

# INFORMATION FOR EDUCATORS AND SCHOOL LEADERS

## K-4 Foundational English Language Arts Learning Progressions

### PURPOSE

- The K-4 English Language Arts (ELA) Foundational Learning Progressions (the Learning Progressions) provide additional details and clarity to help teachers develop key foundational skills in the Learning Standards of the curriculum - they are not intended to replace the ELA curriculum.
- The grade-specific descriptors describe what proficiency in foundational reading, writing and oral language skills looks like at the end of the school year.
- The Learning Progressions are intended to support teacher instruction and classroom assessment in key foundation skills and should not be the only ELA skills that teachers are teaching and assessing.



### CURRICULUM-ALIGNED RESOURCES

- Teachers can use instructional strategies and learning resources recommended by professional associations, approved by schools and districts, or suggested in Ministry resources, to help students work toward proficiency.
- See the [Teaching and Learning Stories](#) for examples of how BC classroom teachers are supporting their students in developing literacy skills, including samples of proficient student work.
- During the 2025/26 school year, additional supporting resources will be developed and made available on the Ministry's curriculum website.



### GUIDING INFORMATION

- The Learning Progressions set a high standard of learning starting with our youngest learners. While working towards proficiency, it is normal for students to be assessed as “emerging” or “developing” as they continue to develop the foundational skills outlined in the Learning Progressions.
- The skills included in the Learning Progressions do not need to be developed in isolation and students can practice or demonstrate multiple foundational skills at the same time.
- While it's important to ensure students acquire skills such as decoding, reading with fluency and developing strong oral and written communication skills, it is equally important to ensure students can experience the enjoyment of reading, writing and exploring oral language and use those skills in meaningful ways.
- The K-4 ELA Foundational Learning Progressions below are organized by Skill. The Foundational Learning Progressions Skills are Oral Language, Reading and Spelling, Fluency, Comprehension and Writing.

### WHAT DOES ELA LEARNING LOOK LIKE IN THE CLASSROOM?

- The ELA curriculum allows for a great deal of choice in the ways in which content and competencies can be combined to create engaging lessons, units, and learning experiences helping teachers meet the individual needs of their students. The Learning Progressions describe what proficient students might look like when they are demonstrating the foundational skills in the ELA curriculum.
- Students learn to communicate effectively, develop, practice, and demonstrate language knowledge, competencies, and understandings that are transferrable across the curriculum and to life outside school. The English Language Arts curriculum supports students in becoming educated citizens by:
  - helping them develop language strategies that can be applied to new contexts
  - developing their cultural awareness and understanding while also deepening their own self identity
  - helping them learn to read for information and for enjoyment
  - enhancing their understanding of how language is constructed, how it works, and how it changes with time and circumstance
  - preparing them for success in future educational and career contexts

The curriculum is designed to empower students by providing them with strong communication skills, an understanding and appreciation of language and literature, and the capacity to engage fully as literate and responsible citizens. The Learning Progressions aim to support teachers in creating these experiences for their students.

 **Email:** [LearningPathways@gov.bc.ca](mailto:LearningPathways@gov.bc.ca)

 **Website:** <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca>

# OVERVIEW

Each **SKILL** represents a set of foundational language arts knowledge. A proficient student should be able to develop, practice, and demonstrate each Skill. All Skills are important when building knowledge in language arts.

Each **SKILL DESCRIPTOR** provides additional information as to the skills developed within each **SKILL**.

Each **SUB-SKILL** further defines the foundational knowledge within each Skill.

The **DESCRIPTOR** is grade specific and describes what proficient student learning looks like at the end of the year/term.

