

Fall, 2012

The 4th Grade Writing Program

In 4th grade, your student learns to write four main genres: narratives, summaries, responses to literature, and information reports. S/he also writes shorter pieces such as poems and letters. Your student will word process some written compositions.



For each main genre, your student first learns and practices a variety of grade-level specific skills, one by one. This includes learning to plan with a graphic organizer. S/he then integrates and builds upon these skills to write essays. After the initial period of skills introduction and practice, each student moves ahead at his/her own pace, with regular teacher input. The writing program is customized, and addresses the unique needs of each student.

Your student also learns to use a child-friendly rubric to monitor and evaluate his/her own progress. Each rubric point matches a California State Content Standard. (Please see the attached Narrative Writing rubric.)

Completed essays are sent home for parent review. But you will be asked to return essays to class because they become part of your student's portfolio until the end of the year.

In March, all California 4th graders take the California Writing Standards (STAR) Test. On testing day, students receive a writing task (a prompt) in one of the first three genres listed above. Students then write to the prompt, without assistance, for about one hour, without the use of dictionaries or other aides to writing.