

Our Literacy Policy 2015-16

2012-16
Our Literacy Policy



Introduction

What is literacy and why is it important? Quite simply, literacy is the ability to read and write. Children need to be able to read and write in order to communicate and access information and ideas. Reading and writing, therefore, are essential life skills.

However, writing is also an art form. As the essential skills are mastered, they can be applied to create interesting, engaging and powerful texts that communicate information, ideas, imagery and emotions to the reader. The teaching of literacy extends beyond the teaching of reading and writing into the creative application of these skills in writing for a range of purposes and audiences. And in reading, it is about engaging and immersing the reader in a wide range of high quality texts to be informed, entertained, make sense of themselves and the world around them and appreciate the writer's craft.

The trick in teaching literacy is to combine the teaching of reading and writing skills within a context that is meaningful, purposeful and creative. The ability to read and write is not an end in itself. Phonics, grammar and vocabulary are the building blocks of literacy and it is the art of combining these blocks effectively which is the real skill.

At the American Academy Junior School, we encourage our pupils to become lifelong learners. We want to give children an education of the highest standard, we aim for excellence in all our school activities and encourage all pupils, whatever their ability to achieve the best they possibly can. We believe that providing pupils with a well balanced, enriching and engaging literacy curriculum will aid them in developing into self-assured communicators. Our school works to ensure that all children develop the ability to communicate effectively and that any barriers to learning are swiftly identified and steps taken to remove them. Our literacy policy will ensure that all pupils become confident speakers, listeners, readers and writers, preparing them for life in the 21st century and beyond.

Aims:

At the American Academy Junior School, we strive for all children to develop an enjoyment of literacy. We aim to encourage our pupils to:

- 1) Listen attentively, paying attention to detail, to process the information and retain aurally as much detail as they are able;
- 2) Speak confidently with intonation, clear diction, accurate grammar and style with regard for their listener /audience;
- 3) Read fluently with good comprehension, which is reflected in appropriate expression and intonation, from a wide variety of texts at their own level, for pleasure and relaxation and to record their thoughts in their Reading Diaries;
- 4) Develop their cognitive skills, imagination, and personal expression through a range of writing tasks using clear, concise language with accurate punctuation and grammar, in a style appropriate for purpose;
- 5) Make progress along the continuum to becoming a correct speller, using a neat, legible, cursive handwriting style;
- 6) Make fair critical responses about their own language work, that of their peers, and that of popular authors and poets;
- 7) Mature socially through working collaboratively in groups and in pairs, as per our Working With Others focus;
- 8) Reach their full potential by extending their work in each of the above areas of the Language Curriculum, whilst being mindful that work is manageable and their targets are realistic.

Expectations:

By the time children leave our school, we expect them to communicate through speaking and listening, reading and writing, effectively and with confidence, fluency and understanding. We also want every child to take pleasure in reading across a range of genres and have a strong motivation to read in their own time. A list of 'I Can' statements for each year group are included in Appendix 1 and give a clearer indication of what your child should be able to achieve at the end of each grade, to ensure that s/he is 'Working At Level'.

Literacy Throughout Our School:

Our lessons throughout the school will be taught through units/topics of work, specified for each year group and crossing over all curriculum subjects. The 2015/6 units are available to view on our school's website. Additionally, literacy units of work for each year group are specified in Appendix 2. Students with specific learning needs will be identified and guided in class with the help of specified assistants and a clear set of targets, ensuring that the curriculum is accessible to all. Extra provisions will also be made for our EAL (English as an Additional Language) students.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting:

Assessment in English is continuous, to inform planning and diagnose strengths and targets for development. In all grades, the children begin the year with a baseline test which is used to then observe progress throughout the course of the year. Weekly spelling tests occur in all grades and periodic testing of key words also happens regularly. Written work is monitored with regular classroom controlled assignments at the end of a unit (at least one every half term) and evidence of progress is kept in each child's portfolio. There are also standardised tests for each grade at the end of the school year. Parents are invited to the school for two official parent/teacher meetings and can also track their child's progress at the Learning Walks and get in touch with specific teachers via email or through the school office to make individual appointments when needed. Reports are issued three times a year.

Appendix 1—'I Can' Statements.

