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Grade 4 TEKS Connections

Strand by Strand

How each strand builds within itself and across the year

Grade 4 English Language Arts and Reading

Prepared by Randi Whitney

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The Year at a Glance

Thirteen strands sounds like a lot until you see what they are doing. They build the language tools: talk, the code, words, smooth reading, and time spent reading. One is the act of understanding. One is what a student does with that understanding. Two are the kinds of text a student meets. One is the choices the author made. Two are the writing. One is the research: a question followed through sources to a presentation.

The strands are numbered in the order the TEKS lists them, not in the order a lesson uses them. A reading lesson may begin in 6, reach back to 3 for a word, and end in 7 with a written response. The map below is the shape of the year, and the sections that follow take each strand in turn. Where a Grade 4 expectation is new or changed from Grade 3, the section says so in one plain sentence.

Strand group	Strands	What the student does
Foundational language	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	The tools: talk, the code, words, smooth reading, and time spent reading.
Comprehension	6	The reader makes sense of a text on purpose.
Response	7	The reader shows what they understood, in talk and in writing.
Multiple genres	8, 9	The elements inside a story and the shapes different kinds of text take.
Author's purpose and craft	10	Why the author made the choices on the page.
Composition	11, 12	The writing process and the kinds of writing it produces.
Inquiry and research	13	A question followed through sources to a presentation.

FOUNDATIONS 1 2 3 4 5 *the tools a reader needs*

↓

GENRES AND CRAFT 8 9 10 *what texts are made of; feeds 6, 7, 11 and 12*

↓

COMPREHENSION 6 *making sense of a text*

↓

RESPONSE 7 *showing what was understood*

↓

COMPOSITION 11 12 *turning understanding into writing*

↓

INQUIRY 13 *a question followed through sources to a presentation; can draw on the strands above*

All 13 strands appear above. Genres and craft, strands 8, 9 and 10, feed comprehension and response and give composition its shape. Inquiry, strand 13, can draw on the other strands as a question requires.

Each strand section opens with the strand's own sentence, then groups its student expectations into the steps they form. Every expectation carries its code and its wording, followed by a short note on what it adds and which earlier expectation it stands on. Each section closes with How It Connects and a one-line summary.

Strand 1: Oral Language

FOUNDATIONAL LANGUAGE: LISTENING, SPEAKING, DISCUSSION, AND THINKING

> *"The student develops oral language through listening, speaking, and discussion."*

Oral language comes first because every other strand runs on talk: the question a student asks in a conference, the discussion after a read aloud, the plan two students make before they write. Four expectations take a student from listening well to planning shared work. Grade 4 changes C and D: C now asks for an opinion supported by accurate information, and D now asks for a plan of shared responsibilities.

STEP 1. Listening well (A)

4.1(A) *"listen actively, ask relevant questions to clarify information, and make pertinent comments".* Three moves in one expectation. Listening actively means the student is tracking what the speaker says, not waiting for a turn. The question and the comment are the proof: a relevant question shows where understanding stopped, and a pertinent comment shows the student tied the new information to something already known. Every later expectation that begins with a question, including 4.6(B), starts with this habit.

STEP 2. Carrying instructions (B)

4.1(B) *"follow, restate, and give oral instructions that involve a series of related sequences of action".* This adds memory and order. Following is the input, restating is the check, and giving is the output. A student who can restate a three-step direction in order has held the sequence in mind. Holding a sequence in order is also what 4.7(D) asks for when it names logical order.

STEP 3. Backing an opinion (C)

4.1(C) *"express an opinion supported by accurate information, employing eye contact, speaking rate, volume, enunciation, and the conventions of language to communicate ideas effectively".* The new demand is in the first words: an opinion is not enough, and accurate information has to sit under it. The delivery list is unchanged from grade 3, from eye contact through the conventions of language. A supported opinion in talk is the spoken partner of the supported response in 4.7(C).

STEP 4. Planning shared work (D)

4.1(D) *"work collaboratively with others to develop a plan of shared responsibilities".* The group now has to produce something: a plan with the work divided. This stands on A, because a group cannot plan anything if no one is listening, and on C, because the plan is where opinions get tested against information. It is the oral version of the planning in 4.11(A) and 4.13(B).

How It Connects

Strand 1 feeds every strand that asks a student to talk: 4.6(B) questions, 4.7(G) discussion, 4.13(A) inquiry questions and 4.13(H) oral delivery. It draws from 4.3 vocabulary, since a student can only say what they have words for, and from 4.6, since a discussion needs something read or heard to discuss.

In short: A opens the ears, B holds the order, C backs an opinion with information, and D turns the talk into a shared plan.

Strand 2: Beginning Reading and Writing

FOUNDATIONAL LANGUAGE: WORD STRUCTURE, PHONICS, AND MORPHOLOGY

> *"The student develops word structure knowledge through phonological awareness, print concepts, phonics, and morphology to communicate, decode, and spell."*

This is the longest strand and the most sequential. The decoding list and the spelling list cover the same ground in a slightly different order, which is useful in the classroom: a word a student reads on Tuesday can be spelled on Thursday. In grade 4 the lists are shorter: decoding starts from named patterns and rules, and the compound-word and abbreviation items are gone.

STEP 1. Decoding longer words (A)(i) through (vi)

4.2(A) *"demonstrate and apply phonetic knowledge by:"* The umbrella for the six decoding expectations that follow. Each one gives the reader another way into a word that is too long to recognize at a glance.

