



## A Parent's Guide to: **Fourth Grade Reading Standards**

Parents and schools  
working together for  
student achievement.

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There has been a lot of discussion about “academic standards” and student achievement over the past few years. Standards set the target or the end result of teaching and learning for students at each grade level in reading, math, and other subject areas.

The following guide presents the “performance descriptors” or expectations for reading at the grade level and provides an explanation or example of the skills. Most importantly, this guide has some fun activities for you and your child to do at home. This guide is a start. If you want additional information about how your child is doing and what your child is learning at school, talk to your child’s teacher. For other learning at home ideas, visit the South Dakota Parent Resource Network online at [www.sdprn.org](http://www.sdprn.org), or call toll free at 1-800-219-6247.

**Proficiency Statement: Students will apply knowledge of sentence structures, complex word patterns and comprehension strategies to acquire vocabulary and construct meaning from grade level texts.**

**This means that by the end of the fourth grade children—**

- Read grade level material smoothly with expression, by sounding out new words such as recognizing and applying letter/ sound relationships, seeing little words in the bigger word, breaking words apart in chunks, thinking about what makes sense, recognizing sight words, and re-reading.
- Are able to determine the meanings of words not known by breaking the words into syllables or parts (yes-ter-day), understanding contractions (can’t is cannot), and finding root words (child is the root word in children).
- Are able to identify and summarize key points of the story.
- Are able to use previously known information and clues found in the story to determine the meaning of new words and understand what is happening in the story.
- Are able to use the various parts of a book to make predictions about what the book is about and/or what information can be found in the book. (For example: table of contents, heading, bold print, captions, pictures, etc.)

**Proficiency Statement: Students will be able to distinguish similarities and differences in literary elements, literary devices, and text structures and features to facilitate comprehension across genres.**

**This means that by the end of the fourth grade children—**

- • Are able to identify different ways the author gives meaning to the story such as comparing and contrasting (how things are alike and how they are different), descriptions of people and places, and the problems and solutions in a story.
- • Are learning to think about what is read by understanding that various elements give meaning to a story. These elements can include messages in the story, what the characters and the settings are like, what happens in the story, and the order of the events in the story.
- • Are learning to recognize the use of various techniques that give meaning such as:
  - simile – comparing two unlike objects,
  - alliteration – repeating beginning sounds of words in a sentence,
  - personification – animal or things acting like humans, and
  - imagery – painting a picture with words.
- • Are able to recognize the difference between facts and fiction when reading stories about real people, places, and times. (For example: A biography about Abraham Lincoln is based on facts).

**Proficiency Statement: Students are able to gather and organize information for study and research purposes.**

**This means that by the end of the fourth grade children—**

- • Can gather information from several sources such as the internet, the library, print material, newspapers, maps, textbooks, etc.
- • Can arrange/organize information found by note taking on note cards, highlighting important parts or key words and definitions or other organizing strategies for the purpose of learning more about a subject or to complete an assignment.

### **Ideas for learning at home**

- • Read with and to your child. Establish reading times that are a part of a daily routine. Set aside quiet time for family reading. Read chapter books together – take turns reading the book aloud. Listen to your child read books from school. Read what they are reading at school together. READ
- • Make all kinds of books available. Visit the library often. Begin making weekly trips to the library, and get your child his/her own library card.
- • Talk about books and what is being read. Ask your child what he/she thinks will happen or what he/she would do in a certain story. Ask what your child sees in their minds when they he/she read certain descriptions or actions in a book. Ask how the story relates to his/her life. Discuss what causes certain things to happen in your child's life. (For example: Because I brush my teeth, I usually get a good report from the dentist.)
- • Make informational books available. Explore and practice using the parts of a book such as the table of contents, the glossary, or the index. Have a book scavenger hunt. Pre-find a few facts from informational books and write them as questions. See how many

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answers your child can find. Give points and rewards for each answer. Have fun learning new information.

- Ask family member and friends to consider giving your child books and magazine subscriptions as gifts for birthdays or other special occasions. Set aside a special place for your child to keep his/her own library of books.

**South Dakota Resource Network**

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