



Literacy Expectation Guide

Kindergarten through Grade 5

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Literacy in Rock Hill Schools

Kindergarten through Grade 5

Introduction

Rock Hill Schools are committed to literacy success for all students. The purpose of this Expectation Guide is to provide a district-wide guide to literacy instruction, to establish procedures for literacy assessments, and to set procedures for monitoring of student achievement. This guide is a companion to the South Carolina English Language Arts Standards published by the South Carolina State Department of Education.

The Expectation Guide committee consisted of the following:

- **Pansy Bailey**, District Literacy Specialist
- **Missy Brakefield**, Director of Federal Programs
- **Jackie Chumley**, Director of Early Childhood
- **Barbara Fewell**, District Literacy Specialist
- **Queenie Hall**, English Language Arts Instructional Specialist
- **Richard Melzer**, Executive Director of Elementary Education
- **Helen Taylor**, Coordinator of Expanded Educational Services
- **Polly Wingate**, District Reading Recovery® Teacher Leader

The cover design was done by **Susan Cook**, Commercial Design Teacher at the Applied Technology Center. The knot design shows the precise and interdependent skills in making each loop and twist of the surgeon's knot for a seamless process, and it is a metaphor for the precise work, role and interdependence that curriculum, assessment and instruction play in the literacy process – learning to read, write and communicate.

The committee began meeting in the spring of 2007 and continued through the fall of 2007 and early winter of 2008. Once the draft was complete, input was solicited from administrators and teachers. All comments and recommendations were considered before publishing the final document.

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Research-Based Model

In developing and defining a plan to ensure literacy success for all children, it is essential to focus on practices grounded in research. An extensive knowledge-base now exists to indicate the skills children must learn in order to read and write well. These skills provide the basis for sound curriculum decisions and instructional approaches that can help prevent the predictable consequences of early literacy failure.

Rock Hill Schools will plan literacy instruction based on the National Reading Panel (2000). The panel has identified **five critical areas of reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension**. Our challenge is to explore the research, open minds to changes in instructional practice, and take up the challenge of helping all children become successful readers and writers.

Philosophy and Goals

Rock Hill Schools are committed to literacy success for all students. Based on scientific research, our schools will implement a comprehensive literacy instructional approach that will address the literacy needs of all learners.

Forward

The purpose of this Expectation Guide is to assist elementary teachers in the organization and instruction of the South Carolina English Language Arts Standards in Rock Hill Schools. It is hoped that the information contained within will provide a common language, consistent practices and procedural expectations across the grade levels. **This Expectation Guide is not a finished product. It will be revisited and revised on an ongoing basis as we search for the best practices to impact and influence student learning. We believe that excellence is a journey, not a destination.**

Program Overview

All literacy instruction is guided by the South Carolina English Language Arts Standards. Elementary literacy instruction in Rock Hill Schools will address the five critical areas of reading instruction identified by the National Reading Panel Report of 2000: comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, phonics, and phonemic awareness.

These areas will be addressed in the comprehensive literacy model. This literacy approach requires the following:

- Explicit, systematic instruction in phonics and exposure to rich literature and informal texts.
- Oral language development, attention to meaning, comprehension strategies, and writing.
- Development of children's interest and pleasure in reading, as well as the development of their reading skills.
- Developmentally appropriate instruction and materials.

Students will receive direct small group instruction in reading and will be actively engaged in actual reading, writing and reasoning tasks. **We strongly recommend that a literacy block of (at least) two to two and a half hours be scheduled daily.**

This Expectation Guide will be used to focus elementary instruction in oral language, reading and writing. All teachers will use it as a basis for planning daily instruction.

Because the elementary schedule is already pressed for time, it will be important for teachers to integrate other content areas into the literacy block. At its most basic level, integration is the merging of two or more content areas which makes for more powerful and potentially deeper learning. A separate-subjects approach too often leaves students with disconnected views of knowledge and fails to reflect the way that people attack real problems in the real world.

The integration of language arts and social studies, for example, would mean that the teacher uses the social studies topic to teach the reading and writing processes. Students reading trade books during literature circles does not constitute integration. Rather, using a social studies text for a mini-lesson in reading workshop, or having students respond to what they have learned about a social studies topic in writing, are better ways to teach the content through language arts.