

Derby Public Schools *Grade Three* *English Language Arts* *Curriculum*

Summer 2025



Designing and Providing Meaningful Learning for All

The Derby Public Schools Curriculum Map

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This DPS Curriculum was developed under the direction of the Derby Public Schools Board of Education and Dr. Matthew Conway Jr., Superintendent of Schools.

Plan Duration: 5-7 years

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Disclaimer: This document is intended for informational purposes and understanding what students will know and be able to do. The Derby Public Schools Board of Education reserves the right to amend this plan at any time.





Welcome to Our Grade Three English Language Arts Curriculum!

We are excited to guide your child on their continued journey of literacy and language development in Grade Three! Our curriculum is designed to deepen reading comprehension, expand writing skills, and develop critical thinking while building on the strong foundations established in earlier grades. We use research-based programs, including Bookworms for shared reading and writing instruction that aligns with state and national standards.

This curriculum ensures that all students develop advanced literacy skills necessary for academic success. Throughout the year, your child will engage with complex fiction and nonfiction texts, conduct research, and express their thoughts through various forms of writing including narratives, informative pieces, and opinion essays.

What Will My Child Learn?

The curriculum is organized into four modules, each focusing on different aspects of advanced literacy development:

Module 1: Life's Lessons & Government for the People

Students explore **character development and civic understanding** through fiction and informational texts. They read **stories about personal growth, money management, and government systems** and write **personal narratives, informative pieces, and opinion essays about character traits**.

Module 2: Patterns in Our World & Family Connections

Students **analyze natural patterns and family relationships** through scientific texts and literature. They read **about geology, biomes, and family stories** and write **research reports, book reviews, and narrative alternatives to classic tales**.

Module 3: Fighting for What's Right & Astonishing Accomplishments

Students explore **social justice and inspiring achievements** through biographies and historical texts. They read **about civil rights leaders, activists, and innovators** and write **biography research reports and opinion pieces about justice**.

Module 4: Journey of Self-Discovery & Actions and Consequences

Students examine **personal growth and decision-making** through character-driven narratives. They read **stories about self-discovery and moral choices** and write **narrative adaptations, book advertisements, and personal identity pieces**.

Throughout these modules, students will participate in guided reading groups, vocabulary development, and writing workshops to strengthen comprehension, fluency, and written expression. This structure ensures students **develop sophisticated literacy skills** and become confident, critical readers and writers by the end of Grade 3! 🚀📖

How Will My Child Be Assessed?

Your child's progress will be monitored through various formative and summative assessments, including:

- Reading comprehension assessments and text analysis
- Vocabulary and word study evaluations
- Writing portfolio reviews (narratives, informative, and opinion pieces)
- Research project presentations
- Literature discussion participation
- Reading fluency and accuracy measures

Our instruction is guided by research-based resources:

✓ **Bookworms** -- A comprehensive literacy program focused on building reading, writing, and critical thinking skills through rich literature and informational texts.

✓ **Guided Reading Groups** -- Small group instruction tailored to individual reading levels and needs.

✓ **Writing Workshop Model** -- Structured approach to developing writing skills across multiple genres.

Through **engaging literary experiences, rigorous text analysis, and purposeful writing tasks**, students will develop strong **reading comprehension, critical thinking, and writing skills**.

Portrait of the Graduate

A graduate of **Derby Public Schools** will be:

📖 A **confident and fluent reader** who understands diverse and complex texts.

✍️ A **clear and thoughtful writer** who expresses ideas effectively across genres.

💡 A **curious and critical thinker** who asks questions and makes meaningful connections.

🤝 A **responsible communicator** who listens and speaks with respect and purpose.

🚀 A **lifelong learner** ready to adapt and succeed in an ever-changing world.

Module 1: Life's Lessons & Government for the People

Unit Titles:

1 **Life's Lessons** (*Shared Reading*) 2 **Purposeful Writing** (*ELA*) 3 **Government for the People** (*Shared Reading*) 4 **Becoming a Writer** (*ELA*)

Essential Questions:

- How do characters learn and grow from their experiences?
- What role does government play in our daily lives?
- How can we write effectively for different purposes and audiences?

Focused Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.2: Recount stories and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.2: Determine the main idea of a text and explain how key details support the main idea.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.1: Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences.

Content Strands:

- Reading Literature and Informational Text
- Character Analysis and Theme Development
- Civic Education and Government Systems
- Writing Process and Genre Development
- Research and Inquiry Skills

Key Vocabulary:

Theme, moral, lesson, character trait, government, constitution, congress, democracy, citizenship, opinion, evidence, narrative, sequence, main idea, supporting details

Students Should Know:

1. How to identify the **central message, lesson, or moral** of a story.
2. The difference between **character traits and character feelings**.
3. How **government systems work** and their purpose in society.
4. The structure and purpose of the **U.S. Constitution and Congress**.
5. How to **determine main ideas** and supporting details in informational texts.
6. The **writing process** for different genres (narrative, opinion, informative).
7. How to **support opinions with reasons and evidence**.
8. Strategies for **planning and organizing** writing.
9. How to **revise and edit** writing for clarity and effectiveness.
10. The role of **illustrations and text features** in understanding meaning.
11. How to **ask and answer questions** to demonstrate understanding of text.

Students Should Be Able To:

1. **Analyze character development** and explain how characters change throughout a story.
2. **Identify themes and morals** in literature and explain their relevance.
3. **Write personal narratives** with clear sequence and descriptive details.
4. **Compose opinion pieces** with supporting reasons and evidence.
5. **Research and write** about government systems using multiple sources.
6. **Use text evidence** to support comprehension and analysis.
7. **Compare and contrast** characters, settings, and events across texts.
8. **Participate in collaborative discussions** about literature and informational texts.
9. **Use writing strategies** such as graphic organizers and planning templates.
10. **Edit and revise** writing to improve clarity, organization, and word choice.



Formative Assessments:

- Character analysis graphic organizers
- Opinion writing rubrics
- Reading comprehension checks
- Government systems research projects
- Personal narrative writing samples

Teacher Resource Links:

- [Bookworms Grade 3 Module 1 Resources](#)
 - [Owen Foote, Money Man Lessons](#)
 - [Constitution of the United States Resources](#)
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Module 2: Patterns in Our World & Family Connections

Unit Titles:

1 **Geology** (*Shared Reading*) 2 **Patterns in Our World** (*ELA*) 3 **Powerful Connections** (*Shared Reading*) 4 **Family Connections & Timeless Tales** (*ELA*)

Essential Questions:

- How do patterns in nature help us understand our world?
- What makes family relationships special and important?
- How do stories connect us across cultures and time periods?

Focused Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.3: Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas, or concepts.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.9: Compare and contrast themes, settings, and plots of stories written by the same author.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas clearly.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3: Write narratives with well-elaborated events and clear sequences.

Content Strands:

- Earth Science and Natural Patterns
- Scientific Inquiry and Research
- Family Heritage and Cultural Stories
- Cross-Cultural Literature Analysis
- Informative and Narrative Writing



Key Vocabulary:

Geology, minerals, rocks, soil, biome, ecosystem, weather patterns, family heritage, culture, tradition, folktale, compare, contrast, research, informative writing, sequence, cause and effect

Students Should Know:

1. **Basic geological concepts** including rocks, minerals, and soil formation.
2. How **weather patterns and natural disasters** affect the environment.
3. The characteristics of different **biomes** and ecosystems.
4. How to **conduct research** using multiple sources and text features.
5. The importance of **family heritage** and cultural traditions.
6. How **folktales and stories** reflect cultural values and beliefs.
7. Strategies for **comparing and contrasting** texts, characters, and themes.
8. The structure of **informative writing** (introduction, body, conclusion).
9. How to **organize information** using graphic organizers and outlines.
10. The elements of **narrative writing** including character, setting, plot, and theme.
11. How to use **descriptive language** and sensory details in writing.

Students Should Be Able To:

1. **Explain relationships** between scientific concepts and natural phenomena.
2. **Research and write** informative reports about geological topics.
3. **Compare family stories** and traditions across different cultures.
4. **Analyze themes** and messages in folktales and cultural stories.
5. **Write book reviews** with clear opinions and supporting evidence.
6. **Create narrative alternatives** to traditional tales.
7. **Use text features** such as diagrams, captions, and headings to gather information.
8. **Participate in research projects** using both print and digital sources.
9. **Organize writing** using clear topic sentences and supporting details.
10. **Revise narratives** to include better character development and plot structure.



Formative Assessments:

- Science research reports
- Cultural comparison charts
- Book review writing samples
- Folktale analysis activities
- Narrative writing rubrics

Teacher Resource Links:

- [Bookworms Grade 3 Module 2 Resources](#)
 - [Minerals, Rocks, and Soil Lessons](#)
 - [Because of Winn Dixie Study Guide](#)
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Module 3: Fighting for What's Right & Astonishing Accomplishments

Unit Titles:

1 **Fight for What's Right** (*Shared Reading*) 2 **Fearless American Females** (*ELA*) 3 **Reaching Our Goals** (*Shared Reading*) 4 **Astonishing Accomplishments & Exposing Injustice** (*ELA*)

Essential Questions:

- How do individuals fight for justice and create positive change?
- What qualities help people achieve their goals despite obstacles?
- How can we expose and address injustice in our world?

Focused Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.1: Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.6: Distinguish their own point of view from that of the author of a text.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.1: Write opinion pieces supporting a point of view with reasons.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2: Write informative/explanatory texts including biography reports.

Content Strands:

- Biography and Historical Figure Analysis
- Civil Rights and Social Justice
- Research and Citation Skills
- Opinion and Persuasive Writing
- Character Trait Analysis

Key Vocabulary:

Biography, civil rights, justice, equality, perseverance, accomplishment, activist, leader, point of view, opinion, evidence, research, citation, primary source, secondary source, timeline, chronological order

Students Should Know:

1. The **lives and accomplishments** of key historical figures and activists.
2. How **individuals have fought for civil rights** and social justice.
3. The difference between **primary and secondary sources**.
4. How to **conduct biographical research** using multiple reliable sources.
5. The structure and elements of **biographical writing**.
6. How to **distinguish between fact and opinion** in texts.
7. Strategies for **writing persuasive arguments** with supporting evidence.
8. The importance of **diverse perspectives** in understanding history.
9. How to **organize information chronologically** using timelines.
10. The connection between **historical events and current issues**.
11. How to **cite sources** appropriately in research writing.