**DEFINITIONS** provide further explanation for key concepts found in the **foundational proficiency descriptors**.

Grade 3 English Language Arts Learning	
Skill - Oral Language	
<p>Students should use independent vocabulary-building strategies to acquire <b>Tier 1</b> words, while more explicit instruction may be required for learners with an indicated need, such as English Language Learners. Students will develop <b>Tier 2</b> vocabulary through classroom instruction, while content-specific <b>Tier 3</b> words will develop across multiple learning areas. There isn't a mandated list of vocabulary words that should be taught at each grade. The selection of words taught will depend on the students, the texts being used, and the classroom context. It is important to provide opportunity for students to experience a variety of texts (oral, written and visual – both fiction and non-fiction) to build <b>fluency</b> early and consistently. This supports students in developing a rich and varied vocabulary that will enhance overall reading and writing proficiency and encourage a love and understanding of diverse literacy forms.</p>	
Sub-skill	Proficiency Descriptor <i>(for the end of the school year)</i>
	Grade 3
<b>Vocabulary</b>  <i>Understanding, recognition, and usage of words. Knowing word meanings, and application of words in different contexts.</i>	Use <b>Tier 1</b> (basic-familiar), <b>Tier 2</b> (high-frequency) and <b>Tier 3</b> (content-specific) vocabulary words, acquired from independent word learning and explicit instruction, in various contexts, including other learning areas
<b>Sentence Construction (Syntax)</b>  <i>Formulating grammatically correct sentences helps students convey their thoughts logically and coherently in both spoken and written communication.</i>	Uses more difficult sentence structures (i.e., use of <b>subordinating conjunctions</b> after, because, before, unless, while) and includes additional detail (e.g., "She wears her red boots and blue jacket when it rains because she doesn't like getting wet.")
<b>Oral Storytelling</b>  <i>The ability to tell stories and narrate events orally lays the groundwork for crafting engaging narratives in writing.</i>	<p>Tells stories with multiple events and develops characters and themes</p> <p>Uses a broad range of vocabulary to describe characters, events, and objects with one or more descriptive details; to share feelings and emotions; to give an opinion or preference; to explain understanding about a topic; to give instructions (e.g., "Mountains are taller and steeper than hills.")</p> <p>Summarizes orally presented information by identifying main ideas and some supporting details</p>

Definitions
<p><i>Note: Many of these terms are found in multiple Skills/Sub-skills and across grades and the example included may or may not be appropriate for the grade you're referencing.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>alphabetic principle/knowledge</b> - the understanding that there is a relationship between written letters and spoken sounds</li> <li><b>appropriate grip</b> - three-finger tripod grip is considered by many to be the most appropriate pencil grip for both right and left-handed writers as it allowed the fingers and wrist to work together to provide a more free-flowing movement. Most students naturally develop a pencil grip that is comfortable for them, a grip is only a problem if a child has difficulty writing legibly and at a fluent speed. General guidelines for an appropriate grip include:</li> </ul>

# Grade 3 English Language Arts Learning

## Skill – Oral Language

Students should use independent vocabulary-building strategies to acquire **Tier 1** words, while more explicit instruction may be required for learners with an indicated need, such as English Language Learners. Students will develop **Tier 2** vocabulary through classroom instruction, while content-specific **Tier 3** words will develop across multiple learning areas. There isn't a mandated list of vocabulary words that should be taught at each grade. The selection of words taught will depend on the students, the texts being used, and the classroom context. It is important to provide opportunity for students to experience a variety of texts (oral, written and visual – both fiction and non-fiction) to build **fluency** early and consistently. This supports students in developing a rich and varied vocabulary that will enhance overall reading and writing proficiency and encourage a love and understanding of diverse literacy forms.

Sub-skill	Proficiency Descriptor <i>(for the end of the school year)</i> <b>Grade 3</b>
<b>Vocabulary</b>  <i>Understanding, recognition, and usage of words. Knowing word meanings, and application of words in different contexts.</i>	Use <b>Tier 1</b> (basic-familiar), <b>Tier 2</b> (high-frequency) and <b>Tier 3</b> (content-specific) vocabulary words, acquired from independent word learning and explicit instruction, in various contexts, including other learning areas
<b>Sentence Construction (Syntax)</b>  <i>Formulating grammatically correct sentences helps students convey their thoughts logically and coherently in both spoken and written communication.</i>	Uses more difficult sentence structures (i.e., use of <b>subordinating conjunctions</b> after, because, before, unless, while) and includes additional detail (e.g., “She wears her red boots and blue jacket when it rains because she doesn’t like getting wet.”)
<b>Oral Storytelling</b>  <i>The ability to tell stories and narrate events orally lays the groundwork for crafting engaging narratives in writing.</i>	Tells stories with multiple events and develops characters and themes  Uses a broad range of vocabulary to describe characters, events, and objects with one or more descriptive details; to share feelings and emotions; to give an opinion or preference; to explain understanding about a topic; to give instructions (e.g., “Mountains are taller and steeper than hills.”)  Summarizes orally presented information by identifying main ideas and some supporting details

