Unit Overview

Grade 3: English/Language Arts

Unit 4: Life Around Us

Contents

Using This Resource

The Unit Overview provides all the standards and learning targets that should be taught over the course of the unit. It is designed to be used in conjunction with the Unit-at-a-Glance. Teachers should refer to the Overview to locate specific standards and their corresponding learning targets when designing lesson plans and assessments. *While Text Suggestions are provided throughout the unit, they are intended as suggestions only. We recognize that elements of some of these texts may be controversial; however, we intentionally left them in this unit for their educational value and the teaching moments they present. Individual teachers should use their discretion when selecting texts to meet their students' needs. The additional resources included in the Overview promote the most effective research-based teaching practices and should be considered when planning and assessing students.

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Unit Overview

The unifying theme for the fourth unit is **Life Around Us**. The theme focuses on living things (nature, animals, spiders, etc.), the environment (trash, recycling, natural resources, etc.), and their interdependence. Students will examine these concepts through a diverse mix of literature, mixed-media, and real-world experiences.

By the end of third grade, students are capable of not only making cause-and-effect connections, but of transferring and applying these connections to situations in their own lives. The intention of this unit is for third graders to gain an understanding of how living things and the environment are connected. In doing so, they will be challenged to look at themselves and how their choices directly impact the world around them, leading to a sense of social responsibility.

Over the course of this unit, ample opportunity will be provided to explore the importance of language in reading, writing and communicating. Students will take an in-depth look at the significance of word choice through examining a variety of genres. Third graders will expand their word analysis and fluency skills by reading purposefully and responding critically to a variety of literature (poetry, realistic fiction, fables and folktales) as well as informational texts (books, newspapers, online articles and digital videos). Additionally, they will study how different types of texts have their own organizational style and how knowledge of textual styles can help readers make meaning from texts.

One extended text, *Charlotte's Web*, will be read and analyzed in depth, as well as five to nine short texts that highlight the theme of Life Around Us. Third graders will continue to practice pre, during- and post-reading strategies to increase their overall comprehension.

Throughout this unit, students will write routinely over short timeframes (journal entries, brief constructed responses and opinions) and over extended time frames (creating poetry, reports and narratives). They will think critically about the impact language has on their writing and analyze how the **purpose** for writing affects how they approach each work. Third graders will conduct short research reports on spiders and ways to help the environment. They will cite evidence, apply grammar skills, and use computers and technology to produce and publish their writing. Students will practice speaking and listening skills through presentations to the class.

Lessons and Lesson Seeds will emphasize the importance of varied instruction and differentiation in order to maximize learning for all students. Collaboration will be promoted through a mix of whole-group, peer-paired and individual tasks. Formative and summative assessments will be used to monitor student progress and to guide overall instruction.

Essential Questions:

- How does our approach to reading change depending on the **type** of texts we use?
- What reading strategies help us understand before, during and after reading?
- Why is it important to analyze words and their meanings?
- How do our language choices affect our writing?
- How does our **purpose** for writing affect **how** we write?
- What skills help us communicate clearly when speaking and listening?
- How do my personal choices affect the environment?

Standards and Learning Targets

Reading Foundational Skills (RF)

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
RF.3	Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.	• Identify and know the meanings of the most common prefixes and derivational suffixes. (See CCSS 3 L.4.) • Increase the number of grade appropriate high-frequency words that can be read.
RF.3.c	Decode multisyllabic words.	• Identify and apply vowel pronunciation rules. • Blend sounds and segmented syllables to read words. • Confirm decoding efforts through word meanings and word order.
RF.4	Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.	• Adjust reading rate to purpose for reading. • Engage in opportunities for daily independent reading of grade-level text to build fluency. • Demonstrate fluent reading in order to fully comprehend text by responding accurately (e.g., discussion, written response).
RF.4.b	Read on-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate and expression on successive readings.	• Listen to Interactive Read-Alouds of steadily increasing complexity (informational and literary, across all genres of text, representing a wide variety of cultures) in order to observe models of fluent reading and apply skills to their own reading. • Practice multiple readings of familiar texts. • Demonstrate appropriate use of phrasing by attending to sentence patterns and structures and by adjusting to intonation and pitch. • Read a variety of texts with expression and volume appropriate to the context in which it is read.
RF.4.c	Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.	• Use prior knowledge and experiences to confirm and self-correct word recognition and understanding. • Use context clues, sentence structure and visual cues to guide self-correction.

