

# Teach A Holistic Language Arts Curriculum in Grades 4-8

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Renewal of Literacy

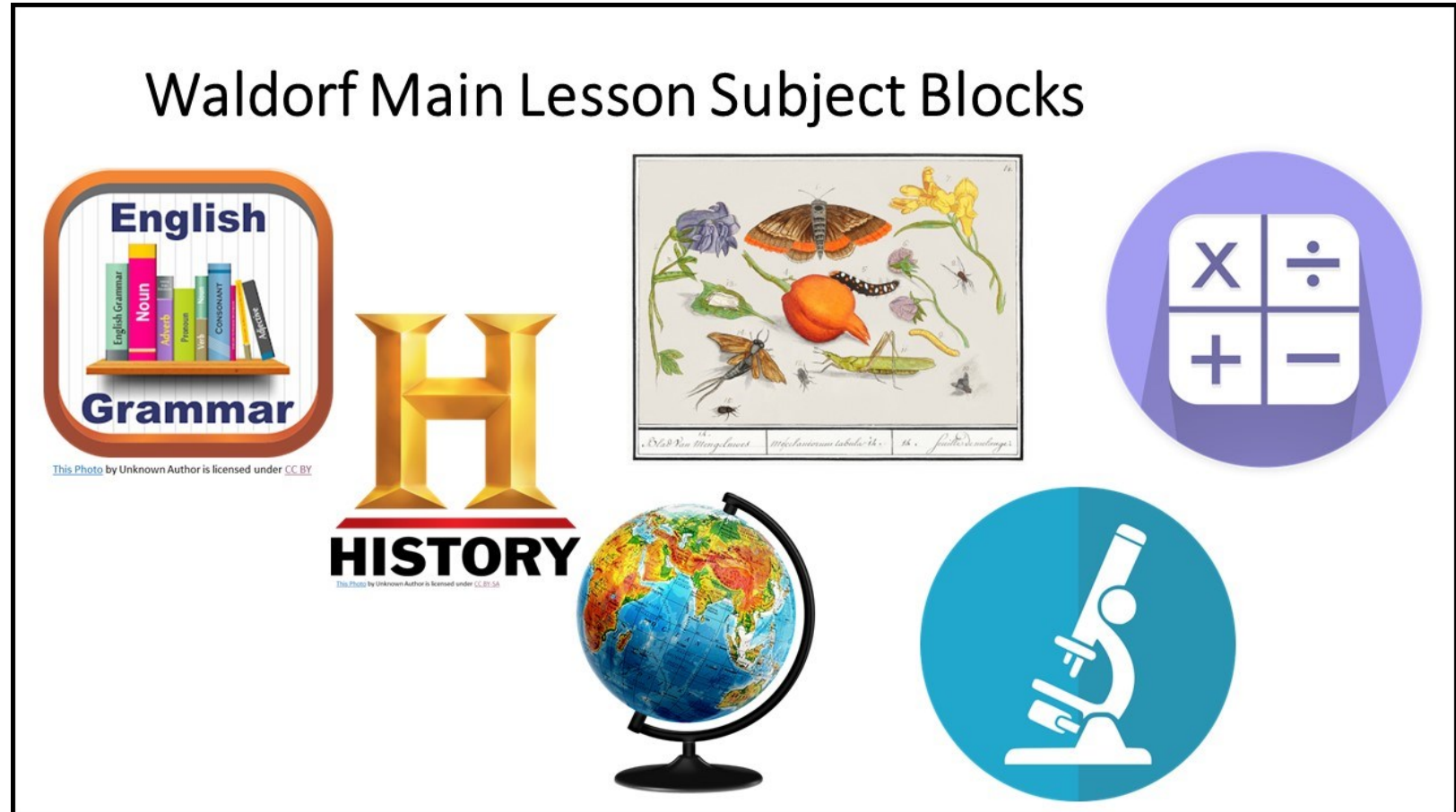


**What is a holistic  
language arts  
curriculum?**



A **holistic language arts curriculum** is one where language arts instruction is included in all subjects. Practically speaking, teachers in grades 4-8 teach 17 aspects of language arts in all six subjects:

1. English
2. History
3. Geography
4. Natural Science
5. Science
6. Math



# Introducing the 17 Aspects of Language Arts Taught in Grades 4-8

1. Storytelling
2. Reading
3. Research Skills
4. Notetaking
5. Outlining
6. Compositions
7. Essays
8. Reports
9. Creative Writing
10. Correspondence
11. Vocabulary
12. Handwriting
13. Spelling
14. Speech
15. Grammar
16. Literary Terms and Analysis
17. Morphology

**LANGUAGE ARTS**

# 1. Storytelling

Tell stories in grades 4-8 to present subject content and help students develop their characters. Present real people from history students can adopt as heroes—and present behavior to spurn.



