

Kindergarten English Language Arts Course of Study
Highland Local Schools

Overview

The Kindergarten English Language Arts (ELA) program at Highland Local Schools is built upon the foundation of [Ohio's Learning Standards](#), supporting the development of early literacy skills in a nurturing, engaging, and structured environment. Through a comprehensive approach, students begin their journey as readers, writers, speakers, and listeners.

Kindergarten students will develop critical skills in phonological awareness, phonics, print concepts, and word recognition. Instruction is grounded in rich literature and informational texts to foster comprehension, vocabulary growth, and a love of reading. Students learn to express themselves through drawing, dictation, and beginning writing, while gaining confidence using phonetic spelling, basic grammar, and punctuation.

Through daily opportunities for listening, speaking, collaboration, and storytelling, students build strong communication and foundational language skills. The curriculum emphasizes explicit, systematic instruction, differentiated small group work, and interactive read-alouds. Students are regularly assessed through observation, performance tasks, and literacy screeners to ensure each child's needs are met and growth is monitored.

Highland's Kindergarten ELA program ensures that all learners—whether emerging or advanced—develop the essential literacy skills necessary for future academic success and lifelong learning.

Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, and Fluency Instruction in Kindergarten

In Kindergarten English Language Arts, phonics and phonemic awareness are foundational components of early literacy development, taught in alignment with Ohio's Learning Standards. Teachers receive professional training in the Orton-Gillingham approach through the Institute for Multisensory Education (IMSE), using its structured, multisensory scope and sequence to deliver systematic, explicit, and research-based instruction. Daily lessons integrate visual, auditory, and kinesthetic strategies to support all learners, including those with dyslexia and other reading challenges. In addition, teachers implement the Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum to provide consistent, focused instruction that helps students hear, identify, and manipulate sounds in spoken words. Together, these evidence-based programs ensure students develop strong decoding, encoding, and phonemic awareness skills, laying a solid foundation for future reading success.

	Phonemic Awareness/Phonics Focus	Red Words
Quarter 1	Mm /m/ ; Aa /short a/; Ll /l/; Oo /short o/; Hh /h/; Gg /g/; Cc /k/; Dd /d/; Tt /t/; Ii /i/; Jj /j/; Kk /k/; Pp /p/; Uu /short u/; Bb /b/; Rr /r/; Ff /f/; Nn /n/; Ee /short e/; Ss /s/; Ww /w/; Yy /y/; Vv /v/; Xx /ks/	the, was, is, a, on, and, to, for, go, I, like, of, will, get, no (15)
Quarter 2	Bb /b/; Rr /r/; Ff /f/; Nn /n/; Ee /short e/; Ss /s/;	want, with, said, you, in, put, help, see, stop, from, off, ball, he, has,

	Ww /w/; Yy /y/; Vv /v/; Xx /ks/; Zz /z/; qu /kw/; long vowels /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, /yoo/	have, me (16)
Quarter 3	Ch /ch/; sh /sh/; th /TH voiced/unvoiced ; wh /w/ or /hw/	his, as, my, into, now, new, give, play, or, by, went, look, do, are, park, they, any (17)
Quarter 4	Review	orange, white, brown, red, yellow, blue, pink, green, black, one, two, come, our, who, what, where, why (17)

Reading Vocabulary and Comprehension in Kindergarten

In Kindergarten English Language Arts, reading vocabulary and comprehension are developed through intentional instruction aligned with Ohio's Learning Standards. Teachers use high-quality anchor texts and active read-aloud strategies to build listening comprehension, oral language, and vocabulary knowledge. Through repeated readings, purposeful questioning, and interactive discussions, students engage deeply with texts while learning to make predictions, identify key details, and understand story structure. Vocabulary instruction is embedded within each read-aloud, with explicit teaching of tiered words to support language acquisition and comprehension. This integrated approach fosters a strong foundation in literacy and prepares students for future reading success.

Unit	Anchor Text
Welcome to School	<i>Wemberly Worried</i> by Kevin Henkes <i>The King of Kindergarten</i> by Derrick Barnes <i>I Like Myself!</i> by Karen Beaumont <i>The Crayon Box That Talked</i> by Shane DeRolf <i>Amazing Grace</i> by Mary Hoffman <i>Ruthie and the (Not So) Teeny Tiny Lie</i> by Laura Rankin <i>Words Are Not for Hurting</i> by Elizabeth Verdick <i>Today I Feel Silly: And Other Moods That Make My Day</i> by Jamie Lee Curtis
Noticing Patterns in Stories	<i>The Very Busy Spider</i> by Eric Carle <i>Jump, Frog, Jump!</i> by Robert Kalan <i>We're Going on a Bear Hunt</i> by Michael Rosen <i>We're Going on a Lion Hunt</i> by David Axtell <i>Sitting Down to Eat</i> by Bill Harley <i>The Napping House</i> by Audrey Wood <i>Hush! A Thai Lullaby</i> by Minfong Ho <i>Caps for Sale</i> by Esphyr Slobodkina <i>Monkeys and Their Monkey Business</i> by A. H. Benjamin
Celebrating Fall	<i>Fall Weather: Cooler Temperatures</i> by Martha E. H. Rustad <i>Why Do Leaves Change Color?</i> by Betsy Maestro <i>Autumn Leaves</i> by Ken Robbins