Reading Literature (RL)

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
RL.1	Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.	• Apply appropriate strategies before reading, viewing or listening to a text: 　▶ Preview and survey the text. 　▶ Make predictions. • Apply appropriate strategies to monitor understanding when reading, viewing or listening to a text: 　▶ Connect ideas within the text. 　▶ Make, confirm and/or modify questions, inferences and predictions. 　▶ Visualize. • Demonstrate understanding, either orally or in writing, after reading, viewing or listening to a text: 　▶ Draw inferences and conclusions from the text. 　▶ Confirm, refute and/or make predictions about the text. 　▶ Connect prior knowledge or experience to the text. • Apply a questioning schema to generate, either orally or in writing, text-specific questions at varying levels of cognitive demand. • Select relevant textual evidence when responding to questions.
RL.2	Recount stories, including folktales and myths, from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson or moral; and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.	• Identify and distinguish among literary texts, including types of stories, poems and plays. • Identify and explain plot-based relationships, including sequence/chronology, problem/solution and cause/effect. • Identify and explain the elements of a story (e.g., character(s), setting, problem, solution, sequence of events). • Analyze details and events in a literary text to determine a message, lesson or moral. (See CCSS 3 W.2.)
RL.3	Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations or feelings), and explain how their actions contribute to events.	• Draw conclusions and make inferences about characters, referring to the text for support. • Connect the actions of the characters to the development of the plot by identifying and explaining cause/effect relationships.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
RL.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.	• Use sentence-level content as clues to the meaning of a word or phrase. (CCSS 3 L.4) • Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known affix is added to a known word (e.g., agreeable/disagreeable; comfortable/uncomfortable). (CCSS 3 L.4.b)
RL.5	Refer to parts of stories, dramas and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using terms such as chapter, scene and stanza.	• Apply knowledge of standard English when writing about or discussing literature. • Participate actively and appropriately in discussions about literary text. • (See CCSS 3 SL.1, SL.2, SL.3.)
RL.9	Compare and contrast the themes, settings and plots of stories written by the same author about the same or similar characters (e.g., in books from a series).	• Support inferences about the relationship between text features with relevant textual evidence. • Apply academic and domain-specific vocabulary when discussing or writing about literature. (See CCSS 3 W.9, L.6.)
RL.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas and poetry, at the high end of the grades two to three text complexity band independently and proficiently.	• Demonstrate understanding of a wide variety of sufficiently complex literary texts representing diverse cultures, perspectives, ethnicities and time periods. • Demonstrate understanding of assigned literary texts of steadily increasing complexity. • Use self-selected informational texts to explore personal interests and learn about themselves as readers.

Reading Informational Text (RI)

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
RI.1	Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.	• Apply appropriate strategies before reading, viewing or listening to a text. • Apply appropriate strategies to monitor understanding when reading, viewing or listening to a text. • Demonstrate understanding, either orally or in writing, after reading, viewing or listening to a text. • Select relevant textual evidence when responding either orally or in writing to text-specific questions.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
RI.4	Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade three topic or subject area.	• Use glossaries or beginning dictionaries, both print and digital, to determine or clarify the precise meaning of keywords and phrases. • Distinguish shades of meaning among related words that describe states of mind or degrees of certainty (e.g., knew, believed, suspected, heard and wondered). (CCSS 3 L.5.c)
RI.5	Use text features and search tools (e.g., keywords, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.	• Use text features (e.g., print features, graphic aids, informational aids and online features) to facilitate understanding.
RI.6	Distinguish their own point of view from that of the author of a text.	• Identify the author's implied or directly stated point of view about the topic of the text (e.g., looking at specific language, punctuation, etc.). • Express a personal point of view about the topic at hand. • Compare and contrast their opinion with that of the author.
RI.8	Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence).	• Identify and explain how connections between and among sentences and/or paragraphs determine the organization of a text. • Explain basic relationships, including comparison, cause/effect and sequence.
RI.9	Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.	• Differentiate the main points from less important points in two texts on the same topic.
RI.10	By the end of year, proficiently read and comprehend informational texts — including history/social studies, science and technical texts — in the grades two to three text complexity band, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.	• Demonstrate understanding of a wide variety of sufficiently complex informational texts representing diverse content, perspectives, time periods, etc. • Demonstrate understanding of assigned informational texts of steadily increasing complexity. • Use self-selected informational texts to explore personal interests and learn about themselves as readers.

