adapt the level of detail they provide and the language they use according to the context of the communication. Through practice in making subtle (or not-so-subtle) strategic changes in style to fit different circumstances and audiences, students increase the likelihood that the texts they create will be understood and interpreted as they would like them to be.

Effective communication is precise, clear, and engaging whether it is spoken, written, or visual. The ability to communicate effectively and clearly involves the correct and appropriate use of language conventions and mechanics. To ensure that they can communicate effectively and clearly with a wide range of audiences, all students in grades 10–12 need to practise their use of the forms of language that are most commonly recognized as standard English. This does not imply that other varieties of English are somehow wrong or invalid; rather, it means that all students need to have standard English in their repertoire of language forms, and to know when they should use it.

Teachers should therefore engage their students in discussions of when and where standard English can and should be used in order to expand students’ knowledge of audience and context and to extend their understanding of the social significance of different language practices.

The social nature of language and communication is central to the English language arts curriculum in grades 10–12. When they make connections between style and audience, and purpose and form, students become more versatile and confident in the choices they make in different contexts and linguistic environments. A major concept underlying the curriculum is that students come to recognize and put into effective practice the crucial connections between language choices and social outcomes. Notions of correctness and clarity are important, not as ends in themselves, but as links to a wider social world including global audiences.
Using Language to Gain, Manage and Evaluate Information

*English Language Arts Curriculum: 10–12* involves students in defining, investigating, and researching a wide range of topics, questions, issues, and problems. The curriculum requires students to locate, understand, interpret, analyse, evaluate, and integrate textual and graphic information from multiple sources, including technological resources.

Similarly, the curriculum engages students in constructing many kinds of texts to organize, synthesize, create, and convey information through speaking, writing, and visual representation.

Because students participate in complex information-based environments, they need to be prepared to use electronic technology effectively to receive and express ideas and information. By using many different kinds of texts and resources to collect and communicate information, students should become aware of the range of possibilities and recognize the many approaches they can use to perform these tasks efficiently and effectively. Building on students’ information-gathering and presenting experiences in previous grades, the English language arts curriculum in grades 10–12 strengthens students’ abilities to perform more complex and challenging tasks.

Students at these grade levels need to learn creative and multifaceted approaches to research and investigation. Being able to select, interpret, judge, manage, and use information from among the wealth of general and specialized sources now available is one of the most essential abilities teachers can foster in students in preparing them both to succeed in the emerging information economy and to participate responsibly in our complex information culture.

A crucial aspect of this curriculum is that students examine information texts and evaluate information and information sources. It is important that students have abundant opportunities to draw connections and recognize discrepancies among different texts, experiences, sources, and bodies of information—for example, texts conveying information that reflects different theoretical, ideological, and cultural perspectives.

Using Language to Explore, Respond to, and Appreciate the Power of Language, Literature, and Other Texts

Building on their learning experiences in previous grades, students in grades 10–12 learn to use and appreciate the power and artistry of language through a variety and balance of texts, including literary, non-literary, transactional, journalistic, and technical. This document defines a text as *literary* when it involves the imaginative treatment of a subject using language and text structure that is inventive and often multilayered.
Creating or responding to literary text is an aesthetic act involving complex interactions of emotion and intellect. Experiences centred on interpreting and creating literary text enable students to participate in other lives and worlds beyond their own. Students reflect on their own identities and on the ways in which social and cultural contexts define and shape those identities. Students’ experiences should enhance their understanding and appreciation that virtually any type of text can contain powerful literary expression. Students need opportunities to construct many different types of texts that draw on their imaginations and involve the use of literary language.

Creating, interpreting, and responding to literary texts are essential experiences at the centre of *English Language Arts Curriculum: 10–12*. The curriculum focusses on personal and critical response to text; organizational and rhetorical strategies; the dynamic relations that exist between reader, author, text and other contexts—including historical, social, cultural, and economic; and the recognition and examination of multiple points of view.

The curriculum engages students with a range of spoken, written, and visual texts from the past and the present. It enables students to see the variety of ways in which human experience is rendered in and through language, and to learn about the influence of historical, social, and cultural context on texts.

**Organizational Approaches**

The English language arts curriculum in grades 10–12 offers a number of options for organizational approaches that teachers and students may select and combine in planning learning experiences for whole-class, small-group, and independent learning. It is important that essential graduation learnings and curriculum outcomes be used as reference points for planning learning experiences. It is also important that, wherever possible, learning in *English Language Arts Curriculum: 10–12* is connected and applied to learning in other subject areas.
Organizing Student Learning

Whole-Class Learning

Whole-class learning experiences often focus on an individual (teacher or student) or on a specific group. Whole-class learning may be used effectively to present strategies, provide information or to communicate directions. This approach is often used to introduce and support other methods of instruction. For example, instructions and explanations can be given to the whole class before they begin to work in smaller groups. Whole-class learning can also be used when the entire class is involved in a common process, for example, in sharing group or individual experiences, or in planning and making decisions about a class project or other shared learning experience.

Whole-class learning activities include the following:

- questioning, discussing, modelling and presenting
- lectures
- mini-lessons
- overviews and outlines
- planning, reflection on, and evaluation of learning

Whole-class learning often involves direct communication between a speaker or speakers and an audience by making statements, giving information and directions or explaining procedures. The information and directions presented in a whole-class setting can provide students with necessary support as they progress towards becoming self-directed learners. Demonstrations, for example, provide students with both verbal and non-verbal information.