## Skill – Reading and Spelling: Word Level

Students learn to make sense of print, decode, read with comfortable fluency, and understand a variety of vocabulary while also discovering that reading is enjoyable, unlocks the imagination, and builds knowledge about the world. Students use the foundational skills of phonemic awareness (phoneme-level blending and segmenting) and **alphabetic knowledge** to begin to build their decoding and spelling skills. Spelling instruction should reinforce taught decoding skills through dictation, sentence generation and be connected to **text** writing. Once an understanding of the **alphabetic principle** is achieved, phonemic awareness instruction should be integrated with letters (e.g., using graphemes) to help students develop an understanding of how words can be changed to make new

Sub-skill	Proficiency Descriptor <i>(for the end of the year)</i>
<b>Grade 3</b>	
<b>Phonemic Awareness</b>  <i>The ability to identify and manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words.</i>	
<b>Phonics</b>  <i>Decoding and encoding with grapheme-phoneme (letter-sound) correspondence.</i>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>INCREASINGLY MORE COMPLEX FICTION AND NON-FICTION TEXTS</b></p> <p>Applies knowledge of complex graphemes to decode multisyllabic words (e.g., /ough/ in "doughnut," /kn/ in "knitting")</p> <p>Decodes and encodes less common <b>vowel digraphs</b> (e.g., /ei/ as in "vein," /eigh/ as in "eight," /igh/ as in "night")</p> <p>Decodes and encodes <b>graphemes</b> that represent different sounds in different words (e.g., 'ch' represents different sounds in "chocolate" and "chorus", 'ough' can represent different sounds such as /o/ in dough, /oo/ in "through")</p> <p>Uses word families/patterns, and <b>morphology</b> to decode and encode more complex words (e.g., for the word "constructed", student can identify that the prefix 'con-' means "with" or "together"; The root '-struct' means "to build" or "assemble"; and the suffix '-ed' indicates that it happened in the past)</p> <p>Applies knowledge of <b>phonics patterns</b> to decode and encode <b>multisyllabic words</b> (3+ syllables) (e.g., "vacation," "beautiful," "independent")</p>
<b>Morphology</b>	<p>Recognizes more advanced <b>prefixes</b> (e.g., 'inter-', 'sub-', 'super-', 'trans-' 'non-') and <b>suffixes</b> (e.g., '-ness', '-able', '-ment', '-tion' '-ible')</p>

<p><i>Parts of a word that carry meaning including affixes, prefixes, suffixes, base words, and root words.</i></p>	<p>Develops strategies for decoding unfamiliar words using <b>base words</b> and <b>affixes</b> (e.g., "unhappiness" by recognizing 'un-', 'happy', and '-ness')</p> <p>Understands how <b>graphemes</b> can change in pronunciation depending on word structure (e.g., "sign" vs. "signature," "electric" vs. "electricity")</p>
<p><b>Spelling</b></p> <p><i>Making the connection between letters and their sounds, enhancing a student's ability to both read and write and leads to confidence in all Skills of literacy.</i></p>	<p>Uses conventional spelling for words with taught <b>spelling patterns</b>, recognizes exceptions to the rules</p> <p>Applies knowledge of <b>spelling patterns</b> and selects between spelling choices accurately.</p> <p>Uses conventional spelling of previously taught and practiced words, may chunk multisyllabic words into syllables to spell smaller pieces of the word (e.g., "beautiful", "because")</p> <p>Applies developing phonological, grapheme-phoneme (letter-sound) correspondence, orthographic and morphological knowledge to decode and spell (encode) words with irregularities</p> <p>Memorizes irregular grapheme-phoneme correspondence, instead of memorizing words as a whole unit, where phonological, orthographic, and morphological information cannot be used</p>

## Skill: Fluency

**Fluency** focuses on a student's ability to read with accuracy, pace and expression to support comprehension. Emphasis should be on accuracy, with pace and expression developing as students gain **automaticity**. Instruction in comprehension should be embedded from the start and emphasized further as students gain independence in decoding.