- **4.2(A)(i)** *"decoding words with specific orthographic patterns and rules, including regular and irregular plurals"*. New in grade 4, and placed first: the reader is expected to know the patterns and rules behind the word, and the wording names regular and irregular plurals. Regular plurals follow predictable patterns; irregular plurals follow their own.
- **4.2(A)(ii)** *"decoding multisyllabic words with closed syllables; open syllables; VCe syllables; vowel teams, including digraphs and diphthongs; r-controlled syllables; and final stable syllables"*. This is the syllable toolkit. Each type gives the reader a way to cut a long word into parts that can be sounded. The list begins with closed syllables, the most common syllable type in English, and works through the rest.
- **4.2(A)(iii)** *"decoding words using advanced knowledge of syllable division patterns such as VV"*. The division work continues, and the word *advanced* is new. The example is *VV*, where two vowels that often team up have to be divided instead. This stands on (ii), since the reader still has to know the syllable types.
- **4.2(A)(iv)** *"decoding words using knowledge of prefixes"*. The first time a word part carries meaning as well as sound. A reader who knows *pre-* can read a word and get a hint about it at the same time.
- **4.2(A)(v)** *"decoding words using knowledge of suffixes, including how they can change base words such as dropping e, changing y to i, and doubling final consonants"*. Suffixes change the base word as well as the meaning, and this is where reading and spelling meet. The same three changes come back in 4.2(B)(vi), where the student has to spell them.
- **4.2(A)(vi)** *"identifying and reading high-frequency words from a research-based list"*. The words a reader should not have to work out. Speed on these is what frees attention for meaning in 4.4 and 4.6.

STEP 2. Spelling the same ground (B)(i) through (vi)

4.2(B) *"demonstrate and apply spelling knowledge by:"* The spelling list covers the same ground as the decoding list, and spelling asks for more. A reader picks the right sound; a speller must pick the right letters. The lists differ in what they include: homophones appear in the spelling list, and the high-frequency words are not in this list. Those words are checked at edit time in 4.11(D)(xi).

- **4.2(B)(i)** *"spelling multisyllabic words with closed syllables; open syllables; VCe syllables; vowel teams, including digraphs and diphthongs; r-controlled syllables; and final stable syllables"*. The same six syllable types as 4.2(A)(ii), now produced rather than recognized. A student who can spell by syllable has a way to check a word that does not look right.

4.2(B)(ii) *"spelling homophones"*. Carried over from grade 3 unchanged and placed early. The words *their* and *there* sound the same, so the ear cannot decide between them; the sentence and the meaning have to.

4.2(B)(iii) *"spelling multisyllabic words with multiple sound-spelling patterns"*. Where one sound can be spelled more than one way, the speller must choose the letters. Decoding narrows the sound; spelling must pick among the letters that can make it, which is the deeper demand.

4.2(B)(iv) *"spelling words using advanced knowledge of syllable division patterns"*. The same advanced division work as 4.2(A)(iii), now produced. Dividing the word is how a speller hears each part before writing it.

4.2(B)(v) *"spelling words using knowledge of prefixes"*. The same prefixes as 4.2(A)(iv), now produced. Prefixes are usually spelled the same way wherever they land, which makes them a reliable place to start when the rest of the word is uncertain.

4.2(B)(vi) *"spelling words using knowledge of suffixes, including how they can change base words such as dropping e, changing y to i, and doubling final consonants"*. The same suffixes as 4.2(A)(v), now produced, and this is where spelling goes deepest. The reader only notices the changed base word; the speller must carry out the change: drop the *e*, change the *y* to *i*, double the consonant.

STEP 3. Handwriting that keeps up (C)

4.2(C) *"write legibly in cursive to complete assignments"*. Cursive counts because it must be legible, and that is the same word Strand 11 opens with: texts that are legible. What grade 4 adds is the purpose: the handwriting exists to complete assignments. A hand a teacher cannot read cannot be revised in 4.11(C) or published in 4.11(E).

How It Connects

Strand 2 feeds 4.3(A) reference work, 4.3(C) affix meaning, 4.4 fluency, and the spelling check in 4.11(D)(xi). It draws from 4.1 oral language, because the sounds a student hears and says are the raw material for the code.

In short: the strand teaches the code in pieces, then asks the student to read it, spell it, and write it.

Strand 3: Vocabulary

FOUNDATIONAL LANGUAGE: NEWLY ACQUIRED VOCABULARY

> *"The student uses newly acquired vocabulary expressively."*

Four expectations, and they move from finding out what a word means to owning it well enough to use it. The word *expressively* is the tell: a student who only recognizes a word has not finished the work. In grade 4 the context work asks for the relevant meaning, and the parts work adds roots beside affixes.

STEP 1. Finding the meaning (A, B)

4.3(A) *"use print or digital resources to determine meaning, syllabication, and pronunciation".* A dictionary entry answers three questions, and the expectation names all three. The syllabication in the entry stands on 4.2(A)(ii), and looking the word up is where the spelling work of 4.2(B) gets a real purpose.

4.3(B) *"use context within and beyond a sentence to determine the relevant meaning of unfamiliar words or multiple-meaning words".* The phrase *within and beyond* is the important one. A single sentence may not be enough, so the reader has to look at the sentences around it. The word *relevant* is new in grade 4: among the meanings the context allows, the reader must pick the one that fits. This reaching beyond the sentence is what 4.6 as a whole asks a reader to do with a whole text, applied here to one word.

STEP 2. Building meaning from parts (C)

4.3(C) *"determine the meaning of and use words with affixes such as mis-, sub-, -ment, and -ity/ty and roots such as auto, graph, and meter".* This stands directly on 4.2(A)(iv) and (v): the student could already read the parts, and now the parts carry meaning. New in grade 4 are the roots: *auto*, *graph* and *meter* join the affixes, so a word can be taken apart two ways at once.

