

Syllabus

Third and Fourth Grade Language Arts

Heritage Academy
A University-Model® School

The mission of Heritage Academy, a Certified University-Model® School, is to partner with Christian parents to prepare college-worthy, character witnesses for Jesus Christ.

I. Course Purpose and Content

Students in this course will receive instruction in reading, writing, listening, spelling, grammar, handwriting, and critical thinking processes so that they may progress forward in their development toward becoming wise and effective communicators.

Pre-requisite for Grade 3: Minimum age of 8; successful completion of second grade Language Arts course.

Pre-requisite for Grade 4: Successful completion of third grade Language Arts course.

Grammar

Students will review and broaden their abilities to correctly identify and use the eight parts of speech in keeping with proper grammatical rules. Rules for capitalization, abbreviations, and using the underline or italics, will also be addressed.

Writing

Students will receive instruction for moving through all five steps of the writing process: planning, drafting, revising, proofreading, and publishing. Students will learn the components and skills necessary for writing instructions (using time-order words), a friendly letter, a persuasive essay, a story, a book report, a sound poem, a research report, and a compare-and-contrast essay.

Reading

Students will read a variety of short stories (fiction and non-fiction) and poems that will be enjoyed and analyzed so that students may learn how to effectively read for information, identify main ideas, predict outcomes, discern the consequences of thought/affection and choice, follow directions, etc.

Spelling

Thirty weekly spelling lists will be learned throughout the semester. Activities that include word sorting, word studies, proofreading, and dictionary skills will strengthen students' spelling and communication skills.

Handwriting

Students will also receive an introduction to cursive handwriting and develop basic mastery in it, so that they may write their final drafts in cursive before the end of the year.

II. Worldview Integration

Heritage Academy is committed to teaching subjects in such a way that students develop a biblical worldview out of which to think and act. The following statements identify worldview assumptions that will undergird this course as students learn skills for communication and explore characters and ideas in literature: are key essential truths which relate to the study of literature and communication:

- God is the Creator and Sustainer of all things. God made us for His pleasure, to reflect His image, and to thrive in relationship with Him.
- Since God made us to reflect His image, we as humans are gifted with unique capacities for engaging in complex communication and complex analytical thinking. We have been wired to explore, create, draw conclusion, and communicate.

- God does not want us to be deceived, which causes damage to us and to our communion with him and others, and can eventually lead to painful destruction and death (Proverbs 3:5-8, John 10:10, James 1:17).
- God creatively and effectively communicates His truth and His love to us through His works, His Word, His Spirit, and His Son so that we may live in the wisdom of His truth and love and have life (John 1:1, John 14:6).
- Through exploration of the Language Arts, we may develop and refine our own skills for communication so that we may become agents of renewal on the earth who accurately discern truth, and who truthfully, skillfully, and creatively craft and parse written and spoken words for the sake of blessing our own spirits, God's, and others'.
- By thoughtfully exploring the thought-patterns, choices, and decisions of literary characters, we may learn to recognize and predict consequences that are related to thought-patterns and choices and may reap new insights for wise living and for worship.

III. Required Texts/ Materials

Please reference *Required Text Book List* and *Course Supplies List* for the appropriate academic year to identify the textbooks and supplies students will need for this course. Both the Required Text Book List and Course Supplies List are accessible online.

IV. Student Responsibilities and Course Guidelines

A. Attendance

Attendance is imperative as concepts cannot be learned if a student is absent. Students are expected to attend class and contribute positively to the classroom environment.

Tardiness is disruptive to other class members. Please arrive on time and prepared. All absences and tardies are considered unexcused unless accompanied by a note from a parent or guardian. Please remember that three tardies generate one absence.

As communicated in Heritage Academy's Family Manual, to earn passing grade in a core elementary course, the elementary student must have attended at least forty-two class periods during the semester. Failure to meet this minimum attendance requirement may result in an F being awarded and recorded on the student's transcript.

B. Absences and Late Work

In the case of planned absence(s), homework that is due during the student's absence must be completed and submitted to the instructor in advance.

When a student is unexpectedly and unavoidably absent due to ill health, past-due assignments must be submitted within two course periods after the student's return to school. **When an unexpected absence must occur, please be sure to notify the school office and the instructor of the students' absence as quickly as possible, preferably before the involved class occurs. This contact may occur by phone or by email.**

Late work that is submitted simply "late" will be graded and penalized with a **ten percent grade reduction for each course period that it is late**; homework will not be accepted more than three course periods (1 week) past its due date, unless previous arrangements between the teacher and the student's parent have been agreed to in light of peculiar circumstances that are occurring beyond the family's control.

C. Student Conduct and Preparation for Learning

For the sake of promoting a safe and focused learning environment, the student is expected to do the following throughout the course of the semester:

- 1) Arrive on time to each class period with the appropriate class materials available for access (e.g., organized notebook with dividers and filed materials, paper, writing tools, texts, and other tools as directed).
- 2) Arrive prepared to submit completed at-home assignments at the start of each class period.
- 3) Arrive ready to listen, learn, take notes, and participate in teacher-directed classroom discussions and activities.
- 4) Ask for clarification or further explanation when a concept or direction remains unclear.
- 5) Demonstrate a spirit of cooperation, kindness, and respect toward the teacher and fellow classmates, in keeping with Heritage Academy's Code of Conduct.
- 6) Help keep the classroom area clean and orderly.
- 7) Cooperate with the parent-educator and the Heritage Academy teacher to complete homework in a timely fashion
- 8) Communicate concerns regarding schoolwork to both the Heritage Academy teacher and the parent-educator, so that these concerns can be addressed quickly.
- 9) On the whole, conduct himself or herself in a manner that is worthy of Christ and reflects the life of the Holy Spirit in him/her: ". . . that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please Him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to His glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light" (Colossians 1:12).

