

**SPECTRUM**

# Common Core Language Arts and Math

Grade

**4**

Take the mystery out of the Common Core while supporting standards-based learning

- Standards overview with parent-friendly explanations
- Tips and activities for helping at home
- Skill-building practice activities
- Critical thinking and problem solving



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**SPECTRUM**  
**Common Core**  
**Language Arts and Math**

Grade  
**4**



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Published by Spectrum®  
An imprint of Carson-Dellosa Publishing LLC  
Greensboro, North Carolina

Spectrum®  
An imprint of Carson-Dellosa Publishing LLC  
P.O. Box 35665  
Greensboro, NC 27425 USA

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ISBN 978-1-4838-0969-4

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# Introduction to the Common Core State Standards

## Grade 4

### Why Are Common Core State Standards Important for My Child?

The Common Core State Standards are a set of guidelines that outline what children are expected to learn at school. Most U.S. states have voluntarily adopted the standards. Teachers, principals, and administrators in these states use the standards as a blueprint for classroom lessons, district curriculum, and statewide tests. The standards were developed by a state-led collaboration between the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association (NGA).

The Common Core Standards set high expectations for your child's learning. They are up-to-date with 21st century technology and draw on the best practices of excellent schools around the world. They focus on important skills in reading, language arts, and math. Common Core State Standards aim to ensure that your child will be college and career ready by the end of high school and able to compete in our global world.



### What Are the Common Core State Standards for My Fourth Grade Student?

Common Core State Standards for your fourth grader are designed to build a solid foundation for reading, literacy, and mathematical understanding. On practice pages in this book, you will find references to specific Common Core Standards that teachers will expect your child to know by the end of the year. Completing activities on these pages will help your child master essential skills for success in fourth grade.

#### *A Sample of Common Core Language Arts Skills for Grade 4*

- Make inferences, or educated guesses, based on reading.
- Explain differences between poems, drama, and prose writing.
- Learn about problem/solution, cause/effect, and other ways to organize ideas logically.
- Read information presented in charts, graphs, and time lines.
- Write to give an opinion, share information, and tell stories.
- Understand and use prepositional phrases.
- Use commas and quotation marks correctly to write dialogue.

#### *A Sample of Common Core Math Skills for Grade 4*

- Solve multi-step word problems involving addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.
- Work with number patterns.
- Compare two fractions to tell which is greater or less.
- Multiply fractions.
- Change fractions to decimals and decimals to fractions.
- Find the perimeter and area of rectangular shapes.
- Measure angles in degrees.

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### How to Use This Book

In this book, you will find a complete **Common Core State Standards Overview** for fourth grade English Language Arts (pages 6–9) and Math (pages 64–67). Read these pages to learn more about the Common Core Standards and what you can expect your child to learn at school this year.

Then, choose **Practice Pages** that best address your child's needs for building skills that meet specific standards. Help your child complete practice pages and check the answers.



At the bottom of each practice page, you will find a **Helping at Home** tip that provides fun and creative ideas for additional practice with the skill at home.

## Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts\*

The following parent-friendly explanations of fourth grade Common Core English language arts standards are provided to help you understand what your child will learn in school this year. Practice pages listed will help your child master each skill.

Complete Common Core State Standards may be found here: [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org).

### RL/RI.4 Reading Standards for Literature and Informational Text

#### Key Ideas and Details

(Standards: RL.4.1, RL.4.2, RL.4.3, RI.4.1, RI.4.2, RI.4.3)

Your child will answer questions about details and examples used in texts. He or she will explain what the text says directly and make inferences, or educated guesses, about what is not directly stated. • Practice pages: 10, 12, 13, 16, 18, 19, 21–26, 28–31, 44

Your child will summarize texts and describe their themes or main ideas.

• Practice pages: 11, 21

Your child will think about characters, settings, and events from stories. For example, he or she will describe a character's thoughts, words, and actions and explain what they say about that character. • Practice pages: 10, 12–16, 20

Your child will read about history, science, and technology and explain procedures, events, and ideas described in nonfiction articles. • Practice pages: 21–27, 30, 31

#### Craft and Structure

(Standards: RL.4.4, RL.4.5, RL.4.6, RI.4.4, RI.4.5, RI.4.6)

Your child will determine the meanings of words and phrases found in texts.

• Practice pages: 17, 22–25, 27, 30, 31, 57

Your child will read stories, plays, and poems and discuss the differences between them.