<p><b>Sub-skill</b></p>	<p><b>Proficiency Descriptor</b> <i>(for the end of the year)</i></p>
	<p><b>Grade 3</b></p>
	<p><b>INCREASINGLY MORE COMPLEX FICTION AND NON-FICTION TEXTS</b></p>
<p><b>Fluency</b></p> <p><i>As word reading (decoding) grows in automaticity, the ability to read <b>texts</b> fluently increases making space to focus on the meaning of the <b>text</b>.</i></p>	<p>Reads a variety of <b>texts fluently</b> (with appropriate pace and natural pauses), including <b>multisyllabic words</b> to support comprehension (e.g., "She planed tomatoes, cucumbers and sunflowers in her beautiful garden.")</p> <p><b>Fluently</b> reads an increasing number of words, demonstrating <b>automaticity</b></p> <p>Rereads words that are newly decoded to increase word reading <b>fluency</b></p> <p>Reads using appropriate intonation and emphasis, including punctuation (e.g., uses excitement in voice when reading exclamations, like, "Wow, that's amazing!")</p>

## Skill: Comprehension

Students develop their ability to understand and interpret [text](#), including identifying main ideas, making predictions and summarizing information. Comprehension should be emphasized from the beginning of reading instruction, even while students are still learning to decode words. While decoding is a prerequisite for full reading comprehension, students can engage in oral comprehension, [text](#) discussion, and predicting/inferring before they become fluent readers. Students should have the opportunity to explore a variety of texts to aid in comprehension across [genres](#), experience various [literary devices](#), and explore the [elements of story](#) that make up diverse texts.

For additional information on **comprehension**, related to comprehending texts and applying understanding, please see the [K-5 Literacy Learning Progressions](#)

Sub-skill	Proficiency Descriptor <i>(for the end of the year)</i>
	Grade 3
<p><b>Comprehension</b></p> <p><i>Built alongside word reading ability (see Fluency), the ability to process written <a href="#">text</a> and understand its meaning, including literal, inferential and evaluative comprehension.</i></p>	<p>Asks and answers questions about presented information, characters, setting, and major events/points of information. Retells <a href="#">text</a> with details and events in sequence</p> <p>Make connections (<a href="#">text</a> to <a href="#">text</a>, <a href="#">text</a> to self or <a href="#">text</a> to world) between ideas and prior knowledge to build understanding</p> <p>Understands the big idea or message of the <a href="#">text</a></p> <p>Draws inferences from <a href="#">text features</a> and <a href="#">elements of the story</a> about feelings, motivations and events (e.g., infers information not explicitly stated in <a href="#">text</a>)</p> <p>Begins to assess characters' decisions and actions or information presented and resulting conclusion</p>

## Skill: Writing

Writing allows students to demonstrate their learning and communicate their thoughts in unique and expressive ways. [Handwriting](#) instruction should ensure accurate letter formation and spacing. Students should receive regular practice (5-10 minutes/day) to build [automaticity](#) which reduces cognitive load and frees up the brain to think about word choice, conventions and sentence formation. Writing instruction should focus on the joy of writing while naturally reinforcing reading and phonics instruction and begin with explicitly teaching sentence, then paragraph construction. Composition of [text](#) can take many shapes, including a focus on narrative, persuasive, informational (expository) and opinion genres.

For additional information on **composition** related to developing and communicating ideas and information in a variety of ways, please see the [K-5 Literacy Learning Progressions](#).