I can	English - Year 1 (expected)	😊	Date
Word Reading	Tell you the letters of the alphabet.		
	Sit at the table and hold a pencil.		
	Point out letters that you have sounded.		
	Read some words ending in: s, es, ing, ed, er, est.		
	Read words that have one part.		
	Read words that have two parts.		
	Read words that are shortened.		
	Read aloud from some books.		
	Re-read a book that I have read before.		
	Listen quietly to a book being read aloud.		
Comprehension	Link stories to what I have done.		
	Tell you the names of some fairy stories.		
	Tell you the names of some traditional tales.		
	Join in with things that the whole class is saying together.		
	Tell you about the meanings of some words.		
	Tell you when something isn't written in the right way, and why.		
	Tell you what might happen in a book after reading the title.		
	Take turns when talking and listen to what other people are saying.		
	Explain what you are reading to me.		

I can	English - Year 1 (expected)	😊	Date
Handwriting	Write words using letters I have already learned.		
	Write the days of the week.		
	Tell you the alphabet in the right order.		
	Tell you some letters that sound the same but are different.		
	Spell some words ending in: s, es, ing, ed, er, est.		
	Spell some words starting with un.		
	Spell the words in the word-bank.		
	Write down what the teacher is telling me.		
	Write some upper-case letters.		
	Write some lower-case letters.		
Composition and SpAG	Write numbers 1-9.		
	Tell you about handwriting families.		
	Tell you what I am going to write.		
	Write a story.		
	Check my work.		
	Leave spaces between words when I write.		
	Use capital letters, full stops, question marks and exclamation marks.		
	Use a capital letter for names, places, days of the week and 'I'.		
	Tell you about some of the grammar I have learned.		

I can	English - Year 2 (expected)	😊	Date
Word Reading	Work out how to read some words by sounding them out and join up sounds to make words.		
	Tell you the different sounds a letter can make.		
	Read words that have two parts.		
	Read words that don't follow the normal rules.		
	Read words quickly without mistakes.		
	Read aloud from some books.		
	Re-read a book that I have read before.		
	Listen quietly to a book being read aloud.		
	Talk about how stories are built.		
	Tell you the names of lots of fairy stories.		
	Tell you the names of lots of traditional tales.		
	Tell you about phrases and ideas that come up in lots of stories.		
	Tell you about a non-fiction book and why it is different to a fiction book.		
Comprehension	Tell you the meaning of some words.		
	Tell you how some words have more than one meaning.		
	Tell you about my favourite word and phrase.		
	Recite some poetry I have learnt by heart.		
	Tell you what a story is about after I have read it.		
	Tell you when what I am reading is wrong and why.		
	Tell you what might happen in a story after I have started reading it.		
	Ask questions about what I am reading.		
	Answer questions about what I am reading.		
	Join in with the class to talk about what we are reading, taking turns and listening.		
	Talk about books I have read at school and at home.		

I can	English - Year 2 (expected)	😊	Date
Transcription	Spell the words in the word-bank.		
	Spell some words that sound the same, but are spelled differently.		
	Spell more words that are shortened.		
	Use an apostrophe to show that something belongs to somebody.		
	Spell words that end with ment, ness, full, less and ly.		
Handwriting	Write letters in the correct size.		
	Write letters that can be joined with another.		
	Tell you which letters don't join up.		
	Write capital letters and numbers in the correct size.		
	Leave space between words.		
Composition	Write a story.		
	Write about something that has happened to me.		
	Write a poem.		
	Write two different pieces about the same subject.		
	Tell you about what I'm going to write.		
	Plan my work on paper.		
	Check my work for spelling, grammar and punctuation mistakes.		
	Check my work to make sure it makes sense.		
SpAG	Read my work and make the meaning clear with my voice.		
	Use a statement, question, exclamation and command.		
	Write a sentence that describes something.		
	Tell you about Standard English.		
	Use the grammar in the I have learned.		
	Use the past and present tense.		

I can	English - Year 3 (expected)	✓	Date
Word Reading	Tell you the meaning of new words.		
	Read words that I have never seen before.		
Comprehension	Discuss how different stories are structured.		
	Read a range of different types of stories and non-fiction texts.		
	Use a dictionary to check the meaning of new words.		
	Tell you about lots of different stories I have read.		
	Retell you a story that I have read before out loud.		
	Tell you about the theme of some books.		
	Prepare a poem for performance.		
	Prepare a play for performance.		
	Ask questions to help me understand a text.		
	Check that what I am reading makes sense to me and explain what I am reading.		
	Infer information about the feelings, thoughts and motives of characters from what I am reading.		
	Predict what might happen from details stated and implied.		
	Summarise the main ideas in a text of more than one paragraph.		
	Tell you how the language, structure and presentation add to the meaning of a text.		
	Join in with classroom discussions.		
	Find and record information from non-fiction.		
	Talk about books I have read at school and at home.		