• Practice pages: 18, 19

Your child will think about whether ideas in an article are organized by time, cause/effect, compare/contrast, problem/solution, or another strategy. • Practice pages: 28, 29, 34

Your child will think about point of view and determine who is telling a story. He or she will compare stories told by first-person and third-person narrators. • Practice pages: 14, 15, 20



Your child will compare firsthand and secondhand accounts of the same event or topic.

• Practice pages: 32, 33

### **Integration of Knowledge and Skills** (Standards: RL.4.7, RL.4.9, RI.4.7, RI.4.8, RI.4.9)

Your child will make connections between a text and a visual presentation of the text. For example, your child will compare a story's text to its illustrations or to a movie version of the story. • Practice pages: 12, 13

Your child will read and understand information presented in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, etc. • Practice pages: 24–26, 28, 29

Your child will explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to back up his or her points.

• Practice page: 21

Your child will compare and contrast stories that have similar themes or compare and contrast similar stories from different cultures. • Practice pages: 14, 15

Your child will combine information from two different texts in order to speak or write knowledgeably about a topic. • Practice pages: 32, 33, 35

## **W.4 Writing Standards**

### **Text Types and Purposes** (Standards: W.4.1, W.4.2, W.4.3)

Your child will state an opinion in writing, giving reasons and information to support the opinion. • Practice pages: 36, 37

Your child will write to provide facts and information about a topic.

• Practice pages: 35, 38, 39, 41, 42

Your child will write stories with descriptive details and clear sequences of events.

• Practice pages: 43–46

### **Production and Distribution of Writing** (Standards: W.4.5, W.4.6)

Your child will revise and edit writing to make sure it is correct, to make it more interesting, and to answer questions from readers. • Practice pages: 40, 47

## Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts\*

Your child will use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing. He or she will learn keyboarding skills. • Practice pages: 40, 47

### Research to Build and Present Knowledge (Standard: W.4.7)

Your child will gather ideas for writing by using a variety of sources to conduct research. • Practice pages: 32, 33, 39, 41

## L.4 Language Standards

### Conventions of Standard English (Standards: L.4.1a, L.4.1b, L.4.1c, L.4.1d, L.4.1e, L.4.1f, L.4.1g, L.4.2a, L.4.2b, L.4.2c, L.4.2d)

Your child will learn to use relative, or non-specific, pronouns such as who and which and relative adverbs such as when and where. • Practice page: 48

Your child will use the progressive verb tense (example: I am walking) to indicate an action that is ongoing. • Practice page: 49

Your child will learn to use modal auxiliary verbs such as may and must to show mood or likelihood. • Practice page: 49

Your child will learn which adjectives should come first in a list of adjectives (example: little red bag, not red little bag). • Practice page: 51

Your child will learn to form prepositional phrases such as above the desk and for my friend. • Practice page: 51

Your child will write complete sentences that include a subject and verb (example: I went home) and avoid sentence fragments (example: Went home) and run-on sentences (I went home she did, too). • Practice page: 50

Your child will learn the correct use of homophones (words that sound alike but have different spellings and meanings) and other words that are frequently confused (examples: to, too, two). • Practice pages: 18, 19, 51

Your child will use correct capitalization and punctuation. He or she will learn to use commas and quotation marks correctly when writing dialogue (example: He said, "Come here!"). • Practice pages: 44, 52, 53

Your child will check spelling carefully, using a dictionary when needed to look up the spellings of words. • **Practice page: 54**

**Knowledge of Language**  
(Standards: L.4.3a, L.4.3b, L.4.3c)

Your child will choose words, phrases, and punctuation to convey ideas and feelings precisely. • **Practice pages: 55, 56**

Your child will think about times when informal language is OK and when more formal language is required. • **Practice page: 55**

**Vocabulary Acquisition and Use**  
(Standards: L.4.4a, L.4.4b, L.4.5a, L.4.5b, L.4.5c, L.4.6)

Your child will search the surrounding text for context clues to the meaning of an unknown word. • **Practice pages: 17, 27, 57**

Your child will study prefixes, suffixes, and word roots from Greek and Latin. • **Practice page: 58**

Your child will study similes (example: as pretty as a picture), metaphors (example: the wind was a bully), and idioms (example: time to hit the sack). • **Practice pages: 59–61**

Your child will find antonyms (example: exhausted/energetic) and synonyms (example: exhausted/drained). • **Practice page: 62**

Your child will learn new words from reading, including specialized words from math, science, history, and other subject areas. • **Practice page: 63**

## Making Inferences

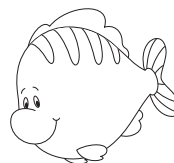
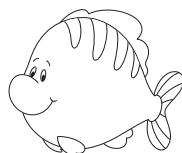
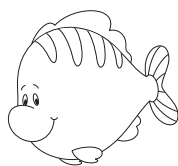
Read the story. Then, circle the phrase that completes each sentence.

