

Sevier County School System
Companion to the
Tennessee Curriculum Standards
(Revised 2009)

English, Creative Writing, Spelling,
Handwriting, Math

for Use by Teachers
of Grades 6-8

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ENGLISH

English instruction includes a balanced approach to grammar and writing. Grammar lessons give students the tools they need to communicate effectively. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are complementary processes. Growth in any one area enhances growth in the others. Students need to achieve oracy (speaking and listening competency) and literacy (reading and writing competency). The curriculum should function to give students opportunities for total language growth.

Implementation of Instruction

- Adherence to the system guidelines for time-on-task and use of the adopted text (Writer's Choice Grammar and Composition) as specified per grade level is required. Glencoe Writer's Choice Grammar and Composition is designed for the heterogeneous classroom; the activities are meant to be used by students with a wide range of ability levels.
- The Tennessee Curriculum Standards in conjunction with the Sevier County Standards Based Curriculum Correlations contain the guidelines for the skills and objectives to be taught and must be incorporated into daily lesson plans.

Materials

- A Teacher Resource Package for Writer's Choice is provided for each teacher at grade level and is the property of the Sevier County Board of Education.
- A copy of the Tennessee Curriculum Standards and Sevier County Standards Based Curriculum Correlations can be accessed at www.sevier.org.
- Supplemental materials, such as the TCAP Coach Reading and Language Arts (grades 6-8) may be integrated into the Writer's Choice program.

Testing/Recordkeeping

- Teachers will use Writer's Choice selection tests and unit assessments in an evaluative and prescriptive manner to determine and/or facilitate student progress.
- In addition to the Writer's Choice testing program, the teacher may create his/her own tests to assess or retest particular skills.
- Teachers will use the results of testing along with professional judgment to determine progress and the need for modification such as reteaching, acceleration, and enrichment.
- The TCAP Writing Assessment will be administered to students in grade 8.

CREATIVE WRITING

In his book, Results Now, Mike Schmoker makes the following statement:

Reading scholars have been informing educators about the importance of writing in students' reading development and the importance of reading in students' development as writers. The reading-writing connection is clear and needs to be emphasized in all elementary classrooms. Reading and writing inform and improve each other – the more students write, the better their reading will become. The more students read, the better their writing will become. As students write and begin to believe in themselves as real writers for real purposes, they will read more widely and deeply (Silvers, 1986).

Materials

- Glencoe Writer's Choice Grammar and Composition is the adopted text for classroom instruction and will be the key implementation tool.
- A teacher Resource Package for Writer's Choice is provided for each teacher at grade level and is the property of the Sevier County Board of Education.
- A copy of the Tennessee Curriculum Standards and Sevier County Standards Based Curriculum Correlations can be accessed at www.sevier.org.
- Supplemental materials, such as TCAP Coach Reading and Language Arts (grades 6-8) and Blowing Away the State Writing Assessment may be integrated into the Writer's Choice program.

Testing/Recordkeeping

- TCAP Writing Assessment will be administered to eighth grade students; however, it is implicit that students in grades six and seven also be given direct instruction in the writing process.
- Documentation of student progress should be collected through various forms such as the following:
 1. A portfolio of student writing samples.
 2. Display of student writing in the classroom and school.
 3. Use of other supportive strategies such as the promotion of publication of student work.
- Each instructor will gauge the appropriateness and extent of use of such activities.

SPELLING

In the Struggling Readers Integrated Learning Workshop by the Wright Group, Rick Dufour stated the following:

Spelling instruction is one of the most neglected strategies for teaching reading. Effective spelling instruction does the following:

- Informs about sound in words.
- Teaches consistent spellings for vowels, consonants, syllables, and morphemes.
- Teaches the origin of words.
- Teaches the meaning of words.
- Links spelling to word identification and writing (Moats, 1997)

The conventions of spelling allow students to read and understand thoughts. Spelling is a problem-solving process in which writers apply knowledge of letters, sounds, spelling patterns, and the meaning of print to construct words.

There are three major spelling patterns:

- Sound patterns can be found in words with rhyming sounds. Sound patterns are related to the visual cues in reading.
- Function patterns relate to the form of the words and how words are used in sentences. Sentence structure requires that particular words have plural or past tense endings or suffixes. These suffixes represent spelling patterns.
- Meaning patterns refer to words with the same root, base, or origin. These words have similar spellings and related meanings, even though they may have quite different pronunciations.

When students see that words are linked by spelling patterns such as those described above, they can more easily spell new words by linking them with familiar words and patterns.

Effective spelling requires an environment in which the teacher demonstrates numerous spelling patterns and strategies and in which the students read and write extensively. Writing gives students a context for learning to spell and allows them to internalize the spelling strategies as they progress.

Understanding the relationships between reading, writing, and spelling is important. Word recognition, phonemic awareness, and spelling are all interrelated and predict one another in the early stages of reading development.

Implementation of Instruction

- Adherence to the system guidelines for time-on-task and use of the adopted text as specified per grade level is required. Houghton Mifflin Spelling and Vocabulary (grade 6) and Zaner Bloser Spelling Connections (grades 7 and 8) are designed for the heterogeneous classroom; the activities are meant to be used by students with a wide range of ability levels.
- The Tennessee Curriculum Standards in conjunction with the Sevier County Standards Based Curriculum Correlations contain the guidelines for the skills and objectives to be taught and must be incorporated into daily lesson plans.