Writing (W)

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
W.1	Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.	• Differentiate among reasons, opinions and facts. • Apply domain-specific vocabulary to clarify ideas. • Introduce the topic or text they are writing about, state an opinion and create an organizational structure that lists reasons.
W.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.	• Differentiate between relevant and irrelevant information when researching a specific topic. • Gather information on a topic. • Draft an introduction that establishes focus with a topic sentence. • Present similar information grouped appropriately (e.g., in one or more paragraphs, as appropriate). • Use linking words and phrases (e.g., also, another, but) to connect ideas within categories of information. • Draft a conclusion that draws inferences or conclusions from the information presented. • Apply the revision and editing stages of the writing process. (See CCSS 3 W.5, W.6.) • Consult reference materials and spelling patterns and generalizations to check and correct spellings. (See CCSS 3 L.2.f, L.2.g.)
W.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details and clear event sequences.	• Apply the prewriting stage of the writing process: ▶ Select and narrow an event or situation. • Draft the introduction and body using a plausible sequence of events and effective descriptions of characters. • Apply academic vocabulary to express chronological and sequential relationships correctly. • Apply the revision and editing stages of the writing process to the narrative piece.
W.6	With guidance and support from adults, use technology to produce and publish writing (using keyboarding skills) as well as to interact and collaborate with others.	• Use technology to enhance learning. • Use technology to locate, evaluate and gather information and/or data. • Apply computer literacy and keyboarding skills at the basic level.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
W.7	Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.	• Define a problem, formulate questions and refine a problem and/or question. • Locate and select sources to meet the information need. • Paraphrase when taking notes from sources. • Use a variety of formats to prepare findings/conclusions for sharing. • Cite a source as appropriate.
W.8	Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.	• Take purposeful notes in a variety of formats that meet the demands of the writing task and medium. • Paraphrase when taking notes from sources. • Evaluate and analyze the quality, accuracy and sufficiency of notes.
W.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes and audiences.	• Adjust the writing process as appropriate for different writing tasks, purposes, audiences and time frames. • Set personal goals and conference regularly with adults and peers to improve writing.

Speaking and Listening (SL)

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
SL.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups and teacher led) with diverse partners on grade three topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.	• Participate in group discussions on a variety of topics. • Use relevant information to engage in discussions. • Speak at an appropriate rate, volume and tone. • Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material.
SL.3	Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.	• Demonstrate active listening. • Use prior knowledge and details from the information presented to generate appropriate questions.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
SL.4	Report on a topic or text, tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace.	• Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when speaking. (CCSS 3 L.1) • Interpret information to create new understandings and knowledge related to the topic. • Speak at an appropriate rate, volume and tone.
SL.5	Create engaging audio recordings of stories or poems that demonstrate fluid reading at an understandable pace; add visual displays when appropriate to emphasize or enhance certain facts or details.	• With guidance, create, organize and display information in a variety of formats, including the use of technology. • Differentiate media types for audience, environment and purpose of presentations. • With guidance, edit/review/revise/practice the presentation of the information product.
SL.6	Speak in complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification.	• Recognize and speak appropriately for audience, environment and purpose. • Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when speaking.

