



4th Grade English

Curriculum Sample

A Grade Ahead will challenge your students and help them achieve their goals!

This school year, our academy's 4th grade students will be participating in A Grade Ahead's Blended Learning program that integrates both traditional and electronic methods to teach students.

Our students begin the week learning a lesson and answering practice questions with paper and pencil in our monthly lesson booklets. Then they go online to a website to complete three days of online activities to master the topic of the week. Each month also includes three weekly quizzes and one test.

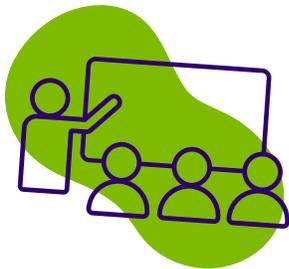
Here's how it works:



Blended Learning Booklet

Each month, students receive a lesson booklet that is split into four weeks of lessons and practice problems.

(At the end of this document, you will find a full sample of one week's lesson and practice problems from A Grade Ahead's 4th grade English curriculum.)



Weekly Class

Each week, students attend a weekly class, either in person or online, and learn a lesson from a teacher. Together, the class completes practice problems to understand the weekly topic.



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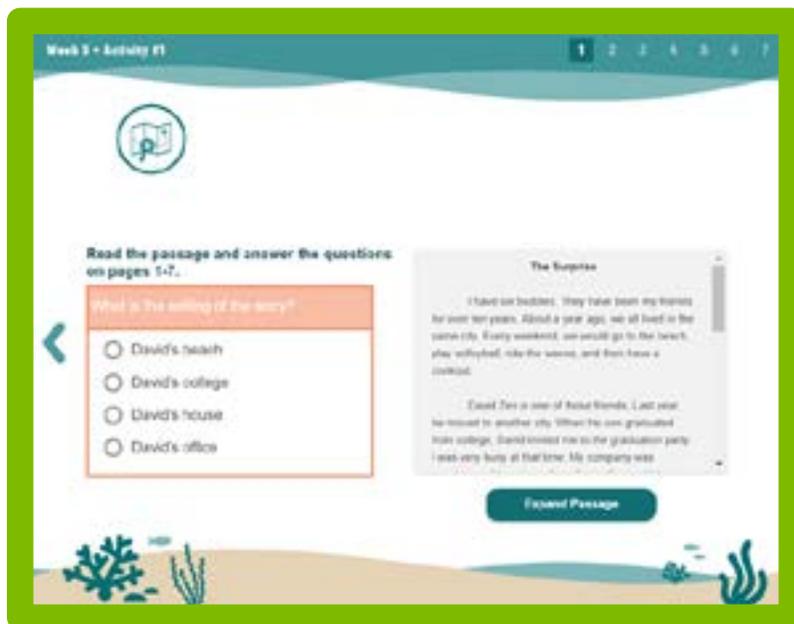
A Grade Ahead Online Activities

After learning the lesson and practicing problems with a traditional approach, students continue learning online through activities at online.agramadeahead.com. Every week, students have three days of homework activities to practice vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension.

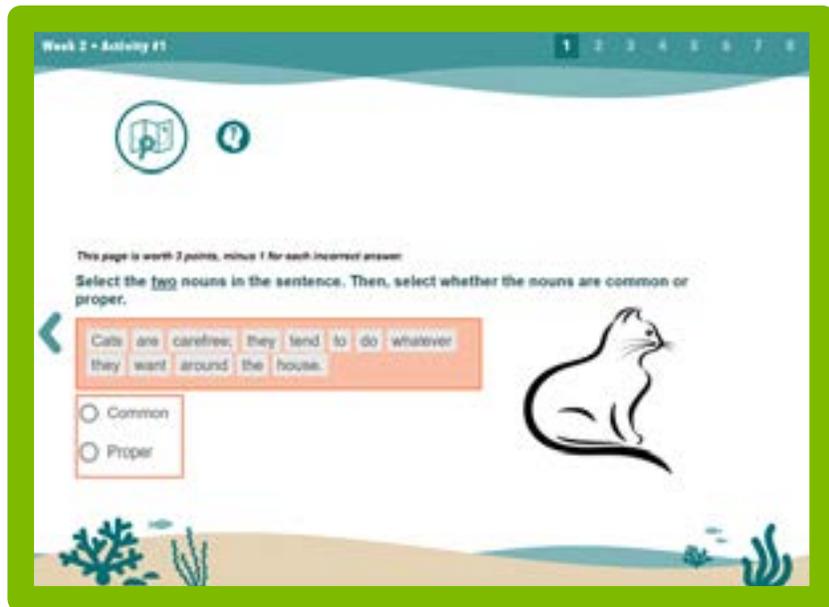
A Grade Ahead Online offers many benefits to students and parents, including