I can	English - Year 3 (expected)	✓	Date
Transcription	Tell you what a prefix and a suffix are.		
	Write lots of words that sound the same but are spelled differently.		
	Spell commonly misspelled words.		
	Use the possessive apostrophe.		
	Check words in a dictionary.		
Composition	Write sentences that have been dictated by the teacher.		
	Plan my writing by discussing it before I start.		
	Draft the work I am planning to complete orally and on paper.		
	Create settings, characters and a plot for a story.		
	Use headings and sub-headings.		
	Evaluate and edit my work, checking for spelling and vocabulary errors.		
	Evaluate other people's work.		
Handwriting	Read my work out loud in front of the class.		
	Join up letters and understand which letters should be joined up.		
	Write in cursive handwriting smoothly and legibly.		
Spelling, grammar and punctuation	Write sentences that have more than one clause.		
	Use lots of conjunctions like when, if, because, although.		
	Use the present perfect form of verbs.		
	Use adverbs, conjunctions and prepositions to express time and cause.		
	Use fronted adverbials.		
	Use the grammar I have learned.		
	Punctuate direct speech.		
	Use the correct nouns and pronouns.		

I can	English - Year 4 (expected)	✓	Date
Word Reading	Explain the meaning of new words.		
	Read words that I have never seen before.		
	Discuss how different stories are structured.		
Comprehension	Read a wide range of different types of fiction and non-fiction texts.		
	Use a dictionary to check the meaning of new words.		
	Discuss lots of different stories I have previously read.		
	Retell a story that I have read before out loud.		
	Describe the theme of some books.		
	Prepare a poem for performance.		
	Prepare a play for performance.		
	Ask questions to help me understand a text.		
	Check that what I am reading makes sense to me and explain what I am reading.		
	Infer information about the feelings, thoughts and motives of characters from what I am reading.		
Spelling, grammar and punctuation	Predict what might happen from details stated and implied.		
	Summarise the main ideas in a text of more than one paragraph.		
	Tell you how the language, structure and presentation add to the meaning of a text.		
	Join in with classroom discussions.		
	Find and record information from non-fiction.		
Handwriting	Talk about books I have read at school and at home.		

I can	English - Year 4 (expected)	✓	Date
Transcription	Explain what a prefix and a suffix are.		
	Spell many homophones.		
	Correctly spell commonly misspelled words.		
	Use the possessive apostrophe.		
	Check words in a dictionary.		
Composition	Write sentences that have been dictated to me.		
	Discuss what I plan to write before I begin writing.		
	Draft the work I am planning to complete orally and on paper.		
	Create settings, characters and a plot for a story.		
	Use headings and sub-headings.		
	Evaluate and edit my work checking for spelling and vocabulary errors.		
	Evaluate other people's work.		
Handwriting	Read my work out loud in front of the class.		
	Join up letters and understand which letters should be joined up.		
	Write in cursive handwriting smoothly and legibly.		
	Write sentences that have more than one clause.		
	Use lots of conjunctions like when, if, because, although.		
Spelling, grammar and punctuation	Use the present perfect form of verbs.		
	Use adverbs, conjunctions and prepositions to express time and cause.		
	Use fronted adverbials.		
	Use the grammar I have learned..		
	Punctuate direct speech.		
	Use the correct nouns and pronouns.		