Language (L)

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
L.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.	• Demonstrate consistent and appropriate use of verb tenses, such as past, present and future, in oral and written language. • Distinguish between simple, compound and complex sentences.
L.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation and spelling when writing.	• Capitalize appropriate words in titles. • Analyze and edit writing for the correct use of commas. • Form and use possessives. • Use word processing prompts when appropriate to demonstrate correct spelling of grade-appropriate words. • Identify the correct spellings for grade-level frequently occurring irregular words.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
		• Use reference materials, including beginning dictionaries, independently when drafting and editing.
L.2.f	Use spelling patterns and generalizations (e.g., word families, position-based spellings, syllable patterns, ending rules, meaningful word parts) in writing words.	• Apply previously learned spelling patterns and • generalizations to spell grade-appropriate words correctly. • Apply knowledge of syllable types to spell multisyllabic words. • Use word processing prompts when appropriate to demonstrate correct spelling of grade-appropriate words. • Analyze writing models for correct spelling.
L.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading or listening.	• Use specific rather than vague language. • Analyze writing models or speech for the effect words and phrases have on feeling or mood. • Choose appropriate words to convey feelings or mood in writing. • Strengthen writing by paying attention to reader/listener interest when revising sentences.
L.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.	• Identify clues within a sentence that help determine or clarify the meaning of a word or phrase. • Access and connect prior knowledge and experiences to determine the meaning of words and phrases. • Discuss words and word meanings as they are encountered in text, instruction and conversation. • Use the context in which words are used to choose among possible meanings. • Strengthen writing by using reference material to revise for precise word choice.
L.5	Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.	• Differentiate between the concepts of literal and nonliteral. • Recognize that word combinations have different meanings in different contexts. • Apply knowledge of literal and nonliteral meaning to understand text.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
L.6	Acquire and accurately use grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases.	• Through modeling and exposure to a variety of texts, develop rich oral language and writing, including general academic and domain-specific words. • Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse peers about grade three topics and text, building on other's ideas and expressing their own clearly. (See CCSS 3 SL.1.)

Unit Assessments and Rubrics

End-of-the-Year Assessments should be completed using the same measurements as in the beginning of the school year. The Learning Targets Checklist (or something similar) should be used to monitor student progress to the standards.

Formative Assessments

- Vocabulary Map
- Sensory Graphic Organizer
- Brief Constructed Response
- Presentation Organizer
- Environmental Search Sheet
- Think-Pair-Share
- K-W-L-S
- Class Observation Checklist

Summative Assessments

- Speaking and Listening Rubric
- Reading Comprehension Rubric
- Language Rubric
- Narrative Writing Rubric
- Writing to Explain Checklist
- Learning Targets Checklist

Vocabulary

High frequency "Tier 2" words and academic vocabulary should be taught explicitly as students need to understand and apply these words across all content areas in various situations. For more information on how to teach vocabulary while using standards, visit the following websites:

- https://www.edutopia.org/blog/teaching-ccss-critical-vocabulary-marilee-sprenger
- http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/sept09/vol67/num01/Six-Steps-to-Better-Vocabulary-Instruction.aspx
- http://achievethecore.org/aligned/including-tier-2-vocabulary-instruction-in-curricular-materials/

Reading

- Genre
- Text Styles
- Text Features
  - ▶ Glossary
  - ▶ Table of Contents
  - ▶ Subtitles
  - ▶ Hyperlink
- Author's Purpose
- Cinquain
- Couplet
- Acrostic
- Limerick
- Stanza
- Metaphor
- Similes
- Cause/Effect

Parts of Speech

- Adjectives
- Nouns
- Verbs
- Adverbs

Language

- Synonyms/Antonyms

- Homophones
- Prefixes/Suffixes
- Theme
- Moral

Literature Genres

- Expository/Informational Texts
- Poetry
- Fiction
- Myths
- Legends
- Fables
- Folktales

Writing

- Brief Constructed Response
- Opinion
- Narrative
- Informative/Explanatory Texts
- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
- Environmental Impact
- Fine
- Cite Evidence
- Purpose
- Compare/Contrast
- The Writing Process

Text Suggestions

The following texts have been chosen for their Lexile levels, interest levels and ease for planning to multiple standards. To find an up-to-date list of vetted texts — which clearly center diversity, equity and inclusion — visit our list of Culturally Responsive Text Suggestions.