Sub-skill	Proficiency Descriptor <i>(for the end of the year)</i>
	Grade 3
<p><b>Printing</b></p> <p><i>The formation of letters by hand, both upper and lowercase, including appropriate spacing, strokes, directionality and size.</i></p>	<p>Legible <a href="#">handwriting</a> with appropriate spaces between words</p>
<p><b>Composition</b></p> <p><i>The formation of words, sentences and paragraphs to create a written piece of <a href="#">text</a>, either fiction or non-fiction with appropriate grammar and mechanics.</i></p>	<p>Organize <a href="#">text</a> with multiple (6-8+) sentences with some explanations, details or examples</p> <p>Fiction writing follows a logical sequence with a clear purpose</p> <p>Writing uses some key features of the form including <a href="#">plot</a>, <a href="#">characters</a>, <a href="#">dialogue</a>, <a href="#">conflict</a>, and <a href="#">setting</a></p> <p>Non-fiction writing has a topic sentence with some development that connects to opinions, experiences, or feelings</p> <p>Writing is accurate, often logically sequenced, and uses several connecting words. <a href="#">Text features</a> (e.g., headings, diagrams) are clear and relevant</p> <p>Uses more complex <a href="#">nouns</a>, <a href="#">verbs</a>, <a href="#">adjectives</a>, and <a href="#">adverbs</a></p> <p>Uses <a href="#">possessive nouns</a> (e.g., "The boy's arm was injured")</p> <p>Writes sentences that include <a href="#">subordinate conjunction</a> (e.g., "I couldn't go to the park because I had basketball practice.")</p>

Ensures subject-verb agreement in sentences (e.g., "The horse runs fast." and "The horses run fast.")

Uses common homophones correctly (e.g., "there", "their" and "they're")

Understands **homographs** are words that are spelt the same but have different meanings and may have different pronunciation

Uses commas in a series and in dates. Begins to use quotation marks

Re-reads **text** to find and correct punctuation and spelling errors. Begins to find grammatical errors, may or may not correct them

## Definitions

*Note: This is a complete list of foundational skill definitions from Kindergarten through Grade 4. Many of these terms are found in multiple Skills/Sub-skills and across grades therefore the example included may or may not be appropriate for the grade you're referencing.*

- **abstract concepts** – thoughts/ideas that are not concrete (e.g., freedom or love)
- **adjective** – a word that describes a noun (e.g., "huge", "red", "angry")
- **adverb** – a word that describes a verb (e.g., "quickly", "silently", "happily")
- **affixes** - added to the beginning (prefixes) or end (suffixes) of a word to change its meaning (e.g., The prefix 'un-' changes the meaning of the word "happy" to "unhappy")
- **alphabetic principle/knowledge** – the understanding that there is a relationship between written letters and spoken sounds
- **appropriate grip** – three-finger tripod grip is considered by many to be the most appropriate pencil grip for both right and left-handed writers as it allowed the fingers and wrist to work together to provide a more free-flowing movement. Most students naturally develop a pencil grip that is comfortable for them, a grip is only a problem if a child has difficulty writing legibly and at a fluent speed. General guidelines for an appropriate grip include:
  - the pencil is held in a stable position between the thumb, index and middle fingers
  - the ring and little fingers are bent and rest comfortably on the table
  - the index fingers and thumb form an open space
  - the wrist is bent back slightly, and the forearm is resting on the table
  - the pencil is held about 1-2 centimetres from the tip
- **automaticity** - ability to rapidly, effortlessly and accurately recognise letter-sound correspondence, letter formation, words, phrases, **text** etc. reading with accuracy, pace and expression to support comprehension. As word reading (decoding) grows in automaticity, the ability to read **text** fluently increases making space to focus on the meaning of the **text**
- **base words** – the basic word that has no prefix or suffixes (e.g., In the word "teacher" the suffix 'er' is added to the base word "teach" transforming the verb "teach" to the noun "teacher")
- **blends/blending** – the ability to combine individual phonemes to form words (e.g., /k/ /a/ /t/ = cat)
- **character** – a person within a story or piece of **text**
- **comparative ending – suffixes** added to words in order to compare objects (e.g., big to bigger to biggest)
- **complex sentence** - contains one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses. A complex sentence will include at least one **subordinating conjunction** (e.g., "She went to class even though she was sick.")