## 2. Reading

Select fiction and nonfiction books, magazines, and articles in all subject blocks to teach new subject content and expand students' literacy skills.



### 3. Research Skills

Provide direct instruction in research skills and have students use reference books such as dictionaries and encyclopedias.



# 4. Notetaking

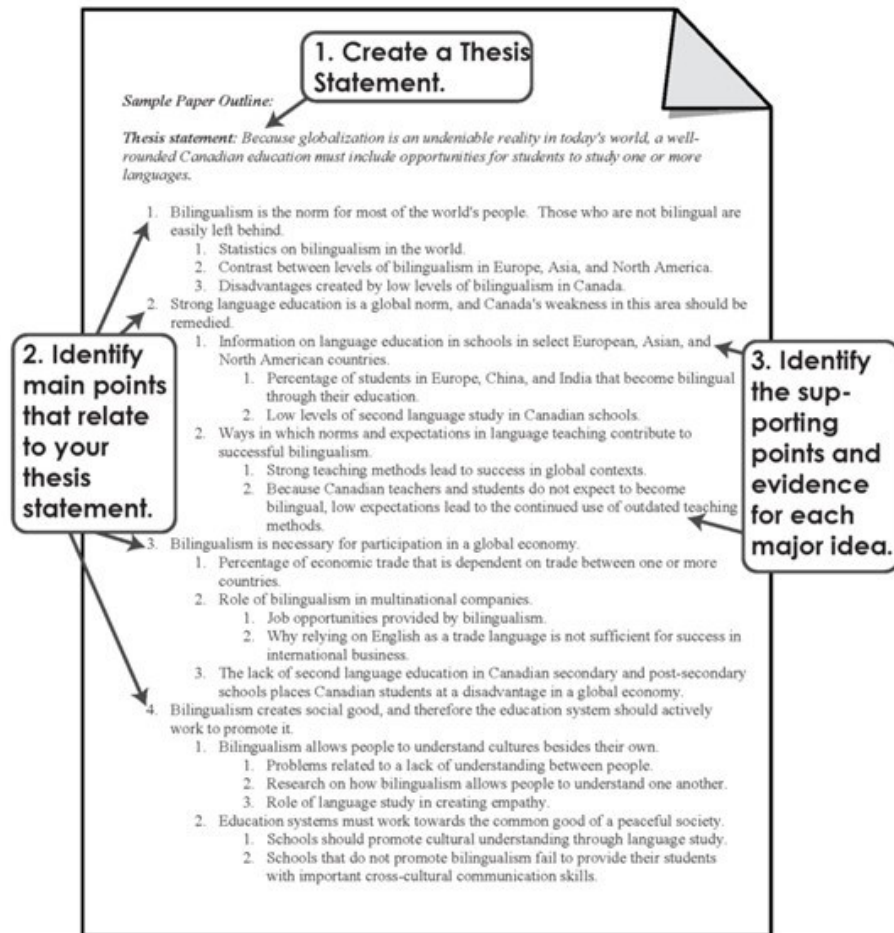


Provide direct instruction in how to take quality notes while listening to a lecture or presentation.



# 5. Outlining

## Anatomy of an Outline



Provide direct instruction in how to create an outline for a paper. The image on the left is an example of an outline suitable for high school students. Teach students the necessary skills to build to this level.

## 6. Compositions



Ask students to write their own compositions summarizing what they are learning in school. These compositions go in students' main lesson books.

Each main lesson book should have unique content, reflecting its author's growth as a writer.

# 7. Essays

Teach students to do formal essay writing where they use literary devices.



**What is a good  
metaphor for a steam  
engine?**

# 8. Reports



Assign reports both oral and written in all subjects so students develop good communication skills in all areas.