STEP 3. Seeing how words relate (D)

4.3(D) *"identify, use, and explain the meaning of homophones such as reign/rain".* One relationship instead of five: words that sound alike but mean different things. *Reign* and *rain* show why the spelling work of 4.2(B)(ii) matters, since the ear cannot decide between them. The verb *explain* asks for the meaning of the pair, not just the pair itself.

How It Connects

Strand 3 feeds 4.7(F), where a response uses newly acquired vocabulary, and 4.10(D), where figurative language is named as craft. It draws from 4.2 for word parts and spelling, and from 4.5 and 4.6, since wide reading is where most new words arrive.

In short: A looks the word up, B reads around it, C takes it apart, and D tells the sound-alikes apart.

Strand 4: Fluency

FOUNDATIONAL LANGUAGE: RATE, ACCURACY, AND PROSODY

> *"The student reads grade-level text with fluency and comprehension."*

One expectation, three parts, and one common misunderstanding. Fluency is not speed. A student who races through a page and ignores the punctuation is not fluent, because the point of fluency is that the reading sounds like it means something.

STEP 1. One expectation with three parts

4.4 *"use appropriate fluency (rate, accuracy, and prosody) when reading grade-level text".* Accuracy gets the words right, rate keeps them moving at a speed that still allows meaning, and prosody is the phrasing and expression that show the reader understands. The word *appropriate* does the work in this expectation: the right rate depends on the text, not on a number. This stands on 4.2, where decoding becomes automatic, and it feeds 4.6, where the reader needs attention free for meaning. The strand's own opening sentence pairs fluency with comprehension, so the two are not separate goals.

How It Connects

Strand 4 sits between decoding and understanding: 4.2 builds the word recognition that makes fluency possible, and 4.6 spends the attention that fluency frees. It also feeds 4.5, since a student who reads smoothly is more likely to keep reading, and it shares its attention to rate and expression with the speaking side of 4.1(C).

In short: accuracy gets the words right, rate keeps them moving, and prosody lets the listener hear the meaning.

Strand 5: Self-Sustained Reading

FOUNDATIONAL LANGUAGE: INDEPENDENT READING

> *"The student reads grade-appropriate texts independently."*

One expectation with two parts, and both parts matter. A student has to choose a text and then stay with it. Choice and stamina can support each other: a student who chooses a text has a reason to stay with it, and time spent inside a book makes the next choice easier.

STEP 1. Choose, then stay

4.5 *"self-select text and read independently for a sustained period of time".* ***Self-select*** stands on 4.6(A), because a student who knows their purpose for reading can choose a text that serves it. Sustained time stands on 4.4, because fluency is what makes a long stretch of reading comfortable. The payoff runs in several directions: more words met for 4.3, more background knowledge for the connections in 4.6(E), and more texts a student can speak about in 4.7(A).

How It Connects

Strand 5 draws from 4.4 fluency and 4.6(A) purpose, and it feeds 4.3 vocabulary, 4.6(E) connections and 4.7(A) personal connections, which names self-selected texts directly.

In short: the student picks the book and then gives it real time, which is how the other strands get their practice.

Strand 6: Comprehension

COMPREHENSION SKILLS USING MULTIPLE TEXTS

> *"The student uses metacognitive skills to both develop and deepen comprehension of increasingly complex texts."*

Strand 6 is not a list. Its own opening line says why: the student uses metacognitive skills to both develop and deepen comprehension. The nine student expectations, A through I, group into four moves a teacher can use: getting ready, building the picture, going beneath the surface, and keeping watch. That is one way to organize the instruction, not a required order, because 4.6(B) itself spans before, during and after reading, and 4.6(I) runs alongside all of it.

STEP 1. Getting ready to read (A, B, C)

4.6(A) *"establish purpose for reading assigned and self-selected texts".* This is the root. Purpose tells the reader what to pay attention to, and it is what later decides which details matter in 4.6(G).

4.6(B) *"generate questions about text before, during, and after reading to deepen understanding and gain information".* A purpose turns into questions. If I am reading to learn how bees help plants, my questions come from that purpose. This stands on A, and it is also the habit 4.1(A) practices out loud.

4.6(C) *"make and correct or confirm predictions using text features, characteristics of genre, and structures".* A prediction is a question the reader has already tried to answer. The reader commits to an idea and then tests it against the text. The text features and genre knowledge come from 4.9.

STEP 2. Building the picture while reading (D, E)

4.6(D) *"create mental images to deepen understanding".* The reader turns words into a picture. Now there is something concrete to check predictions against, which is why this stands on C.

4.6(E) *"make connections to personal experiences, ideas in other texts, and society".* The picture gets attached to what the reader already knows. This is the bridge from what the words say to what the reader can figure out, and it is the connection 4.7(A) later asks the student to describe.

STEP 3. Going beneath the surface (F, G, H)

4.6(F) *"make inferences and use evidence to support understanding".* Inference is where images and connections meet the text: what I see, plus what I know, plus what the text shows me, equals what the author did not say outright. The evidence requirement keeps it honest, and it is also where corrected predictions from 4.6(C) get their proof.

4.6(G) *"evaluate details read to determine key ideas".* Now the reader judges. Not every detail or inference matters equally, and purpose from 4.6(A) is the yardstick. The key ideas found here lead to the central idea named in 4.9(D)(i).

4.6(H) *"synthesize information to create new understanding".* The deepest level. The reader combines the key ideas into something that was not on the page before: a new understanding of their own. In our language, this is where a thesis, a central idea, is born, and a written response in 4.7(B) can draw on that understanding.

STEP 4. The thread through all of it (I)

4.6(I) *"monitor comprehension and make adjustments such as re-reading, using background knowledge, asking questions, and annotating when understanding breaks down".* This is the metacognition the strand names in its opening line. Notice that its repair tools are the earlier skills

used again: asking questions is 4.6(B), and background knowledge is 4.6(E). So (I) is the loop that sends a reader back down the ladder when they lose their footing.

