



Quick Guides

A PUBLICATION OF THE SOUTHWEST EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LABORATORY

4th FOURTH GRADE

ENGLISH / LANGUAGE ARTS

Focus

Student expectations in grade four for Texas and Louisiana have the same goal of providing students with significant opportunities to read and write independently. The Texas Educational Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) have 25 strands, in contrast to Louisiana's Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) of 5 strands. Hence, the GLEs reflect broader statements of student expectations. For example, there is only one GLE strand for reading (*Reading and Responding*), in Louisiana, as opposed to 9 strands in reading for Texas.

While the TEKS and GLEs differ in specificity, they are similar in content, with some notable distinctions. In the strand, *Listening and Speaking*, the fourth grade TEKS and GLEs are more aligned than in grades one and two. However, TEKS address more aspects of listening that emphasize listening-speaking-appreciation and listening-speaking-culture. These expectations are not specifically addressed in the GLEs.

In reading, both Texas and Louisiana utilize the five components of effective reading instruction as identified through scientific reading research: (1) phonemic awareness, (2) phonics, (3) fluency, (4) vocabulary, and (5) comprehension. Although the fourth grade TEKS and GLEs are more aligned, there are some small areas of distinction. The TEKS emphasizes wide reading in a variety of genres, giving students opportunities to self-select independent reading. The TEKS also emphasizes fluency through reading independent-level materials regularly.

Certain areas of vocabulary instruction are addressed in the TEKS, but not the GLEs. These expectations include developing vocabulary by listening to selections read aloud, drawing on experiences to bring meanings to words, and systematically studying word meanings across content. Overall, writing expectations were evenly aligned with the exception of the TEKS expectations of analyzing published examples as models for writing and reviewing a collection of written works to determine strengths and weaknesses and to setting writing goals. The GLEs do not address most of the student expectations in the TEKS strand of viewing and representing.

Assessment

Language Arts methodologies in Texas and Louisiana differ in many ways. Louisiana fourth-grade students are tested using the Louisiana Educational Assessment Program (LEAP) test. The LEAP is a criterion-referenced test that targets GLEs through grade four. There is also a writing component that accounts for 20%. Students must pass the LEAP in order to advance to fifth grade. In Texas, students in grade four are assessed using the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) in both reading and writing. The TAKS is a criterion-referenced test with a comprehensive sampling of student expectations.

Coding

As a result of the specificity of the TEKS, some of the GLEs are matched to more than one Texas expectation.

4.14 B The student is expected to determine distinctive and common cultural characteristics through wide reading.

GLE 11 Compare and contrast stories/tales from different cultures and explain culture's influence on each tale in oral, written, and visual responses (ELA-6-E1)

4.14 C The student is expected to articulate and discuss themes and connections across cultures.

GLE 11 Compare and contrast stories/tales from different cultures and explain the influence of culture on each tale in oral, written, and visual responses. (ELA-6-E1)

The Codes in the middle column on the document:

- Not addressed is coded NA meaning the expectation could not be matched to a particular TEK or GLE.
- Implied refers to statements that are understood in the context of the statement.
- Not specifically addressed (NSA) is used to refer to concepts that may be covered, but not necessarily addressed in all classrooms by all teachers.

In the example above, GLE 11, (ELA-6-E1), ELA refers to the content area, English Language Arts, 6 refers to Standard Six (*Students read, analyze, and respond to literature as a record of life experiences.*), E1 refers to elementary grades, benchmark 1 (*Recognizing and responding to United States and world literature that represents the experiences and traditions of diverse ethnic groups*).

Strand Titles

Strand titles from the TEKS and Louisiana GLEs were matched at the beginning of the listing for their particular student expectations.