See *Appendix A: Text Complexity Considerations* for information on how to select complex text. The Lexile (L) range used for measuring text based on the Common Core band for second- and third graders is 420L-820L.

Poetry
The Candy Smash by Jacqueline Davies (730L)
Falling Up by Shel Silverstein
The Gruffalo by Julia Donaldson (AD440L)
The Gruffalo's Child by Julia Donaldson
Never Take a Pig to Lunch by Nadine Bernard Westcott
Walking the Bridge of Your Nose by Michael Rosen
Out of Wonder: Poems celebrating Poets by Kwame Alexander
Nine: A Book of Nonet Poems by Irene Latham
Just Like Me by Vanessa Brantley-Newton

Fables, Folktales and Legends
Anansi the Spider: A Tale from the Ashanti by Gerald McDermott (AD430L)
The Bossy Gallito by Lucia M. Gonzalez
John Henry by Julius Lester (AD620L)
The Legend of Indian Paintbrush by Tomie dePaola
Monkey: A Trickster Tale from India by Gerald McDermott
One Grain of Rice: A Mathematical Folktale by Demi (AD890L)
The Seven Chinese Brothers by Margaret Mahy
Tops & Bottoms by Janet Stevens (580L)
Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears: A West African Tale by Verna Aardema (770L)

Living Things
365 Ways to Live Green for Kids: Saving the Environment at Home, School, or at Play–Every Day! by Sheri Amsel
Backyard Biology: Investigate Habitats Outside Your Door with 25 Projects by Donna Latham (820L)
Charlie Needs A Cloak by Tomie dePaola
Charlotte's Web by E.B. White (680L)
Joseph Had a Little Overcoat by Simms Taback
Michael Recycle by Ellie Bethel
Miss Spider's Tea Party by David Kirk
National Geographic Animal Encyclopedia: 2,500 Animals with Photos, Maps, and More! by Lucy Spelman
The Rainforest Grew All Around by Susan K. Mitchell
We're Roaming in the Rainforest by Laurie Krebs

Natural Resources
The Lorax by Dr. Seuss (560L)
The New 50 Simple Things Kids Can Do to Save the Earth by Sophie Javna
Simon & Schuster Children's Guide to Insects and Spiders by Jinny Johnson
TIME for Kids Level 3 Science Scoops: Spiders! by the editors of TIME for Kids with Nicole Iorio
TRASH! by Charlotte Wilcox (950L)

Language
Beach is to Fun by Pat Brisson (analogies)
Dear Deer by Gene Barretta (homophones)
Happy Endings by Robin Pulver (suffixes)
Nouns and Verbs Have a Field Day by Robin Pulver (parts of speech)

Punctuation Takes a Vacation by Robin Pulver (punctuation)
Silent Letters Loud and Clear by Robin Pulver (silent letters)

Teacher Resources: Texts
A Guide for Using Charlotte's Web in the Classroom by Patsy Carey and Susan Kilpatrick
How to Write a Poem by Teacher Created Materials, Inc.
Pathways Daily Lesson Guide: Living Things: Spiders!
Pathways Daily Lesson Guide: Environment: Trash!

Teacher Resources: Educational Websites

(Websites change frequently. Preview all sites before showing them to your students.)

- www.pinterest.com/TheEducatorsHelper The Educators' Helper was created on Pinterest to provide resources that support the Instructional Framework best practices such as planning to multiple standards and creating plans that are equitable and inclusive.

- https://info.flipgrid.com/ FlipGrid is a free video discussion platform where teachers can post questions and students of all ages can respond via short videos. It's excellent for students who have challenges with written expression but excel through oral communication; however, all students can benefit from this creative form of expression.

- https://www.peardeck.com/ Pear Deck is an add-on feature for Google Slides or PowerPoint which allows slides to become interactive. Teachers can leave audio instructions for independent work, post surveys or questions for real-time assessment, etc. These features allow for differentiation among students such as drawing responses, dragging answers, leaving video recordings, etc.