D. At-Home (Satellite Classroom) Investment

Daily home-assignments will be outlined on the weekly Home-Communication Sheet the student will receive each Monday. The student can expect to invest approximately 3 to 4 hours each week completing coursework at home in preparation for class periods.

Course assignments may include any of the following:

- **Reading and Post-Reading Activities**
- **Grammar Homework:** This will likely involve review of content taught and completion of work pages.
- **Writing**
Writing assignments should be written with a sharpened pencil on lined paper. Except for when paragraph indentation must occur, hand-written lines should begin against the line that identifies the left-hand margin. Writing should be neat and readable. Students may ask parents for help spelling words, but should circle the words they receive help with. All writing assignments should be submitted with a heading formatted as follows:

Student Name
Class Title
Teacher Name
Date
- **Completing Research / Special Projects:** Students may be directed to research a topic or two throughout the semester for the purpose of presenting information or arguing a point. This may include web work or interviews. Plagiarism is never acceptable.

- **Spelling Work:** Spelling lists will be introduced in class but then mastered at home. Weekly spelling tests will occur in class.
- **Cursive Handwriting Exercises**
- **Memorization Work** (e.g., parts of speech, grammar rules, etc).
- **Dialogue:** Students may be instructed to discuss and/or explore certain topics or concepts with a parent. These assignments will be given purposefully and should not be dismissed.
- **Preparation for Tests**
Students may be instructed to review notes, various texts, previously completed tests, scripture verses and/or to complete review questions or study guides etc., in preparation for tests.
- **Maintenance of Course Binders**
It will be essential for students to maintain order in their course binders throughout the entirety of each semester. Students will be expected to file, as directed, various items given or returned to them so that they may compile a portfolio of important resources and work completed and have these accessible for reference at later points in the semester.
- **Other Assignments**
Additional types of assignments may be given throughout the semester at the discretion of the instructor.

E. Assessments

Each chapter related to writing, grammar, or reading will conclude with a closed-book test. Weekly spelling tests will measure student’s mastery of spelling words.

F. Grades

Grade Apportionment		Grading Scale	
Grammar & Writing Tests	30%	95-100...A	79-77...C+
Writing Assignments	30%	90-94...A-	73-76...C
Spelling Tests	15%	87-89...B+	70-72...C-
Literary Discussion	15%	83-86...B	60-69...D
Reading Worktext Completion	10%	80-82...B-	Below 60... F

The course grade the student is awarded at the end of the semester will indicate the grade that will also appear on the student’s transcript. To maintain eligibility for promotion to the next course in Heritage Academy’s Language Arts sequence, the student must achieve a percentage grade of 70% or above, translating to a letter grade of C- or above, and fulfill attendance requirements.

V. Parent Responsibilities

A. Embracing the University Model

University-Model Schooling at Heritage Academy is driven by two guiding principles:

- to preserve and strengthen God-ordained family relationships;
- to offer students the opportunity to achieve a high degree of academic excellence.

Heritage Academy operates as a University-Model School®, designed for families who want their students to flourish from a life anchored in the home yet still gain from the best aspects of traditional, classroom education. Courses offered at Heritage Academy occur every-other-day so that students may realize the benefits of qualified teachers and a focused learning community, yet continue to experience home as the primary, consistent base where parents remain their foremost guides for spiritual, social, academic, and character formation.

Parents, please consider ways you may maximize the benefits University-Model Schooling offers to your family. How can you as parents utilize the at-home study time this model provides to nurture deeper relationship and impart the faith, values, and life-patterns you desire your student to embrace?

B. Fulfilling the Parent Role

Within a University-Model School[®], every parent commits to fulfill a specified role related to each course in which their student is enrolled, as prescribed by the course's description. Each role identifies specific responsibilities that the teacher relies on the parent to perform, thus facilitating effective home/school partnership whereby students are assured of receiving needed support. For this course, the designated parent role is that of "**Private Tutor.**"

Courses involving this role are made successful because each student has a private tutor (the parent) at home, who is willing and ready to assist. Weekly communication sheets will provide parents guidance from the instructor, outlining homework assignments and any recommended follow-up study/instruction over covered material that is needed. Ways that parents can help their student review or prepare for the next class may also be indicated.

C. Monitor Gradelink and View Seven-Week and Thirteen-Week Gradelink Reports

As your student earns grades for completed tests, quizzes, and various projects and homework assignments, these will be recorded on **Gradelink.com** for you to view at your convenience. My general goal will be to post grades online within a week of their being awarded.

In Gradelink, missing assignments will also be noted. Please take time to follow your student's progress on Gradelink so that you can quickly recognize and explore/address areas of patterns of difficulty or concern that may appear and affirm positive accomplishments.

Gradelink Reports, which will include parent-directed comments related to your student's behavior and progress in class, will be ready for parents to view at the seven-week and thirteen-week point in the semester.

Please contact the office if you have not received your Gradelink login information.

D. Parent/Teacher Fellowship

I hope you will take time to come to Parent/Teacher Fellowship scheduled during the 7th week of each semester. This will give you and I brief opportunity to connect face-to-face and discuss your student's progress, making the most of the partnership that is so vital to students' success within the University Model[®].

VI. Contacting the Instructor

Teacher contact information will be provided on the weekly communication sheets that will be distributed in class; it may also be found in the school directory.