- **compound predicate** – when two verbs share the same subject (e.g., “Sandeep jumped on her bike and rode around the block.”)
- **compound sentence(s)** – a sentence that contains two independent clauses, which are combined by a **coordinating conjunction**, comma, or semicolon (e.g., “I like cake, but I love ice cream.”)
- **compound-complex sentence** – combines complex sentence and compound sentence forms. A compound-complex sentence contains one or more **independent clauses** and one or more **dependent clauses**. (e.g., “We went to the fair, even though it was hot outside, but we enjoyed the adventure.”)
- **compound subject** – two or more nouns, pronouns or noun phrases acting together as the subject of a clause or sentence, usually connected by a coordinating conjunction (e.g., “Manuel and Selina went up the hill.”)
- **compound words** - when two **base words** combine to form 1 new word (example: “afternoon” is made up of the base words “after” and “noon”)
- **conflict** – a disagreement within a story or piece of **text**
- **conjunctions** – a word that combines clauses (e.g., using “and” or “but” to form a **compound sentence**)
- **consonant digraphs** – when two consonants come together as a team to make one sound (e.g., /ch/ in chain, /ph/ in phone)
- **CV, CVC, CCVC, CVCC, CCVCC, CVCe** – the letters in a word (C=consonant or V=vowel)
  - **CV** – consonant-vowel (e.g., “go”)
  - **CVC** – consonant-vowel-consonant (e.g., “hot”)
  - **CCVC** – consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant (e.g., “ship”)
  - **CVCC** – consonant-vowel-consonant-consonant (e.g., “with”)
  - **CCVCC** – consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant-consonant (e.g., “thick”)
  - **CVCe** – consonant-vowel-consonant-silent e (e.g., “lane”)
- **coordinating conjunction** – a conjunction that connects words, phrases, and clauses that are equal to each other (e.g., for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so – also known as FANBOYS – “My favourite foods are burritos **or** sushi.”)
- **decode** - reading words using **phonemes** and **graphemes** by **blending** letter sounds
- **dependent clause** – a group of words (sentence) that contains a subject and very but does not express a complete thought (e.g., “When my dog ate his bone...” *\*What happened when he ate it? The thought is incomplete\**)
- **dialogue** – words that a character expresses (e.g. “Do you want to go to the park?” asked Siobhan.)
- **digraphs** - two letters that make one sound (e.g., The digraph “th” in the word “think”)
- **elements of story** – the parts of a story that are essential to ensuring your story is well-developed and engaging (e.g., character, plot, setting, conflict, theme)
- **etymology** – the origin of a word and the development of its meaning
- **encode** – taking a word, **segmenting** it into its sounds, and representing each sound with a grapheme
- **fluency** – reading with accuracy, pace and expression to support comprehension. Emphasis should be on accuracy, with pace and expression developing as students gain **automaticity**
- **form** – the structure of a piece of writing, how its constructed and organized (e.g., narrative, exposition, report).
- **genre** – literary or thematic categories with similarities in form or style (e.g., fantasy, humour, adventure or biography)
- **grapheme(s)** - written representation of a sound (individual letters or letter combinations) (e.g., The /s/ sound can be written s, se, ss, c, ce, or sc)
- **handwriting** – as used in the BC Curriculum, handwriting refers to the ability to write by hand. K-2 uses “printing” while Grade 3 moves to “handwriting” – cursive writing may be taught at this level, but it is not a requirement of the learning standard
- **homophones** - words that sound the same but have different meanings (e.g., “to,” “too,” and “two”)
- **homographs** - words that are spelled the same but have different meanings (e.g., “lead” (to guide) and “lead” (a metal))
- **independent clause** – a group of words (sentence) that contains a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought
- **inflectional suffixes** - a change in the form of a word (typically the ending) to express a grammatical function or attribute such as tense, mood, person, number, case, and gender (e.g., ‘-s’, ‘-es’, ‘-ed’, ‘-er’, ‘-est’, ‘-ing’, ‘-ly’, ‘-less’, ‘-ness’, ‘-ship’, ‘-ment’)
- **initial phoneme** – the beginning sound of a word (e.g., /c/ in cat)