How It Connects

Strand 6 hands off directly to Strand 7, Response skills. 4.7(C) asks students to use text evidence to support an appropriate response, which is 4.6(F) put into writing. The synthesis in 4.6(H) can deepen that response, because it adds an understanding the student can then support with evidence. It also draws on 4.9 for genre and text features, and on 4.3 for the words that make the text readable.

In short: A sets the target, B and C aim at it, D and E build the scene, F reaches under it, G sorts what matters, H creates something new, and I keeps the whole process honest.

Strand 7: Response Skills

RESPONDING TO SOURCES READ, HEARD, OR VIEWED

> *"The student responds to an increasingly challenging variety of sources that are read, heard, or viewed."*

Response is where reading becomes visible. Seven expectations move from a personal reaction to a response the text can support, first in talk and then in writing. In grade 4 the written response compares across sources, and the retelling adds summarizing.

STEP 1. Starting from the reader (A)

4.7(A) *"describe personal connections to a variety of sources, including self-selected texts"*. This stands on 4.6(E), and it adds the word *describe*. The connection has to be explained, not just announced, which is the first small step toward evidence.

STEP 2. Responding with the text (B, C)

4.7(B) *"write responses that demonstrate understanding of texts, including comparing and contrasting ... across a variety of sources"*. The word *demonstrates* is the check. A response that only states a feeling does not demonstrate understanding; one that shows what the student understood does. New in grade 4 is the comparing and contrasting across sources: the response must now hold more than one text at a time. This stands on 4.6(G) and 4.6(H), because a student cannot compare ideas they have not found and combined.

4.7(C) *"use text evidence to support an appropriate response"*. This is 4.6(F) put into writing, and it is a sentence the rest of the year leans on. The evidence requirement is what separates a response from an opinion. The same demand returns in 4.12(C), where an opinion essay has to support its claim.

STEP 3. Handling the source (D, E)

4.7(D) *"retell, paraphrase, or summarize texts in ways that maintain meaning and logical order"*. Retell keeps the order, paraphrase keeps the meaning in different words, and *summarize*, new in grade 4, keeps only what matters. Three skills in one expectation, and paraphrase is the one 4.13(F) depends on later when a source has to be used without copying it.

4.7(E) *"interact with sources in meaningful ways such as notetaking, annotating, freewriting, or illustrating"*. The physical work of holding onto thinking. Annotation is also named as a repair tool in 4.6(I), so this expectation gives the student a place to keep what the monitoring caught.

STEP 4. Responding in the language of the text (F, G)

4.7(F) *"respond using newly acquired vocabulary as appropriate"*. This is where 4.3 pays off. The phrase *as appropriate* keeps it honest: the response should use the word because it fits, not because it was on a list.

4.7(G) *"discuss specific ideas in the text that are important to the meaning"*. The last expectation returns to talk, and it stands on 4.1(A) and 4.1(C) for the listening and speaking, and on 4.6(G) for knowing which ideas are important. *Specific* is the key word: a discussion of general opinions is not this expectation.

How It Connects

Strand 7 is the hinge between reading and writing. It draws from 4.6 for understanding, from 4.3 for vocabulary, and from 4.1 for discussion. It feeds 4.11 and 4.12, where the response grows into a composition, and 4.13(F), where paraphrase becomes the difference between using a source and copying it.

> *In short: A brings the reader in, B and C bring the text in, D and E keep the source straight, and F and G give the response its words.*

Strand 8: Literary Elements

MULTIPLE GENRES: LITERARY ELEMENTS

> *"The student recognizes and analyzes literary elements within and across increasingly complex traditional, contemporary, classical, and diverse literary texts."*

Four elements, and the order in the list is not quite the order a reader builds them. Theme is listed first because it is the destination, not because it comes first in the work. In grade 4 the wording changes in all four places: themes in the plural with evidence, interactions and changes, four named plot stages, and settings that include historical and cultural ones.

STEP 1. Who it happens to and what happens (B, C)

4.8(B) *"explain the interactions of the characters and the changes they undergo".* Interactions replace relationships, and the changes the characters undergo are named outright. This stands on the inference in 4.6(F): neither an interaction nor a change is usually stated outright.

4.8(C) *"analyze plot elements, including the rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution".* Four named stages instead of three described ones. Rising action, climax, falling action and resolution give the student the vocabulary for where a story stands. This stands on B, because the action usually rises between characters.

STEP 2. Where it happens (D)

4.8(D) *"explain the influence of the setting, including historical and cultural settings, on the plot".* *Influence* is the key word. The setting is not a backdrop to name and move past; this expectation asks the student to show how the place and time change what can happen. Historical and cultural settings are named in grade 4, since the time and the culture are what do the influencing. It stands on C, since the plot is what the setting is influencing.

STEP 3. What it all means (A)

4.8(A) *"infer basic themes supported by text evidence".* *Themes* in the plural and *basic*: a work can carry more than one, and the student starts with the plain ones. The evidence requirement is new, and it is 4.6(F) again: the theme is inferred, and the text has to support it. This stands on B, C and D, which supply the evidence.

How It Connects

Strand 8 feeds 4.12(A), where a personal narrative is built from characters, plot and setting, and 4.9(A), where the same elements appear in fixed forms such as fables. A poem written for 4.12(A) can draw on the figurative language students explain in 4.9(B). The strand draws from 4.6(F) for inference and from 4.7 for the response that names what the student noticed.

In short: B and C give the reader people and events, D shows what the place and time do to them, and A turns the whole pattern into ideas.