- https://nearpod.com/ Nearpod is a platform that combines the most popular applications in one place, making teaching easier and more effective. It has interactive lessons, interactive videos, games and activities that allow for differentiation and real-time assessment of learning.

- www.padlet.com Padlet is a collaborative learning tool that visually organizes information (e.g., words, pictures, videos/links). Users can add comments, rate/score information, and/or respond to questions.

- https://newsela.com/ Newsela is an online education platform for content that can be adjusted based on students' Lexile levels.

- http://www.theteachersguide.com/poetrymonth.htm Preview this site before starting a discussion on poetry. It highlights different types of poetry and offers printables.

- https://sites.google.com/site/mrstabachowssecondgrade/reading-1/bcrs This site gives examples of Brief Constructed Responses. This site offers an abundance of resources directly tied to the CCSS including assessments, online activities for students and SMART board lessons.

- http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/animals/ This National Geographic website has vivid videos, articles and quizzes about a variety of animals.

- http://www.recycling-revolution.com/recycling-facts.html A Recycling Revolution website provides facts/statistics about trash and recycling.

- http://www2.epa.gov/recycle Tips and activities are discussed on this site from the Environmental Protection Agency.

- http://www.nieonline.com/ Newspapers in Education is a site that offers lesson ideas using online newspapers. Lessons are directly correlated to the CCSS.

- http://www.anansi-spider.com/anansi-spider-stories-.html This site is devoted to the *Anansi the Spider* series.

- http://www.slideshare.net/licht1ab/folk-tales-fairy-tales-and-fables-powerpoint-11777650 This is a teacher-created PowerPoint that highlights the difference between fairy tales, folktales and fables using excerpts.

Lesson Sequence — Unit Progression

The Unit Progression gives weekly examples of how to teach to the unit-specific Learning Targets over the course of nine weeks. Teachers should adjust the pace as needed for their individual classes.

This unit highlights living things and the environment as it unfolds over the months of April through June. Third graders learn the significance of language and word choice when it comes to reading and writing. They explore the importance of understanding textual styles through reading a variety of literature and expository texts, and they focus on writing with a purpose.

Week-by-Week

During the first week, students analyze words and their meanings. They start to read poetry and express their opinions through composing their own sensory poems. In Week 2, they continue to learn about different types of poetry (April is National Poetry Month). At the end of the second week, students publish their own poetry books and share their work by reading aloud to their peers during a group "Poetry Slam."

In Week 3, students learn about different genres of literature and how texts have different organizational styles. Understanding these styles helps readers comprehend what they read and gives them insight on how to approach a variety of texts. Third graders read informational texts and pair up to gather facts from print and digital sources about Earth Day and what it means to "reduce, reuse and recycle."

During Week 4, students continue researching information about the environment. They identify three areas that can be improved in their classroom or school, create suggestions to lessen their environmental impact, locate facts using the internet, and publish and present their reports using technology.

The extended text, *Charlotte's Web,* is introduced during Week 5. Third graders discuss farm life and work on pre-, during- and post-reading activities as they read the story over the next four weeks. Vocabulary and language are examined throughout the story and highlighted when students write brief constructed responses.

Independent research is emphasized during Week 6. Students use a K-W-L-S chart as they conduct a short research report on spiders. Additionally, they work on their speaking and listening skills as they present their findings to the class.

In Weeks 7 and 8, third graders are exposed to the folklore genre as they learn about folktales, fables, myths and legends. In Week 7, they compose a narrative piece detailing their own short fable, and in Week 8, they finish *Charlotte's Web* and write a book report that includes their opinion of the story. Lastly, the unit ends in Week 9 when students recall what they learned as third graders. They demonstrate their knowledge by participating in a Year-in-Review game.

Appendix A: Text Complexity Considerations

When selecting books, text complexity matters. According to the Common Core State Standards Initiative, three factors should be considered when the teacher is choosing texts: 1) Qualitative Measures, 2) Quantitative Measures, and 3) Reader and Task Considerations. For more information on these measures, see the following website: www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/standard-10-range-quality-complexity/measuring-text-complexity-three-factors/.