I can	English - Year 5 (expected)	✓	Date
Word Reading	Explain the meaning of new words.		
	Read words that I have never seen before.		
	Discuss a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference/text books.		
	Read and understand differently structured books.		
	Read and understand books written for different purposes.		
	Enjoy a variety of different genres including myths, legends and traditional stories, modern fiction and fiction from history, and books from other cultures and traditions.		
	Recommend books to my friends and explain why I like them.		
	Identify and discuss themes and conventions in stories.		
	Recite poetry from memory.		
	Prepare a play for performance.		
	Sense check texts for meaning.		
	Ask questions to improve my understanding.		
	Infer information about the feelings, thoughts and motives of characters from what I am reading.		
	Predict what might happen from details stated and implied.		
	Summarise the main ideas in a text of more than one paragraph.		
	Tell you how the language, structure and presentation add to the meaning of a text.		
	Discuss and evaluate how authors use language to impact the reader.		
Comprehension	Retrieve, record and present information from non-fiction.		
	Participate in discussions with my classmates about books that I have read, or that somebody has read to me.		
	Explain and discuss what I have read through formal presentation.		
	Provide a reasoned argument to support my views.		
Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation	Use prefixes and suffixes.		
	Spell some words with 'silent' letters.		
	Distinguish between homophones by their spelling.		
	Learn the spelling in the Year 5 and 6 Spelling Appendix.		
	Use a dictionary to check the spelling and meaning of words.		
	Use a thesaurus.		
	Identify my audience and write with them in mind.		
	Draft my work developing initial ideas and researching where necessary.		
	Consider how authors have developed characters and settings and use that knowledge to plan my own work.		
	Select and use the correct grammar and explain how my choices can change and enhance meaning.		
	Write a short précis of a longer passage.		
	Use organisational and presentational devices to structure text.		
	Assess the effectiveness of my writing and other people's writing.		
	Suggest changes to the vocabulary, grammar and punctuation I have used to improve the writing.		
	Check my work to ensure that the correct tense is used.		
	Check my work to ensure that the correct subject and verb agreement is used.		
Composition and handwriting	Check my work for spelling and punctuation errors.		
	Write cursive text legibly, fluently and with increasing speed.		
	Punctuate direct and indirect speech.		
	Use passive verbs.		
	Use the perfect form of verbs.		
	Use expanded noun phrases.		
	Use modal verbs or adverbs.		
	Use relative clauses.		
	Use commas; hyphens; brackets, dashes and commas for parenthesis.		
	Use semi-colons, colons and dashes as boundaries between independent clauses.		
	Use a colon to introduce a list.		
	Punctuate bullet points.		
	Use the grammar I have learned.		
Transcription	Use prefixes and suffixes.		
	Spell some words with 'silent' letters.		
	Distinguish between homophones by their spelling.		
	Learn the spelling in the Year 5 and 6 Spelling Appendix.		
	Use a dictionary to check the spelling and meaning of words.		
	Use a thesaurus.		
	Identify my audience and write with them in mind.		
	Draft my work developing initial ideas and researching where necessary.		
	Consider how authors have developed characters and settings and use that knowledge to plan my own work.		
	Select and use the correct grammar and explain how my choices can change and enhance meaning.		
	Write a short précis of a longer passage.		
	Use organisational and presentational devices to structure text.		
	Assess the effectiveness of my writing and other people's writing.		
	Suggest changes to the vocabulary, grammar and punctuation I have used to improve the writing.		
	Check my work to ensure that the correct tense is used.		
	Check my work to ensure that the correct subject and verb agreement is used.		
I can	Check my work for spelling and punctuation errors.		
	Write cursive text legibly, fluently and with increasing speed.		
	Punctuate direct and indirect speech.		
	Use passive verbs.		
	Use the perfect form of verbs.		
	Use expanded noun phrases.		
	Use modal verbs or adverbs.		
	Use relative clauses.		
	Use commas; hyphens; brackets, dashes and commas for parenthesis.		
	Use semi-colons, colons and dashes as boundaries between independent clauses.		
	Use a colon to introduce a list.		
	Punctuate bullet points.		
	Use the grammar I have learned.		
	Use prefixes and suffixes.		
	Spell some words with 'silent' letters.		
	Distinguish between homophones by their spelling.		
	Learn the spelling in the Year 5 and 6 Spelling Appendix.		
	Use a dictionary to check the spelling and meaning of words.		
	Use a thesaurus.		
	Identify my audience and write with them in mind.		
	Draft my work developing initial ideas and researching where necessary.		
	Consider how authors have developed characters and settings and use that knowledge to plan my own work.		
	Select and use the correct grammar and explain how my choices can change and enhance meaning.		
	Write a short précis of a longer passage.		
	Use organisational and presentational devices to structure text.		
	Assess the effectiveness of my writing and other people's writing.		
	Suggest changes to the vocabulary, grammar and punctuation I have used to improve the writing.		
	Check my work to ensure that the correct tense is used.		
	Check my work to ensure that the correct subject and verb agreement is used.		
	Check my work for spelling and punctuation errors.		
	Write cursive text legibly, fluently and with increasing speed.		
	Punctuate direct and indirect speech.		
	Use passive verbs.		
	Use the perfect form of verbs.		
	Use expanded noun phrases.		
	Use modal verbs or adverbs.		
	Use relative clauses.		
	Use commas; hyphens; brackets, dashes and commas for parenthesis.		
	Use semi-colons, colons and dashes as boundaries between independent clauses.		
	Use a colon to introduce a list.		
	Punctuate bullet points.		
	Use the grammar I have learned.		