# 9. Creative Writing



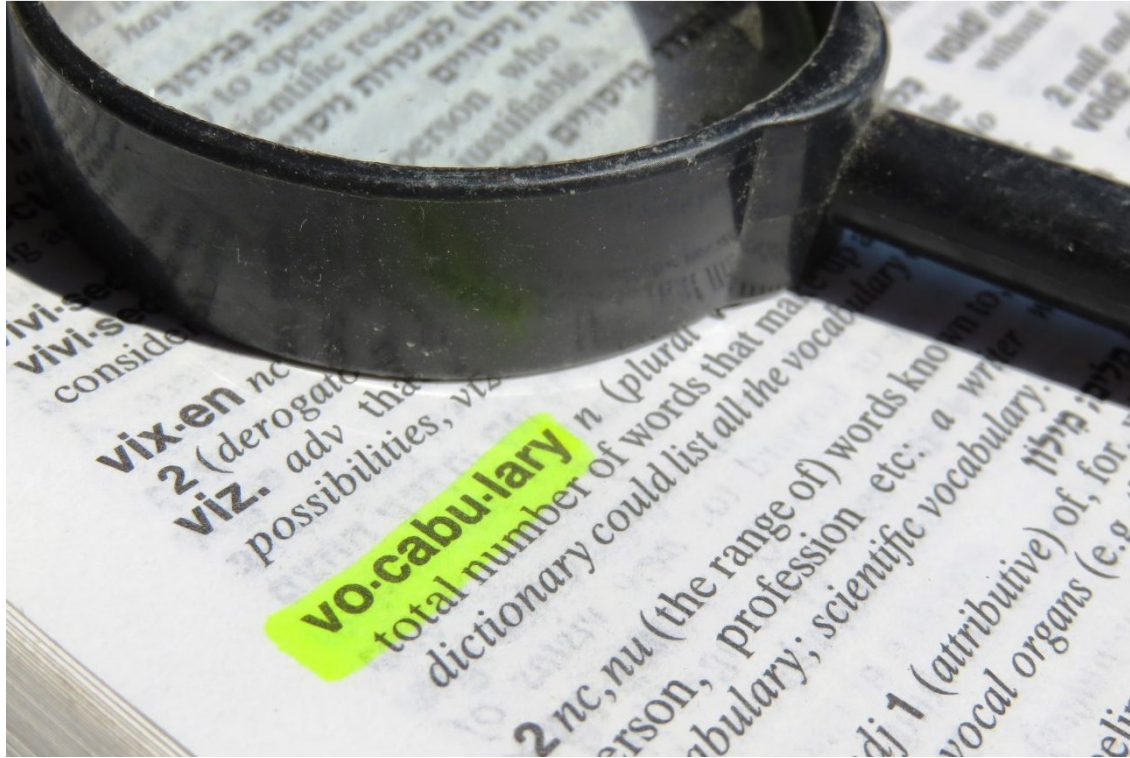
Assign creative writing to teach students to write stories and poetry and give them further opportunities to use literary devices such as metaphors and alliteration.

# 10. Correspondence



Teach students to write formal business letters using formal business style.

# 11. Vocabulary



Provide explicit and direct instruction in new vocabulary as part of each subject block.

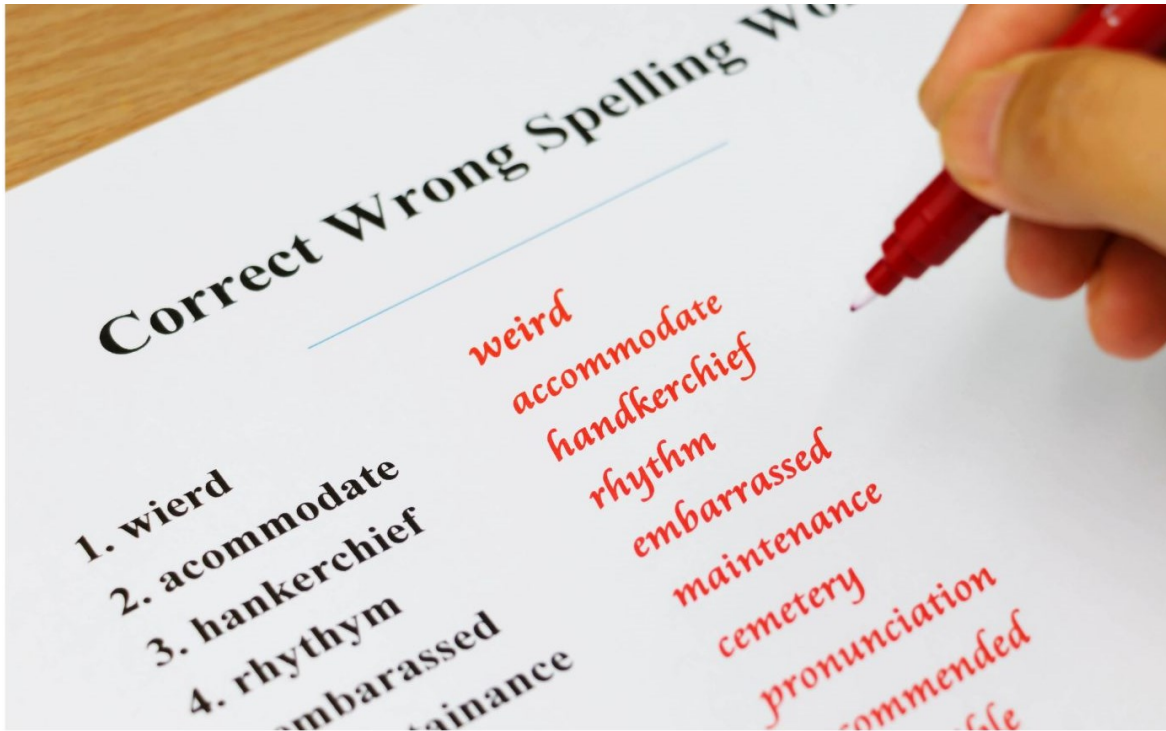
# 12. Handwriting



Provide ample opportunities for students to use and improve their handwriting, including both cursive and print.



# 13. Spelling



Choose a spelling program and provide explicit instruction in spelling skills, including how to spell by syllable and a review of phonics rules.

# 14. Speech



Teach students to give oral reports and to recite poetry.

# 15. Grammar



Provide direct instruction in all aspects of grammar.

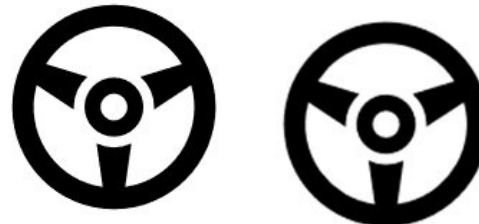
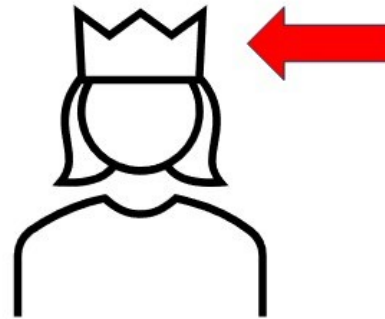
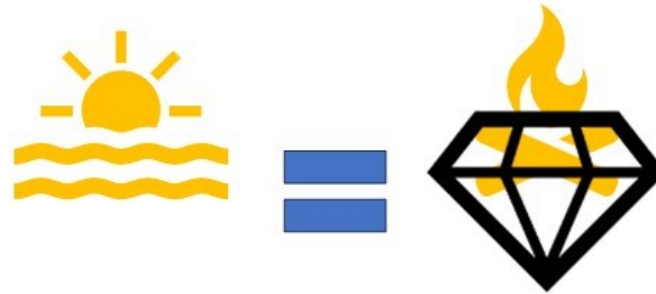
# 16. Literary Terms

## Literary Terms

**Metaphor:** A comparison not using *like* or *as*. For example: The *sun is a burning diamond*.

**Metonymy:** A type of metaphor where a word that is associated with a noun is used to represent it, but it is not technically part of the original noun. For example, the word *crown* refers to a power or authority.

**Synecdoche:** A type of metaphor where a thing is referred to by the name of one of its parts. For example, *She got her first set of wheels* (i.e., her first car).



Provide direct instruction in literary terms and analysis such as the ones on the left.

# 17. Morphology

## Latin Roots

terra	earth
port	carry

### Examples:

- terrestrial, terrain
- Transport (across + carry), compartment

Teach common Latin and Greek roots to support spelling and vocabulary.

# The secret to creating a holistic language arts curriculum is to use economy in teaching.

**Make Every Minute Matter!**  
**Use the Economy in Teaching Test**



Does \_\_\_\_\_ [insert an activity]:

1. Use the shortest possible time?
2. Present the maximum amount of material?
3. Use the simplest means possible?

**Soul Economy (Steiner 2003, 118)**

“Unlocking Continuing the Journey to Literacy”  
shows you how.



**Unlocking *Continuing  
the Journey to Literacy***