Students Should Be Able To:

1. **Research and write** biographical reports about historical figures.
2. **Analyze character traits** of leaders and activists.
3. **Compare accomplishments** of different historical figures.
4. **Write opinion pieces** about justice and fairness.
5. **Use text evidence** to support analysis of biographical texts.
6. **Create timelines** showing important events in a person's life.
7. **Distinguish their viewpoint** from the author's perspective.
8. **Participate in discussions** about social justice and civil rights.
9. **Write persuasive letters** addressing issues of fairness.
10. **Connect historical events** to contemporary situations.



Formative Assessments:

- Biographical research projects
- Civil rights timeline activities
- Opinion writing about justice
- Character trait analysis charts
- Primary vs. secondary source identification

Teacher Resource Links:

- [Bookworms Grade 3 Module 3 Resources](#)
 - [Frederick Douglass Biography Lessons](#)
 - [Susan B. Anthony Study Resources](#)
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Module 4: Journey of Self-Discovery & Actions and Consequences

Unit Titles:

1 **A Journey of Self-Discovery** (*Shared Reading*) 2 **Actions and Consequences** (*ELA*) 3 **A Journey to the Past** (*Shared Reading*) 4 **Readers are Writers & Look How Far I've Come** (*ELA*)

Essential Questions:

- How do characters discover who they are through their experiences?
- What is the relationship between actions and their consequences?
- How do readers become better writers?

Focused Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.3: Describe characters and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.7: Explain how illustrations contribute to the words in a story.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3: Write narratives using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear sequences.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.1: Write opinion pieces including book advertisements.

Content Strands:

- Character Development and Analysis
- Cause and Effect Relationships
- Self-Reflection and Identity
- Creative Writing and Adaptation
- Literary Analysis and Criticism

Key Vocabulary:

Self-discovery, character development, consequences, adaptation, inference, prediction, point of view, narrative elements, dialogue, setting, plot, climax, resolution, identity, reflection, growth

Students Should Know:

1. How **characters change and grow** throughout a story.
2. The relationship between **character actions and story consequences**.
3. How to **make inferences** about character motivations and feelings.
4. The elements that make a story **engaging and meaningful**.
5. How **illustrations enhance** story comprehension and enjoyment.
6. Strategies for **adapting existing stories** with new elements.
7. The purpose and structure of **book advertisements**.
8. How to **reflect on personal growth** as readers and writers.
9. The connection between **reading experiences and writing improvement**.
10. How to **analyze author's craft** and writing techniques.
11. Ways to **express personal identity** through writing.

Students Should Be Able To:

1. **Analyze character development** and explain how characters change.
2. **Identify cause-and-effect relationships** in story events.
3. **Write narrative adaptations** of existing stories.
4. **Create compelling book advertisements** with persuasive language.
5. **Reflect on their growth** as readers and writers.
6. **Use descriptive language** and dialogue in narrative writing.
7. **Make predictions** about story outcomes based on character actions.
8. **Compare different versions** of the same story.
9. **Write personal narratives** about reading and writing identity.
10. **Demonstrate understanding** of story elements through creative projects.



Formative Assessments:

- Character development analysis
- Story adaptation projects
- Book advertisement creation
- Reading and writing identity reflections
- Narrative writing portfolio

Teacher Resource Links:

- [Bookworms Grade 3 Module 4 Resources](#)
 - [The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane](#)
 - [Here Lies the Librarian Resources](#)
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Research Foundation

This curriculum is built upon extensive research in literacy education and evidence-based practices:

Key Research Sources:

- **National Reading Panel Report** - Emphasizes the five pillars of reading instruction
- **Common Core State Standards Research** - Provides foundation for grade-level expectations
- **Bookworms Curriculum Research** - Based on knowledge-building approach to literacy
- **Writing Workshop Research** Supports process-based writing instruction

Evidence-Based Practices Incorporated:

- Close reading strategies for deep text comprehension
- Knowledge-building through content-rich texts
- Structured writing process with multiple genres
- Discussion-based learning and collaborative inquiry
- Differentiated instruction through guided reading groups

This comprehensive curriculum map ensures that all **Grade 3 students in Derby Public Schools** develop **advanced literacy skills** through rigorous reading, writing, and critical thinking activities. By the end of the year, students will be **sophisticated readers and writers** who can **analyze complex texts, conduct research, express ideas clearly across genres, and think critically about literature and the world around them!** 🚀📖

Portrait of the Graduate

A graduate of Derby Public Schools will be:

-  A confident and fluent reader who understands diverse texts.
 -  A clear and thoughtful writer who expresses ideas effectively.
 -  A curious and critical thinker who asks questions and makes connections.
 -  A responsible communicator who listens and speaks with respect.
 -  A lifelong learner ready to adapt and succeed in an ever-changing world.
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