- **Interactive and colorful questions** with formats like matching, drag and drop, fill in the blank, multiple choice, and more.
- **Automatic grading** that saves times for parents and provides immediate explanations for students. They know whether they got a question right or wrong as they are going through the homework, so they can make adjustments if necessary.
- **A rationale for every online question** that explains the correct answer, so students can learn from their mistakes immediately.
- **Student progress reports** that are easily accessible without parents needing to upload any data.
- **Adaptive learning paths** that provide more challenging questions to students who perform well on the first set of activities.

Here is a peek at a few of our online exercises:



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Want to see how A Grade Ahead works first-hand?

We have attached an entire lesson and one day's worth of homework for you to print out and try.



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Lesson Booklet Sample

4th Grade English

Print it out and try it!



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4th Grade • Month 1

ENGLISH

BLENDED LEARNING LESSON BOOKLET

NAME _____



A. Word List 1

1. benefit	(n./v.)	helpful or useful thing; to be useful
2. contain	(v.)	to hold or include
3. develop	(v.)	to cause to grow; to expand
4. plenty	(n.)	large quantity or amount
5. prepare	(v.)	to get ready; to organize
6. severe	(adj.)	harsh; extreme
7. source	(n.)	place of origin
8. surface	(n.)	outermost layer; area



Teaching Tip: Practice spelling these words with your students. You can play a game using the vocabulary words after the lesson. Focus on Main Idea and PCR this week.

Student Goals:

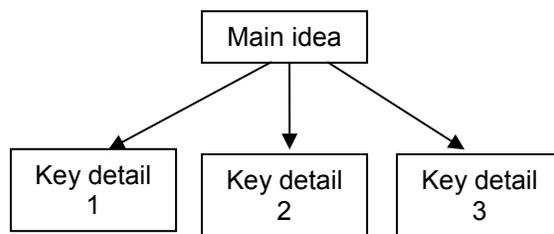
- ✓ I will be able to recognize and use my vocabulary words in a sentence.
- ✓ I will be able to identify the main idea in a passage.
- ✓ I will be able to identify key details in a passage and write key details for a given main idea.
- ✓ I will be able to write a one-paragraph PCR.

B. Comprehension

Main Idea

The main idea of a passage is its main point. It is the big picture of the paragraph or passage. Instead of breaking the passage apart and explaining every little detail, the main idea tells you a brief explanation of the paragraph or passage. It tells you the author’s main purpose for writing it. Figuring out the main idea is the key to comprehending the writing.

The main idea is the overall picture. The information in the paragraph or passage is made up of key details. Key details are facts or examples that support the main idea.



In this diagram, you can see that the main idea is the author’s point in the story. It is not directly written in the story. The key details give examples that support the main idea. There does not need to be three key details, but there should be at least two in every passage.

Finding the main idea

There are different ways we can figure out the main idea.

1. Look for the topic.

Read through the paragraph or passage and look for the topic. If the paragraph mentions the topic, figure out what the author is trying to say about the topic.



Example: What is the main idea of this paragraph?



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Mrs. Davis only yells at her students when they are not following directions, or they are doing something they are not supposed to do in the classroom. She does not always punish her students when they misbehave because she does not believe in discipline. Her students rarely get in trouble.



Teaching Tip: Ask your student(s) the following questions after reading the passage:

What/Who was the topic of the passage?

What was the most important thought about the topic that the author wanted to incorporate?

First, figure out the topic of the paragraph. What/Who is the paragraph about?

The topic is: Mrs. Davis

Next, figure out the main idea about the topic. What is the most important thing about the topic?

Main idea: Mrs. Davis is not strict.

The whole paragraph was talking about how Mrs. Davis does not punish her students and rarely gets mad. She is not a teacher who likes to discipline her students, so we know that she is not a strict teacher. All of the key details in the paragraph show that Mrs. Davis is not strict.

2. Look for key details that support the main idea.

Read the whole passage. Look for any relationships that each paragraph has with one another. Look for examples that could form a main idea.