- **literary devices** – the techniques, styles, and strategies a writer uses to enhance their writing (e.g., sensory detail like imagery and figurative language like metaphor and simile)
- **long vowel sounds** - where the sound that a vowel makes matches its spoken name (e.g., “cake”, “dive”, “bike”)
- **medial phoneme** – the middle sound of a word (e.g., /h/ /o/ /t/ in “hot”, /sel/ /uh/ /ree/ in “celery”)
- **morpheme** - the smallest unit of language that contains meaning (e.g., “dog” – one morpheme, “incoming” – three morphemes “in” “come” “-ing”)
- **morphology** - the study of meaningful units of language, called **morphemes**, and how they are combined in forming words. For example, the word “contradiction” can be broken up as ‘contra-dict-ion’, with the prefix ‘contra-’ (against), the root word ‘dict’ (to speak), and the suffix ‘-ion’ (a verbal action).
- **multisyllabic words** – words that contain two or more syllable segments (e.g., “needle” – 2 syllables – /nee/ /dle/)
- **noun** – person, place or thing (e.g., “Grayson”, “house”, “chair”)
- **orthographic mapping (knowledge)** – a cognitive process where a word’s letter string, sound sequence, and meaning are linked to support permanent storage
- **personally significant** – words that appear in a student’s everyday life – including their name, a friend’s name, Mom, Grandpa or the name of classroom subjects (Math, Gym)
- **perspective** – a student’s particular attitude or belief on a topic or event; a point a view
- **phoneme(s)** – represented by the 26 letters of the alphabet individually and in combination/pairs (e.g., /b/ /aw/ /l/ in ball)
- **phonics patterns** – common letter combinations found in words; taught phonics patterns help students decode and encode words (e.g., consonant blends, syllable patterns (open, closed etc.), vowel sounds, prefixes, suffixes etc.) *NOTE: Grade-specific phonics patterns can be found within the Phonics sub-skill proficiency descriptors*
- **plot** – the main events within a story or piece of **text**
- **possessive ending** – adding an ‘-s’ ending to a singular noun to indicate ownership (e.g., “The dog’s bone” = the bone belongs to the dog)
- **possessive noun** – a noun that shows ownership or direct connect, usually identified by ‘-s’ (e.g., “The student’s bike.” → the word “student’s” is a possessive noun, showing that the bike belongs to the student)
- **predicate** - what the subject is doing or what is happening
- **prefixes** - added at the beginning of a base word to modify the meaning. (e.g., in the word “preheat” the prefix “pre” is added to “heat” indicating that something should be heated beforehand)
- **pronouns** – words that can replace a noun (e.g., “he”, “she”, “they”, “it”)
- **r-controlled vowels** - vowels followed by the letter “r” that distorts the vowel sound (e.g., The “ar” sound in the word “car”)
- **relative clause** – provide additional information about the person or object being mentioned (e.g., My friend Isla, who just moved here, is coming over to play)
- **root words** - understanding the origin and meaning of words based on their roots (e.g., “dent” in “dentist” from Latin)
- **“schwa” sound** - a schwa is a vowel sound in an unstressed syllable, where a vowel does not make its short or long vowel sound. It usually sounds like a short /u/ sound but is spoken softer and weaker. (e.g., ‘i’ in “family” as its pronounced “/fam/ /uh/ /lee”)
- **segments/segmenting** - breaking words into individual phonemes or sounds (e.g., cat = /k/ /a/ /t/)
- **sentence construction** - formulating grammatically correct sentences helps individuals convey their thoughts logically and coherently in both spoken and written communication (e.g., **simple**, **compound**, **complex**, **compound-complex**)
- **sequential order** – the process of arranging events in a specific, logical order based on criteria such as time (e.g., first, then, last)
- **setting** – the place or type of surrounding where a story or piece of **text** takes place
- **short vowel sound** - the vowel pronunciation that is the sound of the letter, rather than the name of the vowel, and must be followed by a consonant (e.g., mad, sell, pen)
- **simple sentence** – a sentence that contains one **independent clause** (e.g., “Ellie rode her bike to school.”)
- **spelling patterns** - follow the taught rule:

- **Grade 1**
  - **“Floss” rule for ‘f’ ‘l’ ‘s’** – if a closed syllable ends with an ‘f’, ‘l’, or ‘s’ immediately after the short vowel sound, double the final letter (e.g., “will”, “tell”, “staff”)
  - **‘-ck’** – If a closed syllable ends in the sound /k/, immediately after the short vowel sound, then use /ck/ (e.g., duck, yuck)
  - **“K” rule** – use the letter “k”, not “c”, to spell /k/ before the letters ‘e’, ‘i’, or ‘y’
- **Grade 2**
  - **‘-tch’, ‘-dge’** – If a closed syllable ends in the sound /k/, /ch/, or /j/ immediately after the short vowel sound, then use:
    - /ch/ at the end, then write /tch/ (e.g., fetch, catch)
    - /j/ at the end, then write /dge/ (e.g., dodge, lodge)
  - **Doubling rule** – when adding an ending to a closed syllable base word, if the closed syllable ends in just one consonant, double it. Otherwise, just add the ending (e.g., “sit” to “sitting”, “jump” to “jumped”)
  - **Dropping silent “e”** – when adding an ending to a silent “e” base word, drop the silent “e” before adding the ending (e.g., “like” to “liking”, “hope” to “hoping”)
  - **‘y’ to ‘i’ rule** – when adding an ending to a base word that ends in “y” preceded by a consonant, change the “y” to “i” then add the ending (e.g., “happy” to “happiness”, “sunny” to “sunniest”)
- **Grades 3 and 4**
  - Spelling rules from previous grades can be reviewed/taught as needed. Students will apply taught rules on further multisyllabic and content-specific **Tier 3** words, applying **morphology** and **etymology** when necessary.
- **stored vocabulary** – words that students have learned through independent vocabulary-building strategies, been explicitly taught and/or exposed to over time.
- **story frameworks** – an approach to creating narratives that can include elements such as character, plot, conflict and resolution (e.g., [Indigenous Story work](#), The Hero’s Journey, Freytag’s Pyramid)
- **story language** – a narration of an incident or series of events that occurred within the story (e.g., mention of characters, setting, events, problems, ending etc.)
- **subject** – who or what a sentence is about
- **subordinating conjunction** – a word or phrase that links a dependent clause to an independent clause (e.g. I had to wait until they had finished)
- **suffixes** – added at the end of a base word that changes the meaning (e.g., adding ‘-er’ to “teach” making “teacher” or ‘-er’ and ‘-est’ to “big” making “bigger” and “biggest”) *NOTE: See also [inflectional suffixes](#).*
- **syntax** - the arrangement of words and phrases to create well-formed sentences in a language
- **terminal phoneme** – the end sound of a word (e.g., /t/ in “cat”)
- **text(s)** – generic terms referring to all forms of oral, written, visual, or digital communication:
  - Oral texts include speeches, poems, plays, oral stories, and songs.
  - Written texts include novels, articles, and short stories.
  - Visual texts include posters, photographs, and other images.
  - Digital texts include electronic forms of all the above.
  - Oral, written, and visual elements can be combined (e.g., in dramatic presentations, graphic novels, films, web pages, advertisements).
- **text features** – elements of the text that are not considered the main body (e.g., typography (bold, italics, underline), font style, guide words, titles, headings, diagrams, captions, labels, maps, charts, illustrations, photographs, tables etc.)
- **three sounds of “-ed”** - the suffix ‘-ed’ makes three different sounds (e.g., /ed/ as in “rented”, /t/ as in “jumped”, and /d/ as in “curved”)
- **tier 1 vocabulary words** – basic vocabulary - words that frequently occur in spoken language

- **tier 2 vocabulary words** – words that are found in written language in the classroom and are useful across many different content areas. These words have high utility for students and should be the focus of explicit vocabulary instruction
- **tier 3 vocabulary words** – content-specific words that are generally specific to a particular content area and have less broad utility for students
- **trigraphs** - three letters that represent one sound (e.g., /dge/ in “dodge”)
- **unstressed syllables** – the part of the word that you don’t emphasize or accent (e.g., ‘-day’ in “Sunday”)
- **VC** – the letters in a word (V=vowel C=consonant) (e.g., “it”)
- **VCe** - words with a vowel-consonant pattern followed by a silent “e” at the end that elongates the vowel sound (e.g., “mate”, “shake”, “fire”)
- **verb** – an action word (e.g., “walk”, “play”, “think”)
- **vowel digraphs** - two vowels that make one sound (e.g., The digraph ‘ea’ in “meat”)
- **vowel diphthongs** – combination of two vowels where one sound glides through the next within the same syllable (e.g., /oi/ in boil and /oy/ in toy)
- **word class** – also known as “parts of speech” refers to the different categories of words used in grammar (e.g., nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs)