

Grade
4

The Complete Year in Reading and Writing

Daily Lessons • Monthly Units • Yearlong Calendar

Laurie Pastore and Pam Allyn

 **SCHOLASTIC**

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To all fourth-grade teachers, who care so much, and:

To my mother, for showing me what it means to be a teacher;
to my father, for teaching me to love books; and my sister,
for reminding me what is truly important in life.

~ *Laurie Pastore*

To Lois Bridges and Danny Miller.

~ *Pam Allyn*

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Chapter 1

All About the Complete Year

Dear Fourth-Grade Teacher,

Your fourth graders are busy. They are busy with their imaginations, their lively experiences, their curiosity, their investigations, their friendships, their home relationships. Their lives are rich with the interconnectedness of all of these parts. Their minds are wide awake, humming, singing with possibility.

Do not be deceived by how old they look, and how they may dress like preteens. At home, they put together a Lego® set after school, a complex project of creation that takes several days to complete. They have a pretend game with a group of friends which goes on and on, where parts are added and discarded over weeks at a time. They generate creative ideas constantly: writing songs, making plays, doing art projects.

They are your greatest allies in any good idea waiting to be hatched, any class project waiting to be done, any fun adventure waiting to be launched. They are coming into their own. You can see the stirrings of true talent: the child whose singing voice suddenly stops your class in its tracks, the child who can zing through ten books in two weeks, the child who draws a face with a startling understanding of human emotion in it. Suddenly, what looks like play is also the early indication of all kinds of passions and interests that child may embrace as she grows to adulthood.

The process work this year, then, is about all of that. It is about helping our students integrate new aspects of their identities and synthesize all the different ways they are experiencing the world through literacy. In the ARCH units that begin this year of instruction, your students are looking across texts to explore common themes

and interests and passions. Across the year, your students are learning how to talk with one another in meaningful and joyous ways about texts, their own and others’.

Your fourth graders can absorb all the newness of their expanding worlds. They are soaking it all in. Let this year be a feast in genre. Mysteries and plays are two genres to explore, discover, and admire; the emphasis on nonfiction connects them to their content areas and to the demands of the state and national assessments while offering them ample opportunity to roam with pleasure through all kinds of text resources and explore their own topics of interest.

Our students are making connections everywhere. Their minds are working at a fast and furious rate, and so units in strategies are opportune and eagerly received. They study theme, character, and more ethereal elements of literature such as mood and tone, all to capture those essential connections across books, across ideas, and across genres.

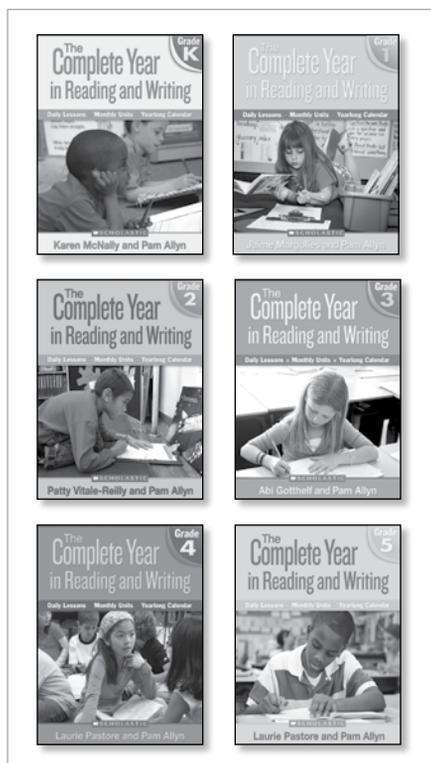
Fourth graders see links everywhere. What better areas to study this year than punctuation that links and connects, grammar that is used to enhance a steady sentence, modifiers, and a deepened knowledge of parts of speech? They are builders, constructors, fort-makers, play-makers, plan-makers, and goal-setters. They are fully into the conventional world and the world of conventions. They are part of the adult world, yet they also like to be just who they are, deeply themselves, quirky, intriguing, eccentric. Let us create a year that embraces all of that: the wanting to belong with the wanting to be themselves, the desire for mastery alongside the deeply creative potential that is in them. This duality is the miraculous world of the fourth grader.

Warmly,

Laurie Pastore Pam Allyn

At-a-Glance Overview of the Complete Year

Organized around the Complete 4 components (Process, Genre, Strategy, and Conventions) and four unit stages (Immersion, Identification, Guided Practice, and Commitment), each book in the Complete Year series features a year's worth of integrated reading and writing curriculum. Because we honor your professional decision-making, you will find that the Complete Year provides a flexible framework, easily adapted to your state standards and to the needs and goals of your community, your students, and your teaching style.



Pam Allyn's *The Complete 4 for Literacy* and Debbie Lera's *Writing Above Standard* are foundational texts for the Complete Year. LitLife and RealeBooks provide innovative professional and technological support for the Complete Year.

What Will You Find Inside the Complete Year Series?

Yearlong Curricular Calendar

Units of Study

- More than 25 detailed unit outlines spanning every season of the school year.
- 8 Spotlight Units including more than 100 day-by-day lessons
- 2 ARCH units to start your year right
- 2 reflective units to end your year on a powerful note

Assessment

- Individualized assessments for every unit
- Complete 4 Assessment (C4A)

Lists of Anchor Texts for Each Unit

Parent Letters

Resource Sheets and Homework Assignments

Professional Reading Lists

Glossary of Terms

DVD that features Pam Allyn sharing the benefits of the Complete 4 for the Complete Year as well as ALL downloadable assessment forms and resources. You will also find helpful links to professional development support from LitLife and easy-to-use technological support from RealeBooks to help you publish your students' work.

The Complete Year Supports...

Individual teachers wanting a clear road map and detailed lessons for reading and writing and for reading/writing connections.

School or district teams wanting to plan a continuum together with specific lessons and units that address the needs of all students—ELL, gifted, and special needs.

Administrative leaders and literacy coaches wanting to guide their school to a consistent, standards-rich plan for reading and writing instruction.

EARLY FALL
LATE FALL
WINTER
SPRING

The ARCH: Becoming Inspired by Writers PROCESS

Why Teach This?

- To help students embrace the rules and routines for writing time.
- To identify each students' writing strengths, weaknesses, and interests.
- To develop student writing identities, abilities, and interests.
- To develop a community of writers who will sustain and support one another across the year.
- To explore how literature influences our writing.

Framing Questions

- How are we continuing to develop an understanding of ourselves as writers?
- How can we build a community of writers who support and trust one another?
- In what way(s) does literature influence and inspire us as writers?

Unit Goals

- Students will help create a supportive writing community.
- Students will internalize the routines and structures of writing time, including conferences and assessments.
- Students will set personal writing goals.
- Students will identify influential texts.

Anchor Texts

- Owen & Mzee: The True Story of a Remarkable Friendship* by Isabella Hatkoff, Craig Hatkoff, and Dr. Paula Kahumbu
- "Poem" by Langston Hughes (from *The Dream Keeper and Other Poems*)
- "Where I'm From" by George Ella Lyon (from *Seeing the Blue Between: Advice and Inspiration for Young Poets*, edited by Paul B. Janeczko)
- Wings* by Christopher Myers

Resource Sheet

- Idea Generator (Resource 2.2)

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The **unit title** clarifies the purpose of the unit and establishes the placement of the unit within a larger K-5 continuum.

One of the **Complete 4 components** (Process, Genre, Strategy, or Conventions) anchors us inside the Unit Template.

Framing Questions guide students toward a central understanding with increasing independence throughout the unit.

Unit Goals focus your instruction within each unit and give you measurable outcomes to help you focus assessment.

Anchor Texts list children's literature titles and other resources that will simplify your planning process. They are just suggestions that we feel would work well with the unit. You are free to substitute your favorites.

Resource Sheets provide you with teacher-tested graphic organizers that support instruction.

Unit Assessments are linked to unit outcomes and evaluate individual student progress. You can print out copies of these assessments from the accompanying DVD.

Stages of the Unit organize your instruction, guiding your students from inquiry to application.

Focused Instruction provides day-by-day direction for teaching throughout the unit. Each bullet reflects approximately one day of instruction.

Independent Practice links student engagement to Focused Instruction.

Total Days are based on suggested lessons. Numbers of days can be adjusted to meet the needs of your class.

EARLY FALL
LATE FALL
WINTER
SPRING

Unit Assessment The ARCH: Becoming Inspired by Writers		PROCESS		
Student name:	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	INDEPENDENT	
Understands his or her role in the class writing community.				
Understands and follows the routines and structures of writing time.				
Sets personal writing goals.				
Identifies influences and models in literature.				

Stage of the Unit	Focused Instruction	Independent Practice
IMMERSION 7 days	You will <ul style="list-style-type: none"> share your reflections on who you are as a writer: interests, topics, favorite genre, habits. read about <i>Owen & Mzee</i>; share why this text inspires you and share your other writing inspirations—key texts, key authors, key writing experiences in your life. 	Students will <ul style="list-style-type: none"> meet in partnerships to share their own writing reflections; present the other student in their partnership to the class as a particular kind of writer.
IDENTIFICATION 5 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> set expectations for writing notebooks (use of pages, table of contents, page numbering, foldovers to mark new projects, etc.). model writing a list of future writing topics using the Four Prompts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> organize notebooks according to class expectations; write a new piece. create a list of future writing topics.
GUIDED PRACTICE 7 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> continue to explore where great writing ideas come from; remind students that writing inspirations do not have to be large, important events, but could be ordinary moments you want to explore. share George Ella Lyon's poem "Where I'm From"; model your own "Where I'm From" list; use this list to inspire another modeled piece of writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> think of ordinary moments that may inspire them to write because they wonder about them or because they preoccupy them; write in response. write their own "Where I'm From" lists, using the list to inspire another piece of writing. write in response to the prompt "Where do your ideas come from?"
COMMITMENT 1 day	ask your students, "How can we inspire one another this year as writers? How can we create a supportive writing community?"	write in response to the following question: "What will inspire you as a writer this year?"
TOTAL: 20 DAYS		

CHAPTER 2 • EARLY FALL: THE FOURTH GRADER AS DEEP THINKER 25

How This Book Will Support You

The Complete Year in Reading and Writing: Grade 4 is written by two authors, Laurie Pastore, a team leader at LitLife and experienced classroom teacher, and Pam Allyn, the executive director of LitLife. Together, we have spent thousands of hours in fourth-grade classrooms, pondering the unique experiences that comprise this year.

LitLife is a global organization dedicated to teacher training in the area of literacy education. Every lesson in this book has been field tested in a wide variety of classrooms. LitLife team leaders coach teachers and work alongside students to create a practical, meaningful curriculum that is well suited to each grade level because it exists inside a broader continuum. See this book as a compass you can use to chart a course in reading and writing instruction that feels true to your beliefs about the developmental needs and interests of fourth graders.

Many programs do not differentiate sufficiently by grade level. Fourth-grade teachers are often combined into a grade 3–5 grouping in professional literature and workshops. And yet the span between these grades is psychologically, socially, and intellectually gigantic. A curriculum for fourth grade needs to match the development of the learner and the uniqueness of this age of student.

In creating this book for you, we also keep in mind the entirety of the child's learning experience throughout the elementary grades. While specifically written for fourth graders, the units presented here were created with the big picture in mind: children's entire K–5 experience.

The Complete 4

The Complete 4 was devised in response to the need expressed to us by teachers for balance in literacy instruction. We believe students should be well-rounded readers and writers. This means they should learn about reading and writing strategies. They should also develop a strong understanding of genre and a working knowledge of the conventions of the English language and begin to take on the passions, habits, and behaviors of lifelong readers and writers. The Complete 4 includes four key components of literacy instruction that will help us teach into these varied expectations: Process, Genre, Strategy, and Conventions.

The Complete 4 components help us to plan the school year by balancing the types of units across the year. Knowing whether a unit falls under the category of Process, Genre, Strategy, or Conventions helps us to focus the unit so that all our lessons lead up to several key understandings.

Here is what we mean by the Complete 4:

Process	Your students will practice the processes shared by all successful readers and writers, at an appropriate developmental level. These include fluency, stamina, and independence.
Genre	Your students will learn to identify and use various literary containers, including narrative, nonfiction, poetry, and standardized tests.
Strategy	Your students will learn to be strategic readers and writers, practicing how writers make plans on a page, and how readers approach text differently depending on their needs.
Conventions	Your students will learn grammar and punctuation in contexts that are real, practical, and relevant to their reading and writing experiences.

In planning a complete year of literacy instruction for fourth grade, we have created reading and writing units that reflect a deep balance. All four Complete 4 components are represented. Take a look at the color calendar on the inside front cover to see how the units in the fourth-grade year focus on the key components of literacy instruction—Process, Genre, Strategy, and Conventions. We have selected these units for you as a way to create balance and provide a solid foundation upon which a productive year of learning can occur.

Will this book help me connect other aspects of the curriculum to the Complete 4?

Absolutely! One of the best features of the Complete 4 system is its flexible capacity to help you integrate all the areas of your curriculum. For example, in fourth grade your students are studying history and science topics of all kinds. They are expanding their research skills. Units on nonfiction reading and writing support cross-content work. You can teach the skills and strategies for reading and writing in the content areas inside one or more of these units.

Alignment to standards is critical, and these units are constructed in such a way as to reflect the standards and to allow for adjustment to your state standards.

Can this book help me if I have other demands in my day and cannot teach all the units?

Yes, it can. Here are three suggestions for how you could adapt this calendar to your particular situation:

- You can choose one reading and one writing unit from each Complete 4 component to teach during the year.
- You can focus on the units of study that pair well with your existing themes.
- You can teach only the reading or writing strand.

Will the Complete 4 help me forge reading and writing connections with my students?

This is another great aspect of the Complete 4 program: we link reading and writing units as “companions.” Although the instruction may not always be identical, the units should be “talking” to one another. You will see how we take special care to make sure reading and writing units echo and parallel each other, or to stagger them so students see, feel, and understand those essential connections. Indeed, reading and writing are interrelated processes that are mutually supportive when taught together. You may have noticed that your strongest writers are typically your most passionate readers.

Can I use this book to support just my writing instruction since I already use another reading program?

Yes. You can use this book to guide you in either writing or reading. Take a look at the writing calendar only: with your grade-level team, you can look into your reading program and see where you can link your instruction. For example, if your reading program has a set of stories on friendship, you could link that set to our Uncovering Theme unit in the spring. This calendar is designed so that you can use it flexibly. Use the reading calendar alone, or the writing calendar alone. They work that way, but they have been written to match for those of you who want the “complete” package. The Complete 4 is also a way to reintroduce quality children’s literature into your classroom even if you use a core reading program.

Can I still benefit from this yearlong approach if my school has commitments that must be addressed at different times of the year?

One of the most exciting aspects of the Complete 4 is that the reading and writing units are interconnected and follow a logical sequence. However, we have also constructed the calendars to allow for flexibility. If, for example, your standardized testing comes earlier in the year, you can easily move units around to suit your test preparation schedule. Or if your entire school studies poetry together in the fall rather than the spring, you can move the units to accommodate that. The calendar is designed to be used either as a whole unit, as a step by step program, or as building blocks to construct your own unique program.

Will the Complete 4 help me meet the needs of all learners in my classroom?

The range of ability levels and learning modalities in each of our classrooms reminds us to balance our own teaching. The Complete 4 can help us accomplish this. For example, we tend to work with our English language learners mostly on conventions of print, while we work with writers whose first language is English more on strategies or genre. The Complete 4 reminds us that our English language learners flourish with exposure to the habits and passions of readers and writers,

the study of different genres, and practice with complex strategies. Similarly, your students who have a comparatively strong sense of conventions are often not given intensive instruction in that area, but they too would enjoy and benefit greatly from inspiring lessons on the construction of a sentence or the artful use of a punctuation mark. The Complete 4 guides us to teach with an eye to creating a Complete Year for all students.

Will this book help me with the flow of my day?

Yes! We are very aware of your time constraints and the benefits of predictable routines. We have created a very simple, easy-to-follow outline for each day's work during reading and writing time that follows a whole/small/whole pattern. These are the three parts of every lesson:

- Focused Instruction: the whole-class lessons
- Independent Practice: individualized or small-group work
- Wrap-Up: more whole-class teaching with planning for the next day's lesson

Focused Instruction	<p>Students gather for a period of Focused Instruction for 5 to 15 minutes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm up your students with a reference to prior teaching and learning. • Teach one clear point. • Ask students to quickly try your point. • Clarify your teaching point. • Set the stage for Independent Practice.
Independent Practice	<p>Students practice independently while you confer with students and/or conduct small instructional groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage students to read or write independently (at their level). • Have students practice your teaching point as they read and write. • Meet with individual students, partnerships, and/or groups regularly for informal assessment and instruction. • Look for future teaching points or an example to use in the Wrap-Up.
Wrap-Up	<p>Students return for a focused, brief discussion that reflects on the day's learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restate your teaching point. • Share examples of students' work or learning. • Set plans for the next day and make connections to homework.

What are my students actually doing during Independent Practice?

As you will see from the scripted lessons in our Spotlight Units, during Independent Practice students practice a skill you have demonstrated. In addition, they are doing something that seems fairly simple on the surface but in fact is the heart of our work and the driving energy for all the lessons in this book: **they are reading and writing independently**, every day. We suggest that 50 percent of all reading

and writing time be Independent Practice. Of this time, approximately 20 percent should be spent practicing a specific skill associated with their reading, and 80 percent of the time should be spent actually reading and writing! Students should be given time every day to read and write in a comfortable manner, at their reading and writing levels, and in books and topics that are of great personal interest to them. Here are the approximate amounts of time your students can and should be reading and writing for each day (you may have to work toward these minutes as the year unfolds):

Grade Level	Actual Reading Time	Actual Writing Time
KINDERGARTEN	10–15 minutes	10–20 (writing/drawing)
FIRST GRADE	10–20	10–20
SECOND GRADE	20–30	20–25
THIRD GRADE	30–40	25–30
FOURTH GRADE	35–45	25–30
FIFTH GRADE	40–45	30–40

Are there essential materials I must use in order to make the Complete 4 program a success?

You can use any of your support materials, including a core reading program or a phonics program, alongside the Complete 4 approach. The heart of our approach is that every child has time to practice skills, strategies, and processes through reading and writing that is at his level and is as authentic as possible. A seminal National Endowment for the Arts study (2007) found, not surprisingly, that “students who read for fun nearly every day performed better on reading tests than those who reported reading never or hardly at all.” The study points to the “failure of schools and colleges to develop a culture of daily reading habits.” In addition, an analysis of federal Department of Education statistics found that those students who scored lower on all standardized tests lived in homes with fewer than ten books (Rich, 2007). This study then points to two pivotal factors in ensuring lifelong literacy: children must have time to read a lot, and children must have easy, continual access to books.

Our work throughout this book and this series is designed to focus on daily Independent Practice: Students are reading authentic literature and reading a lot, every day, at their own level. Students are writing about topics of authentic interest and writing a lot, every day, at their own level. Students are navigating texts and have easy access to understandable texts throughout the day, especially during literacy time. These, then, are the two keys to our work: giving students time to practice reading and writing, and giving them access to texts that inspire them both as readers and as writers.

The access is critical and is best accomplished by establishing a well-stocked classroom library. Your library should have a variety of genres: nonfiction, fiction, and poetry. Approximately 20 to 30 percent of your library should be leveled

through a clearly organized system in which children can find books that are truly comfortable for them to read at their independent reading levels.

Your students should have a way to bring their books between home and school, and to store the stack of books they have been reading most recently, either in baggies or baskets. Organization is one of two keys to life (the other being passion!). Don't let disorder get in the way of helping your children do a lot of reading in your classroom. They can help you organize your library, too.

It is also crucial for students to have a way to record thinking about reading, either in a reading notebook, a folder, or even a binder. The important thing to remember is that this should be a system that works for you and your students. It does not matter so much what you select or what you call it, as long as you know your children can easily access it, and they feel comfortable writing in it and, if they are our youngest readers and writers, drawing in it.

During writing time, your students need order as well. Keep a separate writing area neat and stocked, equipped with all the helpful tools a writer loves: sticky notes, staplers, tape, and date stamps. And as with reading time, your students should have a clearly identified, easy-to-use container to capture their writing. In this series we use writing notebooks with our students from second grade to fifth grade, and writing folders with students in kindergarten and first grade. Using folders allows us to provide our students with a variety of paper choices if they need them. The key to keeping containers for students' writing work is that it is easy for them to revisit, reread, and reflect upon, and it is easy for you to look at before conferences and to assess on an ongoing basis. Again, it does not matter what you call these containers, or which ones you choose, as long as they are truly useful for both you and your students.

I don't have access to all the anchor texts you recommend in this book, or there are other texts I prefer to use instead. Will my units be as effective if my anchor text selections are somewhat different from yours?

We want to give you as many specific suggestions as we can, and so we have recommended many anchor texts for each unit. You can find them both in the unit templates and also in the back of the book in a seasonally organized bibliography so you can order all of them for your classroom library if you wish. However, if you can't find them all, or you have others you wish to use instead, you are more than welcome and the units will absolutely be as successful. Take a close look at why we chose the texts we did so you can replace them with selections that will still match the outcomes for the units and will feel comfortable for you.

I use the elements of balanced literacy: shared reading, guided reading, read-aloud, and more. Where do they fit in to the Complete 4 system?

See your elements of balanced literacy as the "how" of your teaching and the Complete 4 as the "what." Teachers who use balanced literacy elements are still

asking: But WHAT do I teach tomorrow? The Complete 4 answers that age-old question. Your balanced literacy structures, then, can truly become the engines that drive your content home. For example, shared reading and the read-aloud are structures you can use present your content, both in the Focused Instruction and in the Wrap-Up. Guided reading is a structure you can use to practice content with smaller groups of children. This can be done during Independent Practice, so while some of your children are reading independently others are meeting with you in small groups.

What if I've never taught in units like this before?

In a Complete Year unit of study, students learn about one aspect of reading or writing (process, genre, strategy, or conventions) in a one- to six-week cycle of learning. Inside this book you will find all the units for a Complete Year of reading and writing instruction. In each unit, we have set a specific focus for instruction and created framing questions to guide you and your students. We have set a time frame and established goals for each unit and put together a list of anchor texts that you can use to teach the lessons. Most important, we have provided helpful templates to take you through *all* the units.

To help you implement and pace your instruction, we have divided the instruction in each unit into four key lesson stages: Immersion, Identification, Guided Practice, and Commitment. The premise behind this concept was inspired by the work of Pearson and Gallagher (1983). They delineated a gradual release of responsibility from teacher to student as the ideal conditions for learning. These stages help us make the necessary turns in our teaching so that we move in an efficient and effective way through any unit of study and our students have the best chance for success.

Immersion	We immerse our students in a topic of study.
Identification	We name or define what students must know about the topic by the end of the unit.
Guided Practice	We model reading and writing for our students and give them time for practice, so that we can guide them toward the goals of the unit.
Commitment	We ask students to reflect on their learning and commit to the use of this knowledge in their future reading and writing.

You use specific language to identify the parts of a unit and the parts of a lesson. How can I be sure I can follow along easily?

The language in this book is extremely user-friendly. We try to steer clear of jargon as much as we can. To best help teachers plan units and teach lessons, we have identified terms that help us all move forward easily. We have included a helpful Glossary of Terms for you on page 233.

What is the role of the Spotlight Units in the Complete Year books?

Each Complete Year book features eight bonus Spotlight Units, designed to help you understand what each unit of study can look and feel like in your classroom—both in terms of the concrete day-to-day details as well as the “learning energy” that you create through your instructional language and strategies. During the Spotlight Units, we invite you into our classrooms to sit by our sides and listen as we interact with our students. While we know you’ll use your own language that reflects your unique teaching personality, we provide examples of language we use in our classrooms as a model for you to adapt. Learning how to craft our teaching language in artful ways that encourage active student participation takes practice; for example, knowing how to design open-ended questions rather than questions that just elicit a yes–no response is an art, typically learned through classroom-tested trial and error. Sometimes, it’s helpful to listen in on another teacher and notice how she uses language to frame each teaching moment.

Inside the Spotlight Units, you’ll find one reading unit and one writing unit in each of the Complete 4 components (Process, Genre, Strategy, and Conventions). Our Spotlight Units also include unit templates, so you can see how we translate the templates into day-by-day lesson plans. You’ll notice that not all bullets are translated directly into lessons and that the flow of the unit is fluid and flexible so you can adapt it in ways that fit your students’ unique needs and interests.

How do I use the unit templates?

We envision teachers taking the templates we provide for each unit and adapting them to their students. Perhaps you have favorite books you love to read in your nonfiction unit. Or perhaps your students need more than one day on a bulleted lesson. Although the templates offer guidelines for the overall structure of a unit and suggestions for how the unit might be paced, we see them as a road atlas, a guide that leads you toward your goal but also gives you the opportunity to add your own special touches along the way. Many teachers like to keep these unit templates on their desks as a reminder of where they are going, to help them plan each day’s lesson.

How will I assess my students through the Complete Year?

The structure of the Complete 4 classroom gives you a rich opportunity to assess your students during their Independent Practice. Units of study give you regular, frequent opportunities to take stock of your students’ progress. At the end of each unit is an assessment form for you to use.

Chapter 6 is dedicated to the C4 Assessment (C4A): a comprehensive tool designed for your grade level. You can use the C4A three times a year for both reading and writing. Quick and easy, the C4A will provide valuable information on your students’ progress in all areas of reading and writing instruction.

The Complete Year in Grade 4

These books are organized around the seasons of the year. Our learning time with our students, bound by the parameters of the school year, is also organized by seasons, and so we thought it would be helpful to organize our books that way, too.

As the year begins, fourth graders have great confidence about their place in school. They are the “big” kids and can go places independently; they may have new privileges at lunch and recess. Winter brings new growth. They are changing in many ways and are quite aware of the world outside their classrooms. They have a vibrant interest in the conversations of adults around them. They are building stamina. They are interested in how to read and write in the sciences and history. The spring brings with it more blooming possibilities. Students are reading in new genres and discovering the joys of reading a lot: quantity feels as good as quality. They have forged friendships that truly matter to them, and talk about things of great importance to them. At this spring season, they suddenly seem to grow another ten inches. They may be doing new after-school activities and sports that are important to them in ways that are becoming more than activities—they are passions. They are reading and writing poetry; together with friends, they are creating plays and performing them. Their world is changing, expanding, unfolding. They are gloriously young, seriously growing. This is a year like no other.

Get ready now for the Complete Year experience. Timely and timeless (and won't cost YOU time). Flexible and friendly (and fun). Easy to use and easy to navigate (and easy to explain to parents). Standards based and field tested (in hundreds of classrooms). Made for you (to simplify your teaching life and to reconnect you with the joy of teaching). Made for your fourth graders (especially).

Have a great year!

EARLY FALL

The Fourth Grader as Deep Thinker

“Ma spits on her finger. She wipes at a smudge on my chin. I lift my head and let her wash me all she wants. That finger of hers reminds me of the ginger cat who washes her kittens down in the Land of the Car Bones, where Pa and I take our walks sometimes.”

—from *Just Juice* by Karen Hesse

Our fourth graders are seized by ideas, becoming passionate about their own and intrigued by others'. This season is one of expanding for students: thinking across books, across ideas, making connections to all of the world, finding writers they love, collaborating with one another in productive and joyous ways as readers and writers. They are still so young, too, as you well know, and so the reading and writing times still represent tender moments of belonging, identity-shaping, and community-building. They are thinking deeply about themselves and about their relationships to others. Join us in this first season with our fourth graders for eight units of study in the teaching of reading and writing.

EARLY FALL UNITS

- The ARCH: Thinking Across Books, *page 21*
- The ARCH: Becoming Inspired by Writers, *page 24*
- Getting to Know the Job of Words:
Parts of Speech, *page 29*
- Adding Description to Writing:
Using Modifiers, *page 44*
- Deepening Collaboration: Reading Partners, *page 55*
- Deepening Collaboration: Writing Partners, *page 58*
- Exploring Changes in Characters, *page 61*
- Adding Thoughts and Feelings to Writing, *page 64*

SPOTLIGHT
UNITS

Beginning the Year With the ARCH

Our first units, known as the ARCH, are designed to bring our students together into a reading and writing community. This acronym stands for Assessment, Routines, Choice, and Healthy Community. The units balance the need to assess students as readers and writers with lessons on the routines of reading and writing time, the community-building aspects of reading and writing time, and how to make choices both in terms of topics and texts.

We must actively construct this community by establishing the daily routines for reading and writing time, discovering personal and shared interests, and introducing our students to our libraries and writing tools. Fountas and Pinnell (2001) remind us that during the first month of school you have two important goals: to help your students think of themselves as readers and to establish roles and routines. They remind us to repeat key lessons, chart the routines and roles of the reader and writer, and refer our students back to these reference points regularly.

As teachers, we are always a bit uncertain about how to begin the year in terms of content. We want to get to know our students, and we know we need to establish these routines, but we wonder what the content and outcomes are for this work. The ARCH is designed to blend both process and products: the beautiful work we do in coming together for the first time, as well as the important work we do in generating products that represent our students and move them forward at the very beginning of this school year's journey.

Each Complete 4 year begins with an ARCH unit at every grade level, but each year should feel different because of your students' changing developmental needs. (See page 112 of *The Complete 4 for Literacy* to see all the ARCH articulations for each grade level.) In fourth grade, our ARCH focus is Thinking Across Books and Becoming Inspired by Writers. In the reading and writing units that follow, we continue to build upon that theme with units that help our students discover the value of thinking and working across text.

The ARCH units set the foundation for the entire year. The ARCH incorporates teaching of all of those routines and habits you long for and need when you are in the midst of your work with your students. If you set the stage now, you are guaranteed a happy, truly productive year in the teaching of reading and writing.

The ARCH: Thinking Across Books

PROCESS

Why Teach This?

- To embrace the rules and routines of reading time.
- To develop student reading identities, abilities, and interests.
- To develop a community of readers who will sustain and support one another across the year.
- To develop the importance of thinking critically across text.

Framing Questions

- How are we continuing to develop an understanding of ourselves as readers?
- How can we build a community of readers who support and trust one another?
- How can we think across multiple texts?

Unit Goals

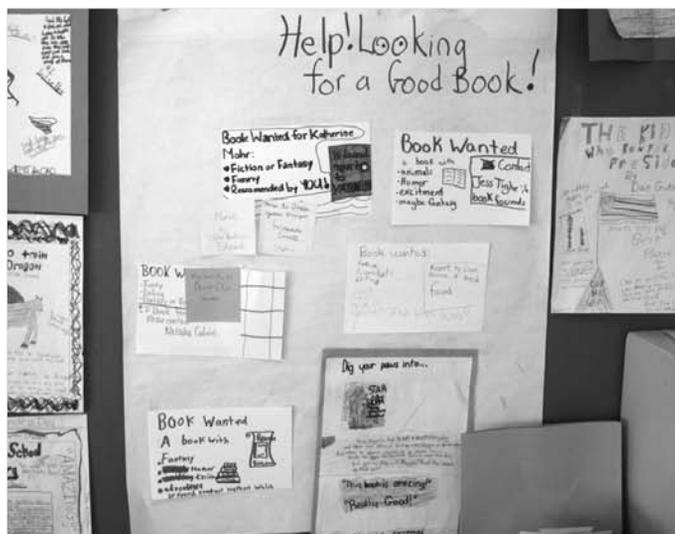
- Students will internalize the routines and structures of reading time.
- Students will set personal reading goals.
- Students will practice thinking critically across text, making important discoveries and connections.

Anchor Texts

- “Anti-Bullying Buddies,” a nonfiction article by Elizabeth Carney, *Scholastic News* (10/9/06)
- “The Bully” in *Baseball, Snakes, and Summer Squash: Poems About Growing Up* by Donald Graves
- *Riding the Tiger* by Eve Bunting
- *Whoever You Are* by Mem Fox
- *Zen Ties* by Jon J. Muth

Resource Sheet

- Reading Goals Planner (Resource 2.1)



Unit Assessment The ARCH: Thinking Across Books		PROCESS	
Student name:	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	INDEPENDENT
Understands and follows the routines and structures of reading time.			
Has an accurate sense of oneself as a reader, including challenges faced.			
Sets personal reading goals.			
Uses classmates for book/genre/author suggestions.			
Demonstrates a developing ability to talk across text.			

Stage of the Unit	Focused Instruction You will	Independent Practice Students will
IMMERSION 4 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> introduce the class to your classroom library, the routines for borrowing books, the way the library is organized. review prior knowledge and experience in key fictional genres. read aloud from <i>Whoever You Are</i> by Mem Fox; explore similarities, as people and as readers, despite differences in classroom community. read aloud <i>Zen Ties</i> by Jon J. Muth; explore what it means to be a friend, a classmate, and a member of a reading community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore the library, listing books of interest and their location. list favorite genres and favorite titles within genres; share these with a partner; explore these genre baskets in the library. find classmates with similar interests; interview them, explore their reading preferences, explore genre baskets together. set personal goals as readers and as members of a reading community; get acclimated to the flow of the reading period.
IDENTIFICATION 4 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> model goal-oriented book selection and plans for future reading. define the job specifications of being in a reading community. create list of students and each one's preferred genre. explain the role of the teacher and the student in a reading conference. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify the next three books they plan to read. practice flow of the reading time and reading independently. meet in genre interest groups to add books to reading plans. read with the plan of preparing for a conference.

<p>GUIDED PRACTICE 6 days</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read aloud a theme-based picture book like <i>Riding the Tiger</i> by Eve Bunting; model a reading conference with a student based on this shared text. • read aloud a theme-based poem like “The Bully” by Donald Graves; model thinking aloud as you read and connect this poem to yesterday’s picture book. • ask what kind of a community we will have this year and how we will we treat each other; read aloud a passage from a theme-based article like “Anti-Bullying Buddies” by Elizabeth Carney; model making additional connections across text; ask the class why authors often write about this topic. • establish expectations for thinking inside of text this year: good readers make connections across text, looking for larger ideas, issues, and themes. • establish expectations for reading across a wide range of genres this year, challenging students to try on new genres and new authors; use the Reading Goals Planner (Resource 2.1). • establish expectations for reading behaviors this year— including building stamina and reading a certain number of books across the year; use the Reading Goals Planner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read independently; practice daily routines; participate in teacher conferences. • read independently, think about how connections can be made across texts. • work at table groupings to write a classroom community charter. • read independently, noticing when they stop and think as they read; share their reading behavior with a partner. • set up three-month reading goals for genre and number of books using the Reading Goals Planner and tape into reading notebook; read independently. • add to the Reading Goals Planner by considering reading behaviors, capacities, routines, and collaborations.
<p>COMMITMENT 1 day</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review total reading expectations for the class reading goals across the Complete 4—process, genre, strategy, and conventions (this serves as a general introduction to the units in the year). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • share draft reading goals with a partner; discuss and revise reading goals based on discussion.
<p>TOTAL: 15 DAYS</p>		

The ARCH: Becoming Inspired by Writers

PROCESS

Why Teach This?

- To help students embrace the rules and routines for writing time.
- To identify each student's writing strengths, weaknesses, and interests.
- To develop student writing identities, abilities, and interests.
- To develop a community of writers who will sustain and support one another across the year.
- To explore how literature influences our writing.

Framing Questions

- How are we continuing to develop an understanding of ourselves as writers?
- How can we build a community of writers who support and trust one another?
- In what way(s) does literature influence and inspire us as writers?

Unit Goals

- Students will help create a supportive writing community.
- Students will internalize the routines and structures of writing time, including conferences and assessments.
- Students will set personal writing goals.
- Students will identify influential texts.

Anchor Texts

- Lois Lowry's Newbery acceptance speech (found at www.loislowry.com/pdf/Newbery_Award.pdf)
- *Owen & Mzee: The True Story of a Remarkable Friendship* by Isabella Hatkoff, Craig Hatkoff, and Dr. Paula Kahumbu
- "Poem" by Langston Hughes (from *The Dream Keeper and Other Poems*)
- *Stone Soup* magazine (downloadable from www.stonesoup.com)
- "Where I'm From" by George Ella Lyon (from *Seeing the Blue Between: Advice and Inspiration for Young Poets*, edited by Paul B. Janeczko)
- *Wings* by Christopher Myers

Resource Sheet

- Idea Generator (Resource 2.2)

Unit Assessment The ARCH: Becoming Inspired by Writers			PROCESS
Student name:	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	INDEPENDENT
Understands his or her role in the class writing community.			
Understands and follows the routines and structures of writing time.			
Sets personal writing goals.			
Identifies influences and models in literature.			

Stage of the Unit	Focused Instruction You will	Independent Practice Students will
IMMERSION 7 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> share your reflections on who you are as a writer: interests, topics, favorite genre, habits. read aloud <i>Owen & Mzee</i>; share why this text inspires you and share your other writing inspirations—key texts, key authors, key writing experiences in your life. read aloud <i>Wings</i>; introduce your class to the writing routines and tools in your classroom by beginning a writing piece in your own notebook that is inspired by this book and its message. read aloud “Poem” by Langston Hughes; remind writers of the variety of choice they have in topic and form. introduce the Four Prompts to your class (I wonder, I remember, I observe, I imagine); write in response to one of these prompts. ask students to generate a baseline piece of writing of their choice to be used for assessment; write in front of your class as a model of this exercise, making sure to keep it short and fun! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> meet in partnerships to share their own writing reflections; present the other student in their partnership to the class as a particular kind of writer. meet in partnerships to look through last year’s writing portfolios; explore their writing inspirations (mentor texts, authors, etc.). practice working within routines by beginning a writing piece in their writing notebooks. meet in partnerships to look through last year’s writing notebooks; explore the range of writing topics and forms. use one of the Four Prompts to write another piece in their writing notebooks. create a baseline piece of writing for assessment; choose their own topic and their own form. write an explanatory author’s note to explain what the writing sample demonstrates about the writer.

<p>IDENTIFICATION 5 days</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set expectations for writing notebooks (use of pages, table of contents, page numbering, foldovers to mark new projects, etc.). • model writing a list of future writing topics using the Four Prompts. • model thinking about the literature that you would like to write in response to this year; demonstrate this kind of free writing for your class (for example, write in response to a different Langston Hughes poem: <i>What does this poem inspire you to say in your own words in response?</i>). • ask a student to share her writing with the class; use the Idea Generator (Resource 2.2) to help this writer go deeper or in other possible directions with her topic. • model a writing conference with a student volunteer; establish responsibilities and expectations for writing conferences during Independent Practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organize notebooks according to class expectations; write a new piece. • create a list of future writing topics. • browse through picture books and poetry collections; find at least one text that inspires new writing and free-write in response to this text. • use the Idea Generator to explore other approaches and development ideas for their topic. • plan in writing for a possible conference based on yesterday's writing; share with partners.
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<p>GUIDED PRACTICE 7 days</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue to explore where great writing ideas come from; remind students that writing inspirations do not have to be large, important events, but could be ordinary moments you want to explore. • share George Ella Lyon's poem "Where I'm From"; model your own "Where I'm From" list; use this list to inspire another modeled piece of writing. • read aloud a snippet from Lois Lowry's Newbery acceptance speech (1994), in which she shares where her own writing ideas come from. • walk students through an issue of <i>Stone Soup</i>, a literary magazine by and for children; comment on the range of writing children are inspired to undertake for publication (poems, personal narratives, fiction, book reviews). • share your own personal writing goals with your students; document them and put them in a public place. • share a volunteer student's baseline writing piece; ask the class to name the strengths of the writer and suggest areas for development, considering these as additional fodder for writing goals. • discuss with the class how you will work on your writing goals over the next several months. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • think of ordinary moments that may inspire them to write because they wonder about them or because they preoccupy them; write in response. • write their own "Where I'm From" lists, using the list to inspire another piece of writing. • write in response to the prompt "Where do your ideas come from?" • read a story or poem from <i>Stone Soup</i>; they will use their emotional responses to these texts as inspiration for their own notebook writing. • meet with a partner and discuss possible writing goals for the next several months; list these in their writing notebooks. • revisit the baseline writing piece; consider personal strengths and areas for development and add these thoughts to individual writing goals. • copy personal writing goals onto index cards and place in library pockets with student names (these will be used for writing conferences).
<p>COMMITMENT 1 day</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ask your students, "How can we inspire one another this year as writers? How can we create a supportive writing community?" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write in response to the following question: "What will inspire you as a writer this year?"
<p>TOTAL: 20 DAYS</p>		