Strand 9: Genres

MULTIPLE GENRES: GENRE-SPECIFIC CHARACTERISTICS, STRUCTURES, AND PURPOSES

> *"The student recognizes and analyzes genre-specific characteristics, structures, and purposes within and across increasingly complex traditional, contemporary, classical, and diverse texts."*

Six letters, each one a family of text. The pattern repeats inside every family: name the form, name its parts, and name what those parts do for the reader. In grade 4 the parts inside several families change: poetry turns to figurative language, drama to script structure, and the informational pattern is new. The argument structure stays, with a change to how facts work inside it.

STEP 1. Story forms (A)

4.9(A) *"demonstrate knowledge of distinguishing characteristics of well-known … folktales, fables, legends, myths, and tall tales".* The list trades fairy tales for tall tales. This stands on the literary elements in Strand 8. The elements are the same; what changes is their fixed shape. A tall tale, for instance, stretches the truth on purpose and dares the reader to notice.

STEP 2. Poetry (B)

4.9(B) *"explain figurative language such as simile, metaphor, and personification that the poet uses to create images".* No longer rhyme scheme and stanzas: grade 4 asks what the figurative language does, which is to create images. Simile, metaphor and personification are the three named. Simile and metaphor return as craft in 4.10(D).

STEP 3. Drama (C)

4.9(C) *"explain structure in drama such as character tags, acts, scenes, and stage directions".* The parts are now the structure of the script: character tags that say who speaks, acts and scenes that divide it, and stage directions that say what happens besides the dialogue. *Explain* replaces *discuss*. This is still where 4.1(C) earns its keep, since drama is written to be spoken.

STEP 4. Informational text (D)(i) through (iii)

4.9(D) *"recognize characteristics and structures of informational text, including:"* Three things to recognize, and they move from the whole to the parts to the pattern.

- **4.9(D)(i)** *"the central idea with supporting evidence".* The central idea is 4.6(G) given a name, and the evidence is 4.6(F) given a job. This is the expectation a student carries into 4.12(B).
- **4.9(D)(ii)** *"features such as pronunciation guides and diagrams to support understanding".* Two features instead of a long list: a pronunciation guide for saying the hard words, and diagrams for seeing how the parts fit. Each one is a signal about what matters. These are the text features a reader uses to predict in 4.6(C).
- **4.9(D)(iii)** *"organizational patterns such as compare and contrast".* Compare and contrast is the pattern named in grade 4. The wording says patterns such as this one, so other organizational patterns count too. A reader who sees it knows to look for what is alike and what is different. This feeds 4.10(B) and 4.11(B)(i).

STEP 5. Argumentative text (E)(i) through (iii)

4.9(E) *"recognize characteristics and structures of argumentative text by:"* The expectation names three moves: find the claim, test how the facts are used, and identify who it is written for.

4.9(E)(i) *"identifying the claim"*. The claim is the point the author wants the reader to accept. Everything else in the text should serve it.

4.9(E)(ii) *"explaining how the author has used facts for an argument"*. No longer telling fact from opinion: grade 4 asks how the facts are used, which is the harder question. A fact only helps an argument if it is placed where it counts. This is the reading partner of the evidence requirement in 4.7(C).

4.9(E)(iii) *"identifying the intended audience or reader"*. Who the argument is built for. Audience decides which reasons an author chooses, which is why this connects to purpose in 4.10(A).

STEP 6. Multimodal and digital texts (F)

4.9(F) *"recognize characteristics of multimodal and digital texts"*. Words plus image, sound, or layout. This stands on (D)(ii), because the features are the same kind of signal, and it feeds the delivery choice in 4.13(H).

How It Connects

Strand 9 feeds 4.12(A) through (C): 4.9(B) shapes poetry in literary composition, 4.9(D)(i) shapes informational composition, and 4.9(E)(i) through (iii) shape argumentative composition. It also feeds 4.10, where the same structures are examined as author's choices, and it draws on 4.6 for the comprehension that makes analysis possible.

In short: A names the story forms, B and C name the parts of poetry and drama, D and E name the parts of information and argument, and F adds the screen.

Strand 10: Author's Purpose and Craft

CRITICAL INQUIRY INTO AUTHORS' CHOICES

> *"The student uses critical inquiry to analyze the authors' choices and how they influence and communicate meaning within a variety of texts. The student analyzes and applies author's craft purposefully in order to develop his or her own products and performances."*

Seven expectations about choices. The first is the why, the middle ones are the how, and voice is the sound of the whole thing.

STEP 1. Why the author made it (A)

4.10(A) *"explain the author's purpose and message within a text"*. Two questions in one expectation: what is this text for, and what is it saying? This stands on the genre purposes in 4.9 and on the reader's own purpose in 4.6(A), which is the mirror image of the author's.

STEP 2. How the text is built (B, C)

4.10(B) *"explain how the use of text structure contributes to the author's purpose"*. This stands on 4.9(D)(iii). Structure is a choice, not a default, and the expectation asks the student to connect the choice back to the purpose in A.

4.10(C) *"analyze the author's use of print and graphic features to achieve specific purposes"*. This stands on 4.9(D)(ii) and adds the judgment: the same feature can serve different purposes in different texts, so the student has to explain this use, not just spot the feature. *Analyze* replaces *explain*: the student has to take the feature apart.

STEP 3. The language tools (D, E, G)

4.10(D) *"describe how the author's use of imagery, literal and figurative language such as simile and metaphor, and sound devices such as alliteration and assonance achieves specific purposes"*. Metaphor joins simile, and the sound devices are named: *alliteration* and *assonance*. This stands on 4.9(B) for figurative language. The phrase literal and figurative is worth slowing down for, since the student has to tell which one is in front of them before explaining what it does.

4.10(E) *"identify and understand the use of literary devices, including first- or third-person point of view"*. The verb *understand* is added in grade 4: spotting the point of view is not enough, and the student has to say what it does for the reader. Point of view decides what the reader can know and who is telling it. This stands on 4.8(B), because the narrator's position shapes how the reader sees the characters.

4.10(G) *"identify and explain the use of anecdote"*. Anecdote replaces hyperbole in grade 4: a short story told to make a point. Two verbs: identify it, then explain what the story does for the text. It still belongs with the language tools, since it is one more device to name.

STEP 4. Voice (F)

4.10(F) *"discuss how the author's use of language contributes to voice"*. Voice comes from the author's use of language, and the imagery, figurative language and anecdote in D and G are some of the choices that make it. *Discuss* is the right verb here, because voice is hard to point to and easier to describe once the earlier devices have names.

How It Connects

The strand's second opening sentence hands the craft to the writer: analysis learned for the sake of the student's own products and performances. So Strand 10 feeds 4.12, where the student composes with the craft they have studied, and 4.11(C), where revision covers sentence structure and word choice. It draws from 4.9 for genre and structure, from 4.3 for word meaning, and from 4.6 for the comprehension that lets a reader get far enough in to notice a choice.

In short: A names the purpose, B and C show how the page serves it, D, E and G name the language tools, and F names the voice those choices make.

Strand 11, Composition: The Writing Process

COMPOSITION: PLANNING, DRAFTING, REVISING, EDITING, PUBLISHING

> *"The student uses the writing process recursively to compose multiple texts that are legible and uses appropriate conventions."*

The word *recursively* matters. The steps are not a straight line, and a writer who revises often goes back to plan. The strand is built in five moves, with the longest list inside the edit.

STEP 1. Plan (A)

4.11(A) *"plan a first draft by selecting a genre for a particular topic, purpose, and audience using a range of strategies such as brainstorming, freewriting, and mapping".* One selection fitted to three givens: the student selects a genre for a particular topic, purpose and audience. This stands on 4.9 for the genre choice and on 4.6(A) for the habit of naming a purpose. The strategies named, such as brainstorming, freewriting and mapping, are how the choice gets made.

STEP 2. Develop the draft (B)(i) and (ii)

4.11(B) *"develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by:"* Two things make a draft a piece of writing rather than a pile of sentences: a structure and an idea that holds the details together.

4.11(B)(i) *"organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction, transitions, and a conclusion".* This stands on 4.9(D)(iii), where organizational patterns were recognized in reading. Now the student builds one. *Transitions* are new in grade 4: the joints between the parts, which also have to be built.

4.11(B)(ii) *"developing an engaging idea with relevant details".* ***Relevant*** is the yardstick, and it is 4.6(G) again: a detail earns its place by serving the idea. ***Engaging*** is carried over from grade 3, where the same phrase appears, and it is where 4.10 begins to matter.

STEP 3. Revise (C)

4.11(C) *"revise drafts to improve sentence structure and word choice by adding, deleting, combining, and rearranging ideas for coherence and clarity".* Four moves are named: adding, deleting, combining and rearranging for coherence and clarity. This stands on B, because there has to be a draft with a structure before revision has anything to improve. Word choice is where 4.3 and 4.10(F) meet the page.

STEP 4. Edit: the conventions list (D)(i) through (xi)

4.11(D) *"edit drafts using standard English conventions, including:"* Eleven expectations in four groups: the sentence in (i), (ii) and (viii); the kinds of words inside it in (iii) through (vii); the mechanics that mark them in (ix) and (x); and spelling in (xi). The list is a checklist, not a sequence, and a teacher can take the groups in any order.

4.11(D)(i) *"complete simple and compound sentences with subject-verb agreement and avoidance of splices, run-ons, and fragments".* The sentence is the unit, and agreement is the first check. New in grade 4 is the avoidance list: *splices*, *run-ons* and *fragments* name the three ways a sentence breaks.

4.11(D)(ii) *"past tense of irregular verbs".* One tense in grade 4, and the hard one: irregular verbs do not follow the rule, so each form has to be known. Tense is time, and a draft that slips between times confuses the reader.

4.11(D)(iii) *"singular, plural, common, and proper nouns".* Nouns answer who or what, and the common and proper pair is where capital letters begin. The nouns named here return in (vii), where pronouns stand in for them, and in (ix), where some of them take capitals.

4.11(D)(iv) *"adjectives, including their comparative and superlative forms".* Adjectives add detail, and the comparative and superlative forms add comparison. This stands on (iii), since an adjective needs a noun to describe.

4.11(D)(v) *"adverbs that convey frequency and adverbs that convey degree".* Two new kinds in grade 4. Frequency answers how often, and degree answers how much. Two kinds are named, which keeps the expectation teachable: frequency and degree, not every adverb at once.

4.11(D)(vi) *"prepositions and prepositional phrases".* Prepositions answer where and when, and the phrase they begin usually ends in a noun.

4.11(D)(vii) *"pronouns, including reflexive".* The core idea is simple: a pronoun stands in for a noun, so the noun has to be clear first, which is the work of (iii). New in grade 4 is the reflexive: the pronoun that turns back on the subject, such as *myself*.

4.11(D)(viii) *"coordinating conjunctions to form compound subjects, predicates, and sentences".* This stands on (i). A conjunction is what makes a compound sentence compound, so the student needs to know a sentence first. It is also the setup for the comma rule in (x).

4.11(D)(ix) *"capitalization of historical periods, events, and documents; titles of books; stories and essays; and languages, races, and nationalities".* This stands on the proper nouns in (iii). Grade 4 widens the map: historical periods and events, documents, titles of stories and essays, and languages, races and nationalities. The expectation names the specific places capitals go, which keeps the rule concrete.

4.11(D)(x) *"punctuation marks, including apostrophes in possessives, commas in compound sentences, and quotation marks in dialogue".* Contractions are gone from this expectation; the apostrophe work is possessives now. Quotation marks in dialogue are new, and they mark who is speaking. Commas in compound sentences stand on the conjunctions in (viii).

4.11(D)(xi) *"correct spelling of words with grade-appropriate orthographic patterns and rules and high-frequency words".* Spelling closes the list, and it stands on the whole of 4.2(B): the syllable types, the affixes, the base-word changes, and the high-frequency words from 4.2(A)(vi).

STEP 5. Publish (E)

4.11(E) *"publish written work for appropriate audiences".* Publishing closes the loop that A opened with audience: the work goes to a reader. When the work is a research result, 4.13(H) widens the choice to oral or multimodal delivery.

How It Connects

Strand 11 draws from 4.9 for genre, 4.10 for craft, 4.2 for spelling, and 4.1 for the talk that surrounds a conference. It feeds 4.12, since the compositions there are produced through this process. Both 4.11(A) and 4.13(B) ask the student to plan before producing: 4.13(B) plans the inquiry, 4.11(A) plans the draft.

In short: A chooses, B builds, C reshapes, D cleans, and E hands the work to a reader.

Strand 12, Composition: Genres

COMPOSITION: LITERARY, INFORMATIONAL, ARGUMENTATIVE, AND CORRESPONDENCE

> *"The student uses genre characteristics and craft to compose multiple texts that are meaningful."*

Four expectations, and each one is a different kind of writing. This is where Strand 9 and Strand 10 meet Strand 11: the genre gives the shape, the craft gives the quality, and the process gets it done. The four are parallel genres that share the 11 writing process, and each adds something the earlier one did not. A personal narrative in A draws on the writer's own life, and poetry draws on the ear for sound. Informational writing in B adds a central idea the writer must hold to. Argument in C adds a claim and a reader to persuade, which is the opinion essay. Correspondence in D is the most direct, because a real person will read it.

STEP 1. Literary texts (A)

4.12(A) *"compose literary texts such as personal narratives and poetry using genre characteristics and craft"*. A personal narrative draws on the characters, plot and setting of 4.8. A poem can draw on the figurative language students explain in 4.9(B). Craft is the 4.10 work: imagery, point of view, and voice.

STEP 2. Informational texts (B)

4.12(B) *"compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea and genre characteristics and craft"*. The central idea comes from 4.9(D)(i): a topic explained around one idea, shaped by the genre characteristics and craft the strand names.

STEP 3. Argumentative texts (C)

4.12(C) *"compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics and craft"*. This stands on 4.9(E): a claim, facts that can be checked, and a sense of who the reader is. The opinion essay is the form where those three parts have to line up.

STEP 4. Correspondence (D)

4.12(D) *"compose correspondence that requests information"*. The shortest expectation and the most direct: the letter has a job, which is to ask for something. It stands on 4.11(E), because a letter is written to be sent.

How It Connects

Strand 12 draws from 4.9 for the literary, informational and argumentative shapes, from 4.10 for craft, from 4.8 for narrative elements, and from 4.11 for the process. The written response in 4.7(B), which compares understanding across sources, grows here into a full composition with a genre and craft. Strand 12 can also feed 4.13(H): when students compose an informational research text, 4.12(B) gives it the shape.

In short: A tells a story, B explains a topic, C argues a point, and D writes to a person.

Strand 13: Inquiry and Research

INQUIRY AND RESEARCH: SHORT-TERM AND SUSTAINED

> *"The student engages in both short-term and sustained recursive inquiry processes for a variety of purposes."*

Eight expectations that run like a research cycle. The word *recursive* appears again, this time about inquiry: a researcher who finds a new question goes back to the start.

STEP 1. Ask (A)

4.13(A) *"generate and clarify questions on a topic for formal and informal inquiry".* This stands on 4.6(B). The same question habit, now aimed at a topic rather than at a text. *Clarify* is new in grade 4: the first question is rarely the best one, and the student has to sharpen it before following it. Formal inquiry is the research project; informal inquiry is the question a student follows in a conversation or a read aloud.

STEP 2. Plan (B)

4.13(B) *"develop and follow a research plan with adult assistance".* This stands on 4.11(A), where planning a draft was already a set of decisions. *With adult assistance* is part of the expectation at this grade, and it names the support rather than hiding it.

STEP 3. Gather (C, D)

4.13(C) *"identify and gather relevant information from a variety of sources". Relevant* is the yardstick from 4.6(G) and 4.11(B)(ii), and a variety of sources is what makes the next expectation possible.

4.13(D) *"identify primary and secondary sources".* Where the information comes from decides how much weight it carries. A photograph from the event and a later article about it are not the same kind of evidence.

STEP 4. Make it yours (E, F, G)

4.13(E) *"demonstrate understanding of information gathered".* This is 4.6(H) applied to research: the student combines what was gathered into an understanding of their own, and demonstrates it rather than repeating it.

4.13(F) *"recognize the difference between paraphrasing and plagiarism when using source materials".* This stands directly on 4.7(D). Paraphrase keeps the meaning in the student's words; plagiarism uses someone else's words or ideas without credit. The difference is both the wording and the credit.

4.13(G) *"develop a bibliography".* The credit made visible. Grade 4 names the list a bibliography. This stands on (F): telling paraphrase from plagiarism apart is what makes the list necessary.

STEP 5. Present (H)

4.13(H) *"use an appropriate mode of delivery, whether written, oral, or multimodal, to present results".* The last expectation can draw on several strands: written delivery uses 4.11(E), oral delivery uses 4.1(C), and multimodal delivery uses 4.9(F). Appropriate sends the student back to audience and purpose one more time.

How It Connects

Strand 13 pulls from 4.6 for questions and synthesis, from 4.7 for paraphrase, from 4.9 for genre and multimodal texts, and from 4.11 for planning and publishing. It feeds back into 4.11(B)(ii), since gathered information becomes the relevant details of a draft, and into 4.12(B), since research usually ends in an informational composition.

> *In short: A asks, B plans, C and D gather, E, F and G make the material the student's own, and H presents it.*

The Threads That Run Through the Year

A strand section shows how one strand builds. This table shows how the strands hold each other up. Each row is a connection the wording supports: the first code hands something to the second, and the last column says what that looks like in plain words.

Read it one row at a time. A teacher planning a unit can follow a row forward to see what the work is preparing, or backward to see what it depends on.

From	To	Why, in plain words
4.1(A)	**4.6(B)**	Asking a relevant question out loud is the same habit as generating questions about a text.
4.2(A)(iv)	**4.3(C)**	Prefixes are decoded first, then used to work out what a word means.
4.2(A)(v)	**4.3(C)**	Suffixes are decoded first, then used to work out what a word means.
4.2(A)(v)	**4.2(B)(vi)**	Suffix rules appear in the reading list and the spelling list, with the same three base-word changes.
4.2(A)(vi)	**4.4**	Words recognized on sight leave attention free for rate, accuracy and meaning.
4.2(A)(ii)	**4.3(A)**	Syllable types learned for decoding are what syllabication in a dictionary entry requires.
4.2(B)	**4.11(D)(xi)**	Spelling knowledge is applied when a draft is edited.
4.2(B)(ii)	**4.3(D)**	Homophones spelled in 4.2(B)(ii) are the homophones explained in 4.3(D).
4.3(B)	**4.6**	Working out a word from context keeps comprehension moving.
4.4	**4.6**	Fluency and comprehension are paired in the strand's own opening sentence.
4.5	**4.6(E)**	Independent reading builds the background knowledge that connections need.
4.5	**4.7(A)**	Self-selected texts chosen in 4.5 are sources a response in 4.7(A) can describe.
4.6(A)	**4.6(G)**	Purpose decides which details count as key.
4.6(B)	**4.13(A)**	Both name generating questions: about a text in 4.6(B), on a topic in 4.13(A).
4.6(E)	**4.7(A)**	Personal connections made in 4.6(E) are described in 4.7(A).
4.6(F)	**4.7(C)**	Inference with evidence becomes a response the text can support.
4.6(H)	**4.7(B)**	Synthesis in 4.6(H) can deepen the written response 4.7(B) asks for.
4.6(G)	**4.9(D)(i)**	Key ideas found in 4.6(G) lead to the central idea of informational text in 4.9(D)(i).
4.7(B)	**4.12**	A written response that demonstrates understanding grows into a full composition.
4.8(B)-(D)	**4.8(A)**	Characters, plot and setting supply the evidence for themes.
4.8	**4.12(A)**	Characters, plot and setting learned in Strand 8 are what a personal narrative is made of.
4.9(B)	**4.12(A)**	Figurative language students explain in 4.9(B) can become a craft choice in a poem they compose for 4.12(A).
4.9(B)	**4.10(D)**	Figurative language named in poetry in 4.9(B), simile and metaphor, returns as craft in 4.10(D).
4.9(D)(i)	**4.12(B)**	The central idea with supporting evidence becomes the central idea of an informational composition.
4.9(D)(ii)	**4.6(C)**	Text features named in 4.9(D)(ii) are what a prediction in 4.6(C) uses.
4.9(D)(ii)	**4.10(C)**	Print and graphic features named in 4.9(D)(ii) return as author choices in 4.10(C).
4.9(D)(iii)	**4.10(B)**	Organizational patterns named in 4.9(D)(iii) become the text structure 4.10(B) ties to purpose.
4.9(D)(iii)	**4.11(B)(i)**	Organizational patterns named in 4.9(D)(iii) become the purposeful structure a draft in 4.11(B)(i) is organized with.
4.9(E)	**4.12(C)**	A claim, facts and an audience are the parts of an opinion essay.

From	To	Why, in plain words
4.9(F)	**4.13(H)**	Multimodal texts recognized in 4.9(F) are one delivery mode named in 4.13(H).
4.10(D), (E)	**4.12(A)**	Imagery and figurative language from 4.10(D), and point of view from 4.10(E), can be craft choices in a literary composition.
4.10(A)	**4.11(A)**	The author's purpose studied in 4.10(A) returns as the writer's own purpose in 4.11(A).
4.11(A)	**4.13(B)**	Both ask the student to plan before producing: 4.13(B) plans the inquiry, 4.11(A) plans the draft.
4.13(C)	**4.11(B)(ii)**	Gathered information becomes the relevant details in a draft.
4.7(D)	**4.13(F)**	Retelling and paraphrasing in 4.7(D) is the skill 4.13(F) asks students to tell apart from plagiarism.
4.1(C)	**4.13(H)**	An opinion delivered with eye contact and rate in 4.1(C) is the skill an oral presentation in 4.13(H) needs.
4.3(A)-(D)	**4.7(F)**	A response uses the vocabulary the student has acquired.

Three threads carry the most weight. The first is words: strand 2 builds them, strand 3 gives them meaning, strand 4 makes them automatic, and strand 7 asks the student to use them. The second is evidence: 4.6(F) makes an inference, 4.7(C) demands proof, 4.9(D)(i) pairs the central idea with supporting evidence, and 4.9(E)(ii) shows how facts are used for an argument. The third is purpose: it starts in 4.6(A), guides the author's choices in 4.10(A), and returns in 4.11(A) as the writer's own decision.

The strands are not thirteen separate subjects. They are one year of thinking, split into parts so each part can be taught in its own turn.