Materials

- Houghton Mifflin Spelling and Vocabulary (grade 6) and Zaner Bloser Spelling Connections (grades 7 and 8) are the adopted texts for classroom instruction and will be the key implementation tools.
- A Teacher Resource Package for Houghton Mifflin and Zaner Bloser is provided for each teacher at grade level and is the property of the Sevier County Board of Education.
- A copy of the Tennessee Curriculum Standards and Sevier County Standards Based Curriculum Correlations can be accessed at www.sevier.org.
- Supplemental materials, such as the TCAP Coach Reading and Language Arts (grades 6-8) may be integrated into the English program.

Testing/Recordkeeping

- Teachers will use Houghton Mifflin Spelling and Vocabulary (grade 6) and Zaner Bloser Spelling Connections (grades 7 and 8) tests and unit assessments in an evaluative and prescriptive manner to determine and/or facilitate student progress.
- In addition to the Houghton Mifflin and Zaner Bloser testing programs, the teacher may create his/her own tests to assess or retest particular skills.
- Teachers will use the results of testing along with professional judgment to determine progress and the need for modification such as reteaching, acceleration, and enrichment.

HANDWRITING

Handwriting is one of the most important means of communication. Knowing how to write legibly with ease and fluency allows the writer to record and communicate ideas rapidly and understandably.

Handwriting is a perceptual motor skill that is best taught through frequent periods of trisensory (visual, auditory, and kinesthetic) instruction. This instruction must include purposeful, meaningful, and interesting practice.

The most effective method of teaching handwriting is through an integrated approach. When instruction in any one element of the communication skills is isolated, it then becomes necessary to spend additional time teaching the application of the newly acquired skill in context.

The practice of handwriting skills should include continuous evaluation by the student and by the teacher. The quality of handwriting practice is more important than the quantity. Practice makes permanent, not necessarily perfect.

Implementation of Instruction

There is almost a century of research that demonstrates the power of **directly** and **systematically** teaching handwriting.

- Zaner Bloser Spelling Connections contains cursive form as well as manuscript form of spelling word lists. Also a Zaner Bloser poster of cursive lettering is provided in grades 6-8.
- Adherence to the system guidelines for time-on-task and use of the adopted text Houghton Mifflin Spelling and Vocabulary (Grade 6) and Zaner Bloser Spelling Connections (as appropriate guides for appropriate letter formation) as specified per grade level are required.
- The Tennessee Curriculum Standards in conjunction with the Sevier County Standards Based Curriculum Correlations incorporate handwriting within language arts guidelines when addressing oral and written communication skills.
- Cursive handwriting is required to be taught as well as modeled in grades 3-8. Cursive handwriting will be introduced in grade 3 through formal handwriting instruction and will be perpetuated along with manuscript handwriting in grades 4-8. Without doubt in middle grades, students will begin to manifest their own individual styles in both manuscript and cursive; however, the expectation of legible handwriting will remain a minimal standard throughout middle grades.

Testing/Recordkeeping

- Students should exhibit their best handwriting to be used for grading purposes.
- A handwriting grade (E, S, N, or U) will be given and recorded on the grade card.
- The handwriting grade is not considered for honor roll purposes.

MATHEMATICS

The State of Tennessee's 6-8 Mathematics Curriculum, correlated to the Sevier County Standards Based Curriculum Correlations, is the adopted curriculum guide to be used in mathematics instruction with the Sevier County School System. Glencoe Mathematics Applications and Concepts is the adopted textbook series for use in grades 6-8.

Implementation of Instruction

- Adherence to the system guidelines for time-on-task and the adopted text (Glencoe Mathematics Applications and Concepts) as specified per grade level is required. Glencoe Mathematics Applications and Concepts is designed for the heterogeneous classroom with math instruction and activities to be used by students with a wide range of ability levels.
- The Tennessee Curriculum Standards in conjunction with the Sevier County Standards Based Curriculum Correlations contain the guidelines for the skills and objectives to be taught and must be incorporated into daily lesson plans.

Use of Materials

- Each teacher will have access to the following materials:
- A Teacher Resource Package for Glencoe Mathematics is provided for each teacher at grade level and is the property of the Sevier County Board of Education.
- A copy of the Tennessee Curriculum Standards and Sevier County Standards Based Curriculum Correlations can be accessed at www.sevier.org.
- Supplemental materials, such as the TCAP Coach Mathematics (grades 6-8), Accelerated Math, and/or math intervention software programs, may be integrated into the Glencoe Mathematics program.

Testing/Recordkeeping

- In addition to the Glencoe Mathematics testing program, the teacher may utilize system-wide created tests or create his/her own tests to assess or retest particular skills.
- Teachers will use the results of testing along with professional judgment to determine progress and the need for modification such as reteaching, acceleration, and enrichment.
- Progress must be documented on the Individual Student Record Sheets, which must be placed in the student's official cumulative folder at the end of the year or upon his/her transfer to another school. This record is an official component of the cumulative record.
- Students must master 75% or more of the skills listed in the Tennessee Curriculum Standards Objectives for the students' level of instruction.
- Students who fail to demonstrate mastery of a skill must be given at least one opportunity for reteaching and retesting.