I can	English - Year 6 (expected)	✓	Date
Word Reading	Tell you the meaning of many new words.		
	Read many words that I have not encountered before.		
	Discuss with confidence a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference/text books.		
	Read and understand a variety of different literary structures.		
	Read and understand books written for a wide range of different purposes.		
	Enjoy a wide variety of different fiction genres including myths, legends and traditional stories, modern fiction and fiction from history, and books from other cultures and traditions.		
	Recommend books to my friends and discuss why I like them and what could be better about them.		
	Identify and discuss the themes and conventions of many stories.		
	Recite many poems from memory.		
	Prepare and direct a play for performance.		
Comprehension	Sense-check texts for meaning.		
	Ask questions to improve my understanding.		
	Infer information about the feelings, thoughts and motives of characters from what I am reading.		
	Predict what might happen from details stated and implied.		
	Summarise the main ideas in a text of several paragraphs.		
	Tell you how the language, structure and presentation add to the meaning of a text, giving examples.		
	Discuss and evaluate how authors use language to impact the reader.		
	Retrieve, record and present information from a variety of non-fiction sources.		
	Participate in classroom discussions with my peers about books that I have read, or that somebody has read to me or summarised for me.		
	Explain and discuss what I have read through formal presentation.		
	Provide a reasoned argument to support my views.		

I can	English - Year 6 (expected)	✓	Date
Transcription	Use a variety of prefixes and suffixes.		
	Spell some words with 'silent' letters.		
	Distinguish between homophones by their spelling.		
	Spell the words I have been taught.		
	Use a dictionary to check the spelling and meaning of words.		
	Use a thesaurus to find alternative words with the same meaning.		
	Identify my audience and write with them in mind.		
	Draft my work developing initial ideas and researching where necessary.		
	Consider how authors have developed characters and settings and use that knowledge to plan my own work.		
	Select and use the correct grammar and explain how my choices can change and enhance meaning.		
Composition and handwriting	Write a short précis of a longer passage.		
	Use organisational and presentational devices to structure stories.		
	Assess the effectiveness of my writing and other people's writing.		
	Suggest changes to the vocabulary, grammar and punctuation I have used to improve the writing.		
	Check my work to ensure that the correct tense is used.		
	Check my work to ensure that the correct subject and verb agreement is used.		
	Check my work for spelling and punctuation errors.		
	Write cursive text legibly, fluently and with increasing speed.		
	Punctuate direct and indirect speech.		
	Use passive verbs.		
Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation	Use the perfect form of verbs.		
	Use expanded noun phrases.		
	Use modal verbs or adverbs.		
	Use relative clauses.		
	Use commas: hyphens: brackets for parenthesis.		
	Use semi-colons, colons and dashes as boundaries between independent clauses.		
	Use a colon to introduce a list.		
	Punctuate bullet points.		
	Use the grammar I have learned.		

Appendix 2—Literacy Units of Work

Grade 1: Fiction:

Stories in familiar settings,
Stories with repeating patterns,
Counting stories,
Traditional tales,
Fairy tales,
Fantasy stories – superheroes.

Non-fiction:

Labels, lists and signs,
Information texts
Instructions
Letters.

Poetry:

Nursery rhymes and jingles,
Pattern and rhyme,
The senses,
Humorous poems,
Poems on a theme,
Traditional poems for young children.

Grade 2: Fiction:

Fiction stories with familiar settings,
Fantasy stories,
Traditional Tales,
Stories by the same author.

Non-fiction:

Instructional texts,
Explanatory texts,
Information texts,

Poetry:

Songs and repetitive poems,
Humorous poems
Favourite poems.

Grade 3: Fiction:

Tales, Myths and Fables,
Familiar stories,
Play scripts,

Non-fiction:

Instructions,
Information texts,
Postcards.

Poetry:

Performance poetry,
Different forms of poetry.

Grade 4: Fiction:

Stories from imaginary worlds,
Stories that raise issues

Non-fiction:

Explanation texts,
Recount
Newspapers

Poetry:

Christmas poetry,
Different kinds of poem.

Grade 5: Fiction:

Stories by a significant author,
Various reading comprehension texts –
introducing key comprehension skills.
'A Christmas Carol'
Greek Mythology

Non-fiction:

Biography unit,
Persuasive texts
Film reviews.

Poetry:

'The Pied Piper of Hamelin' – traditional poetry.
Performance poetry.

Grade 6: Fiction:

Different kinds of stories,
Various reading comprehension texts,

Non-fiction:

Autobiography
Journalistic writing.

Poetry:

Analysing poetic styles and writing original poetry,
Performance poetry.