As a result of research conducted in 2013 on text complexity, updated information was added to Appendix A of the CCSS to reflect the new expectations required of students in order to meet College and Career Readiness (CCR) by high school graduation. The table below shows the six different measures found reliable for measuring text complexity and their corresponding grade levels.

Common Core Band	ATOS (Accelerated Reader)	Degrees of Reading Power®	Flesch-Kincaid	The Lexile Framework®	Reading Maturity	Text Evaluator
2nd-3rd	2.75 – 5.14	42 – 54	1.98 – 5.34	420 – 820	3.53 – 6.13	100 – 590
4th-5th	4.97 – 7.03	52 – 60	4.51 – 7.73	740 – 1010	5.42 – 7.92	405 – 720
6th-8th	7.00 – 9.98	57 – 67	6.51 – 10.34	925 – 1185	7.04 – 9.57	550 – 940
9th-10th	9.67 – 12.01	62 – 72	8.32 – 12.12	1050 – 1335	8.41 – 10.81	750 – 1125
11th-CCR	11.20 – 14.10	67 – 74	10.34 – 14.20	1185 – 1385	9.57 – 12.00	890 – 1360

Table 1: Updated Text Complexity Grade Bands and Associated Ranges From Multiple Measures, taken from www.corestandards.org/wp-content/uploads/Appendix-A-New-Research-on-Text-Complexity-revised.pdf, which can be found on the website www.corestandards.org/other-resources/.

Appendix B: Instructional Strategies for Diverse Learners

When choosing instructional strategies, teachers should consider the multiple learning styles, backgrounds and abilities of all students. Research shows that to promote ELA/literacy skills, teachers should incorporate a mix of whole-group, peer-paired and independent activities into instructional procedures. Below is a list of research-based strategies recommended to promote literacy skills in the five essential areas of reading (comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, phonics and phonemic awareness).

Comprehension Strategies

- KWL Charts, Venn Diagrams, T-charts, etc.
- Interactive Read-Alouds, Think-Alouds, etc.
- Story Boards, Sketch to Stretch, etc.
- Question-Answer-Relationship (QAR) (e.g., www.youtube.com/watch?v=wsud7AQWva8)
- Focus Questions

Comprehension Strategies with Cooperative Learning (Collaboration)

- Guided Reading, Literature Circles, Book Talks, etc.
- Readers Theater, Role Play, Reciprocal Reading, etc.
- Shared/Buddy/Paired Reading
- Think-Pair-Share, Turn-and-Talk, etc.
- Jigsaw (e.g., www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/nov18/vol76/num03/Let's-Get-Jigsaw-Right.aspx)
- Socratic Seminar (grade 2: www.youtube.com/watch?v=zBfH_fhAme0; for older students: www.youtube.com/watch?v=69Qv3I0nuNg)
- Fishbowl
- Four Corners (e.g., www.youtube.com/watch?v=M2XmJQ9FL5A)
- Gallery Walk (e.g., www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNT3PZP2obU)

Vocabulary Strategies

- Word Walls
- Word Analysis, Word Sorts (e.g., Making Words), Word Games (e.g., UpWords, BINGO)
- Word Ladders
- Concept Mapping (great for ELL students/differentiation), Concept Circles, Frayer Model, etc.

- Alpha Boxes (e.g., www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBGB7CiN0bQ)
- List-Group-Label (e.g., www.youtube.com/watch?v=K731qicwYcY)
- Non-Linguistic Strategies (visuals)
- Analogies, Connect-Two, etc.

Fluency Strategies

- Daily Read-Alouds, Think-Alouds, etc.
- Record Self/Listen to Self
- Listen to Stories Using Technology
- Repeated Readings
- Choral Reading

Phonemic Awareness/Phonics Strategies

- Making Words
- Word Ladders
- Centers/Literacy Stations
- Guided Reading
- Interactive Writing