	<i>Leaf Man</i> by Lois Ehlert <i>Leaves</i> by David Ezra Stein <i>We're Going on a Leaf Hunt</i> by Steve Metzger <i>Fall Harvest Fun</i> by Martha E. H. Rustad <i>The Pumpkin Book</i> by Gail Gibbons <i>The Apple Book</i> by Gail Gibbons
Falling in Love with Authors and Illustrators	<i>Kite Flying</i> by Grace Lin <i>Dim Sum for Everyone!</i> by Grace Lin <i>Fortune Cookie Fortunes</i> by Grace Lin <i>The Ugly Vegetables</i> by Grace Lin <i>Tito Puente, Mambo King</i> by Monica Brown <i>My Name Is Celia: The Life of Celia Cruz</i> by Monica Brown <i>Pele, King of Soccer</i> by Monica Brown <i>My Name Is Gabriela: The Life of Gabriela Mistral</i> by Monica Brown <i>The Lion and the Mouse</i> by Jerry Pinkney <i>The Tortoise and the Hare</i> by Jerry Pinkney <i>The Grasshopper and the Ants</i> by Jerry Pinkney
Holiday Stories	<i>The Gingerbread Boy</i> by Paul Galdone <i>The Gingerbread Man Loose in the School</i> by Laura Murray <i>The Gingerbread Man Loose at Christmas</i> by Laura Murray <i>Gingerbread Mouse</i> by Katy Bratun <i>Trees</i> by Verlie Hutchens <i>Pick a Pine Tree</i> by Patricia Toht <i>The Great Spruce</i> by John Duvall <i>The Christmas Wish</i> by Lori Evert <i>The Wild Christmas Reindeer</i> by Jan Brett <i>Bear Stays Up for Christmas</i> by Karma Wilson <i>Muddypaws' First Christmas</i> by Steve Smallman <i>Snowmen at Christmas</i> by Caralyn Buehner
Winter Wonderland	<i>It's Snowing!</i> by Gail Gibbons <i>The Story of Snow: The Science of Winter's Wonder</i> by Mark Cassino and Jon Nelson <i>The Snowy Day</i> by Ezra Jack Keats <i>Animals in Winter</i> by Henrietta Bancroft and Richard G. Van Gelder <i>The Big Snow</i> by Berta and Elmer Hader <i>Over and Under the Snow</i> by Kate Messner <i>Big Tracks, Little Tracks</i> by Millicent Selsam <i>Wild Tracks!</i> by Jim Arnosky <i>Tracks in the Snow</i> by Wong Herbert Yee <i>The Mitten</i> by Jan Brett <i>Annie and the Wild Animals</i> by Jan Brett <i>The Hat</i> by Jan Brett

Exploring Life Cycles	<i>It's Spring!</i> by Samantha Berger and Pamela Chanko <i>What's Alive?</i> by Kathleen Weidner Zoehfeld <i>How a Seed Grows</i> by Helene J. Jordan <i>From Seed to Sunflower</i> by Gerald Legg <i>The Tiny Seed</i> by Eric Carle <i>Who Will Plant a Tree?</i> by Tom Leonard <i>Frogs</i> by Gail Gibbons <i>From Tadpole to Frog</i> by Wendy Pfeffer <i>Waiting for Wings</i> by Lois Ehlert <i>From Caterpillar to Butterfly</i> by Deborah Heiligman <i>Have You Heard the Nesting Bird?</i> by Rita Gray <i>A Nest Full of Eggs</i> by Priscilla Belz Jenkins <i>The Ugly Duckling</i> by Hans Christian Andersen (various retellings; often by Jerry Pinkney or Stephen Mitchell)
Dr. Suess	<i>The Cat in the Hat</i> by Dr. Seuss <i>Fox in Socks</i> by Dr. Seuss <i>Wacky Wednesday</i> by Theo. LeSieg (Dr. Seuss) <i>Horton Hears a Who!</i> by Dr. Seuss <i>Green Eggs and Ham</i> by Dr. Seuss
Reduce, Reuse, Recycle	<i>What a Waste: Trash, Recycling, and Protecting our Planet</i> by Jess French <i>The Last Straw: Kids vs. Plastics</i> by Susan Hood <i>The Three R's: Reuse, Reduce, Recycle</i> by Nuria Roca <i>Recycle!</i> by Gail Gibbons <i>Rainbow Weaver / Tejedora del Arcoíris</i> by Linda Elovitz Marshall <i>Compost Stew: An A to Z Recipe for the Earth</i> by Mary McKenna Siddals <i>Harlem Grown</i> by Tony Hillery
Author Study	<i>Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!</i> by Mo Willems <i>The Pigeon Finds a Hot Dog!</i> by Mo Willems <i>We Are in a Book!</i> by Mo Willems <i>Waiting Is Not Easy!</i> by Mo Willems <i>The Duckling Gets a Cookie!?</i> by Mo Willems

District and State Reading Assessments

In Kindergarten, students participate in several district assessments to support early literacy development. Within the first 30 days of school, all Kindergarten students take the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA), which provides teachers with baseline information about each child's early learning and development. In addition to the KRA, Kindergarten students are assessed using the NWEA MAP Growth Reading (Ohio K-2) assessment multiple times throughout the year to monitor progress in key literacy areas aligned with Ohio's Learning Standards. During the last quarter of the year, students also complete the NWEA Dyslexia Screener, which helps identify potential early indicators of reading difficulties. These assessments guide instruction, support early intervention, and ensure each

student receives the foundational literacy support they need to thrive. Other assessments may be given to provide insight into student needs.

Curriculum Materials, Instructional Methods and Resources

Ohio's Kindergarten English Language Arts Standards
Institute for Multi-Sensory Education- Orton Gillingham
Heggerty Phonemic Awareness
Anchor Texts - guided by Fishtank Learning
Scholastic News