Reading aloud to the whole class allows students to see and hear others using language powerfully and eloquently. Modelling writing or demonstrating writing procedures provides opportunities for students to examine and draw conclusions about the strategies used by the teacher or by other students in the process of learning, and affirm the teacher’s commitment to learning as a lifelong process.

Although large amounts of information transmitted by lecture may not always be retained, short periods of whole-class instruction, provided as the need or opportunity arises, can challenge the imagination, stimulate reflection, and develop a sense of inquiry. It can provide a forum for critical thinking and challenge students to revise and extend their own knowledge base as they encounter the ideas of others and compare those ideas with their own.
Small-Group Learning

It is important that English 10–12 classrooms be organized to accommodate small-group learning. Through a variety of paired and small-group activities, students will have time to practise and develop their language skills. Such group work will also decrease students’ dependence on the teacher and increase positive interdependence.

Small-group experiences in grades 10–12 should be planned to help students learn how to interact effectively and productively as members of a group or team. As groups take on various learning tasks, students will develop and consolidate the skills, abilities, and attitudes involved in group processes. Group processes require students to:

- participate, collaborate, co-operate, and negotiate
- consider different ways of going about a task
- discuss, brainstorm, react, and respond
- build on their own ideas and extend the ideas of others
- share their own expertise and employ the expertise of others
- establish group goals
- identify and manage tasks
- identify and solve problems
- make decisions
- pace projects, and establish and meet deadlines
- respect varying leadership and learning styles
- be aware of and sensitive to non-verbal communication—their own and others’
- recognize the responsibilities and dynamics of working in groups and make use of their understanding
- assess their own contributions and use feedback from the group to improve their own performance

Small-group learning experiences demonstrate to students how their patterns of learning, experience, and expertise are different from and similar to those of others. As students become more aware of their individual strengths as learners, they will become better equipped to deal with the demands placed on them by independent learning tasks.
**Independent Learning**

Since learning is both personal and individual, *English Language Arts Curriculum: 10–12* allows for differences in the students’ backgrounds, interests, and abilities through a curriculum that encourages choice and negotiation. Independent learning is one of many strategies teachers can use to help students to learn. Within the confines of the study of language, literature, and other texts, students will make personal choices in selecting topics, issues, and curriculum areas to explore to suit their specific needs and to help them grow toward autonomy.

Classroom time must be given to allow students to conduct their research, confer with their peers and with the teacher, prepare reports and presentations, present the results, and evaluate their progress and achievement in independent learning. Such learning experiences will help students to reflect on their own learning strategies and will promote their progress toward becoming independent learners.
## Organizing Learning Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Teacher Roles</th>
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| Issues | This approach involves active inquiry focussing on diverse perspectives, experiences, and values. | • provide a framework for inquiry and discussion  
• coach students in gathering/assessing information  
• coach students through group process  
• encourage variety and diversity of opinions |
| Theme | This approach involves the creation of and response to a range of texts focussed on a central idea. | • identify a variety of themes arising from available resources  
• help students choose a theme to match interests and concerns  
• suggest strategies for inquiry and discussion  
• negotiate a culminating activity and give feedback on its development |
| Project | This approach focusses on finding information and building knowledge through investigative techniques and processes. | • negotiate topics and task  
• suggest resources and research strategies  
• give feedback and coach students on strategies for selection and integration of information  
• coach students on decision making about content and form |
| Workshop | In a workshop focus approach the environment is organized as a working studio or workshop, e.g., drama, readers, viewers, or writing workshop. | • negotiate a group focus and planning of activities  
• monitor and coach students on group process  
• give feedback on group and individual progress  
• negotiate task and criteria/procedures for evaluation |
| Concept | In this approach, experiences and investigations focus on a language arts concept or topic, e.g., voice, imagery, satire, symbols, archetypes, or place. | • negotiate a focus, task, and evaluation criteria  
• suggest resources  
• suggest questions and directions for inquiry  
• coach students in decision making and reformulation  
• give feedback to shape the culminating activity |
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| Major Texts                  | This approach encourages close exploration of diverse aspects of a major work (novel, play, or film) with options to extend experiences with and responses to the text. | • negotiate a focus, task, and evaluation criteria  
• suggest resources and issues to explore  
• coach students in evaluating and selecting information  
• encourage students to reformulate and redirect inquiry  
• give feedback on progress and suggest directions for development  
• ask questions about form and format decisions |
| Author Study                 | Explorations and investigations of specific authors may include historical and historical background information texts, and cultural contexts in which the works were created or set. | • identify a range of authors for which resources are available  
• negotiate focus, strategies, and task  
• coach students on strategies for selection and integration of information  
• coach students on decision making about content and form  
• encourage students to reformulate and redirect inquiry in response to information and emerging ideas |
| Historical Geographic/       | This approach centres on a range of works representing particular times, places, and cultures. | • identify a range of topics for which resources are readily available  
• negotiate focus, strategies, and task  
• ask questions and suggest directions to extend the inquiry  
• give feedback on ideas, information, and direction  
• suggest areas and issues for further development |
| Cultural Exploration         |                                                                             |                                                                                                                                               |