Example: What is the main idea of this passage? What are the key details from this passage?

Billy was very lazy. He never wanted to do anything. He would come home from school and sit on the couch and watch TV. He just did not have the desire or the motivation to do anything. One day, his mom told him that he needed to find a hobby. She asked him what he might want to do as an activity. He told her that he did not want to do anything, so she wrote down a few things that he could try to see if he liked them. She handed him the list.

The first thing on the list was soccer. She got Billy's older brother, Ian, to go to the local park and kick the ball around with him. Billy tried to kick the ball to Ian, but he missed the ball and fell face forward onto the ground. Ian started to laugh hysterically. He had never seen anyone fall on his face trying to kick a ball before. Billy knew that soccer was not something he would want to do ever again.

The second thing on the list was baking. Billy was not looking forward to trying this activity out. His mom showed him a book with recipes. She told him that all he had to do was put the ingredients into a pot and follow the directions in the book. Billy thought it would be easy. He began to put the ingredients together, but he realized that the dough did not look like cookie dough. The dough was watery and not very appealing. His mom looked at the dough, and she realized that Billy had not put the correct amount for each ingredient. Billy was not happy, and he told his mom that he hated baking.



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The last thing on the list was reading. Billy did not really enjoy reading at school because the book choices his teacher made did not interest him. His mom took him to the library and told him to choose a book that interested him. Billy liked animals, so he decided to choose books about animals. They got home, and Billy’s mom told him to read the book to her. Billy began reading, and he realized he was really enjoying the book. He also loved reading to his mom because he got to spend time with her.



Teaching Tip: Ask your student(s) the following questions after reading the passage:

What was the key detail in each paragraph?

What was the most important thought about each key detail?

What were the key details in the passage? If you look at the passage, you will notice that each paragraph talks about a different activity that Billy tried; so, the key details will have to be the activities that Billy tried.

- Key detail 1: The first thing on the list was soccer.
- Key detail 2: The second thing on the list was baking.
- Key detail 3: The last thing on the list was reading.

Since we know the key details of each paragraph, we know what the main idea of the passage is.

Main idea: Billy tried different activities from a list his mom provided him.



Student Practice

Antarctica

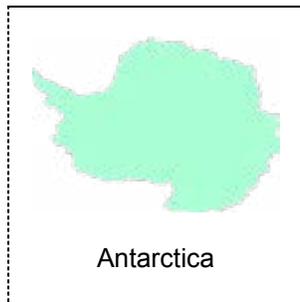
Antarctica is the southernmost, windiest, coldest, and stormiest of all the continents. It is almost double the size of Australia. Antarctica has almost no life, but its seas have many types of animal and plant life. Although there is not much life on land, there are many **benefits** that others receive from the continent.

Krill, a small fish, is found in **plenty** in Antarctica. It is a basic **source** of food for whales. Many fishing experts believe krill is one of the world’s largest sources of protein. Also, more than forty types of birds are known to breed in Antarctica, many of them near the seashore.

The Antarctica ice caps **contain** seventy percent of the world’s supply of fresh water. They also contain more than ninety percent of the world’s ice. Most of Antarctica is covered with ice 1 mile thick. Interestingly, because it receives very little rainfall, it is called a desert. The water in the ice could be useful if these huge icebergs of Antarctica could be taken to the warmer oceans of the countries that do not have enough water. This water could then be made available to the dry countries of the world. Research shows that this would cost less than removing salt from seawater to make fresh water.

The population of Antarctica changes with the seasons. At any given time, it is estimated that there are at least one thousand people living on the continent, but people do not stay in Antarctica all year long. These people work in research stations there.

Antarctica is one of the best places to do research since the land there has barely been touched. One type of research that is being done there is on air quality since it has the cleanest air in the world.



Answer the following questions about the passage.

1. What is the main idea of this passage?

- a) Antarctica has a lot of ice.
- b) People can benefit from Antarctica.
- c) Antarctica is the best place to do research.
- d) Krill fish is found in plenty in Antarctica.

2. Choose two key details found in the passage that support the main idea.

- a) Antarctica has the cleanest air that is best for doing research on air quality.
- b) The population of Antarctica changes with the seasons.
- c) Antarctica is the windiest, coldest, and stormiest of all the continents.
- d) Krill is the basic source of food for whales.
- e) The Antarctica ice caps contain seventy percent of the world's supply of fresh water.
- f) Antarctica is almost double the size of Australia.

<p>3. Why is it interesting that Antarctica is called a desert? Bubble the <i>best</i> answer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> A) It does not rain much. <input type="radio"/> B) There is a lot of snow. <input type="radio"/> C) Even though there is a lot of water in the form of snow, it is called a desert. <input type="radio"/> D) There is no life in Antarctica. 	<p>4. Why do you think Antarctica has the cleanest air? Bubble the <i>best</i> answer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> A) It has a lot of snow. <input type="radio"/> B) Only about 1,000 people live there, so there is little trash. <input type="radio"/> C) There is no life there, so there are no plant and animal droppings. <input type="radio"/> D) There are no industries, which pollute the air.
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Student Practice

Students must write in complete sentences.

Read the following paragraphs. Then, write the main idea of each paragraph and circle a key detail that supports the main idea.

5-6. David was not doing very well in school. His grades dropped significantly after he began playing video games. His mom always told him that he needed to finish his schoolwork before playing games, but he never listened to her. He even lost friends because he never wanted to play outside.

Main Idea: _____

A key detail that supports the main idea is...

- a) His grades dropped after playing games.
- b) He never listened to what his mom said.
- c) He was not good at games.
- d) No one wanted to be his friend.



Prose Constructed Response Questions

A prose constructed response question asks the reader to provide a longer and more detailed answer. These questions are intended to help students learn to use given information and knowledge from personal experiences (optional) to answer questions. At this level, students will answer prose constructed response questions using one paragraph.

The one-paragraph response allows students to develop an organized answer in a limited amount of time. This kind of response follows strict guidelines, but it can function as a formula to a well-written answer to many kinds of questions.

The one-paragraph response format is fairly strict. Although it may look like the perfect solution to all extended response questions, you should not rely on it for every situation.



Example: Read the following passage, and then answer the prompt provided.

Martial arts are some of the most popular sports for children to participate in today. While perhaps the most well-known martial art is karate, there are many other styles practiced, including taekwondo, aikido, and judo. Martial arts have become popular for many reasons. One reason is the physical benefits of martial arts. Practicing martial arts builds strength, flexibility, and stamina. All of these can help keep a martial arts student healthy and less prone to illness. Another reason martial arts have become popular is because of the benefits to other areas of life. Students are taught self-discipline and self-confidence, and they are expected to be responsible, truthful, and respectful. Because of these reasons, martial arts have become very popular for children and adults.

Prose Constructed Response Question: Are there benefits to martial arts? Use details from the paragraph, other knowledge, and personal experience to answer the question.

Example Response: Yes, there are many benefits to martial arts. A martial art sport can help make someone healthier. It does this through building strength, flexibility, and stamina in a student. These contribute to keeping the body strong. It also helps keep someone from becoming sick. Martial arts can also help teach someone responsibility and self-discipline. These are important life skills. I took a karate class at the YMCA last year. I became much stronger, and I did better in gym class because of it. I also gained self-discipline, so I learned to do my homework directly after school instead of playing first. In conclusion, I believe martial arts are very beneficial for students and adults.

Steps to write a one-paragraph response:

1. **Introduction.** When answering with a one-paragraph response, always begin by restating the question. If the question asks a yes or no question, begin your response with a yes or no as appropriate. This will be your general answer to the prompt. Do not go into specific details in your first sentence. After you have answered the prompt, add some reasoning on why your answer is true.



Example: “Yes, there are many benefits to martial arts.” The first sentence effectively restates the question.

2. **Support from the Passage.** The next 4-6 sentences should use details from the passage to answer the question. At least 3 references should be made to the information from the passage. You can either summarize details from the passage or use quotation marks (“ ”) around something that you directly took from the passage.



Example: “...Can help make someone healthier,” “...building strength, flexibility, and stamina in a student,” and “...can also help teach someone responsibility and self-discipline” are all references to facts given in the passage.



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Grade 4 Scoring Rubric for Prose Constructed Response Items

Skill Measured	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point	0 Points
Reading Understanding of Key Ideas and Details		The student response shows a strong analysis of the text. The student understands the text explicitly and implicitly and uses clear references to the text to support the analysis.	The student response shows a mostly correct analysis of what the text says explicitly and implicitly. The student uses references to the text to support the analysis.	The student response shows a mostly incorrect analysis of what the text says explicitly and implicitly. The student may only reference the text minimally, showing a lack of understanding.	The student response shows an inaccurate analysis or no analysis of what the text says.
Writing Expression		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The student answers the prompt in a way that shows thorough development of the topic. The student uses reasoning and details from the text. The response is appropriate for the prompt and reader. - The student's response is very organized. It begins and ends in a strong way, and it is clear and unified. - The student makes a strong use of language. Language (details, transition words, vocabulary) is used effectively to strengthen and clarify. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The student answers the prompt in a way that shows thorough development of the topic. The student uses reasoning and details from the text. The response is mostly appropriate for the prompt and reader. - The student's response is organized. It has a clear beginning and ending, and it is clear and unified. - The student makes use of language (details, transition words, vocabulary) to strengthen and clarify. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The student answers the prompt in a way that shows a lack of development of the topic. The student demonstrates little reasoning and uses few details from the text. The response is mostly inappropriate for the prompt and reader. - The student's response is lacking in organization. It may or may not have a clear beginning and ending, and it is lacking in clarity and unification. - The student lacks in his or her use of language (details, transition words, vocabulary) to strengthen and clarify. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The student's response is not developed. It is not appropriate to the prompt or reader. - The student's response is not clear or unified. - The student does not use language (details, transition words, vocabulary) to strengthen and clarify.
Writing Language and Conventions	The student response shows a command of the English language that is in line with writing that has been thoroughly edited. There may be 1-2 errors in grammar and usage, but they should not affect the overall meaning.	The student response shows a command of the English language that is in line with writing that has been edited. There may be a few errors in grammar and usage, but they should not affect the overall meaning.	The student response shows a somewhat lacking command of the English language that is in line with writing that has been edited. There are a few consistent errors in grammar and usage that might affect understanding.	The student response shows a limited command of the English language. There are consistent errors in grammar and usage that sometimes affects understanding.	The student response shows minimal or no command of the English language. There are many and consistent errors in grammar and usage that commonly affects understanding.



Answers of Student Practice

B. Comprehension

- 1. b
- 2. a, e
- 3. C
- 4. D

Answers may vary for 5-6 slightly. An example is provided.

5-6. David spent too much time playing video games; a

7-16. Prose Constructed Response:

To grade the prose constructed response question, use the rubric provided above. An example of a full 10-point answer is provided. It contains facts from the passage and personal experiences (not required but recommended).

No, I do not think it will be possible for human beings to live on Antarctica as permanent residents. **Antarctica is the windiest, coldest, and stormiest of all the continents.** This means that it is a dangerous place to live. There are probably hurricanes and ice storms all year round. **It also contains more than ninety percent of the world's ice.** This ice covers any dirt and rock, so there is nowhere to grow food. If there is nowhere to grow food, there will be nothing to eat. **The population of Antarctica changes with the seasons.** This means that people will only live in Antarctica during its mildest seasons and leave during its harshest seasons. **Last winter during a blizzard, the snow piled up so high it reached the windows, mom's car was buried in snow and ice, and it was so cold we couldn't go to school for three days.** Antarctica is even colder and more snowy than that blizzard. In conclusion, I don't think people will be able to survive the cold of Antarctica.

This answer receives the full 10 points because it answers the question in the first sentence (underlined). It also uses important details from the passage and personal experience (in bold). There are no spelling errors, and there are no grammar errors.



Head online to complete all days of the course:
ENGLISH: Main Idea & PCR (W1)



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Now, more than ever, kids need supplemental education!

A Grade Ahead makes it easy for you to help your students get caught up – and even stay ahead of – their peers. Our students are top performers at the heads of their classes who get into Ivy League schools and perform well on standardized tests. They reach their goals of becoming doctors, engineers, and other well-paid professionals.

Why A Grade Ahead?

- 1. Our curriculum is outstanding**, with clear lessons and homework activities that are challenging and interesting. They are not boring and repetitive like some other programs.
- 2. Our parents love us**, with more than 90% referring us to their friends and families year after year. **See what real parents are saying in "Our Results"**.
- 3. Our small group classes are like tutoring, only better.** With a maximum of 8 students per class, your child will get plenty of individualized attention.
- 4. It's cost-effective.** Unlike private tutoring, A Grade Ahead's classes are affordable and provide a fun environment to learn.

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