Before the Atkins family began to pack for their vacation, they made a list of what they would need. Then, they laid out the needed clothes on the dining room table. They each had three pairs of shorts, three T-shirts, a swimming suit, socks, and shoes. They put their tents, sleeping bags, raincoats, flashlights, bug spray, cooking equipment, and fishing gear on the dining room floor.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. The Atkins family's vacation was going ____ . | 2. On their vacation, they were _____ . |
| to be in a warm climate                          | going to eat out in restaurants         |
| to be in a city                                  | going camping                           |
| 3. The place they were going _____ .             | 4. They would be away _____ .           |
| often had afternoon showers                      | for two weeks                           |
| never had any bugs                               | for a long weekend                      |

They put the camping equipment and a duffel bag filled with their clothes in the car. They were off! In a couple of hours, they got to the campsite. After setting up camp, they headed for a swim. They ran shoeless to the water and jumped in. After swimming, they had to shower because they were muddy. They hung their suits on trees to dry. While Mom prepared dinner at the campsite, Dad and the children went back to the lake with their poles and bait.

- |                             |                                 |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 5. The campsite was _____ . | 6. They swam _____ .            |
| at the seashore             | in a swimming pool              |
| in the woods                | in a lake                       |
| 7. The campsite was _____ . | 8. Dad and the children _____ . |
| not too far from home       | brought back fish               |
| first class                 | fell in the pond                |



Ask your child to read any paragraph aloud from a favorite chapter book. What questions about characters, settings, and events does the text answer directly? What is suggested or hinted at, but not directly stated?

## Themes

Write the letter for the lesson that best describes the theme of each story.

A. If you are patient, your turn will come.

B. If you want to do well, keep practicing.

C. Being brave will help you achieve your goals.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Bethany's friends talked on the phone and traded glittery stickers. Each afternoon, they took turns deciding how to spend their time. Bethany did not always like the activity, but she played anyway. She knew that her turn would arrive soon.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Alex wanted to learn his multiplication tables. His friends knew how to multiply, and he wished that he could do it, too. Each day, he spent one hour studying his flash cards. By the end of the month, Alex was a multiplication expert!
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. During the school play, Trey was scared to go on stage. But he took a deep breath and stepped onto the stage. He was a star!

Write a short story for each theme.

4. Telling the truth is very important. \_\_\_\_\_

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5. Everyone makes mistakes. \_\_\_\_\_

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6. Even if you lose, you might learn a valuable lesson. \_\_\_\_\_

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Choose a common theme such as “don’t give up” or “good wins over evil.” Have fun with your child brainstorming stories that illustrate the theme. Stories may include those found in books, movies, and TV shows. Keep going with another theme.

## Characters, Settings, and Events

Read the story below.

### The Crow Who Brought the Daylight (An Inuit Story)

Long ago when the earth was first born, the Inuit people from the north lived in darkness. They did not mind because they thought everyone lived in darkness. But one day an old crow let something slip. He had flown all around the world and had seen daylight many times on his travels. When the Inuit people heard about daylight, they wanted it too.

"Think about all of the things we could do if we had daylight," the people said. "We could travel far. We would be safer. We could see polar bears coming. We could catch more fish." The people asked the old crow to fly out and bring them back daylight. He said that he was too old and too tired. But the people continued to beg. Finally, Crow agreed.

Crow flew east for a long time. He had nearly given up when he saw a faint flicker of daylight ahead of him. "Ah," said the tired crow. "There's the daylight the people want." As he continued flying, the sky got brighter and brighter. He finally landed in a tree near a river. He needed to rest after his long journey.

Crow watched a village girl take water from the river. Hoping to get warm, he turned himself into a speck of dust and floated down onto her warm fur coat. When she returned to her father's snow home, Crow floated off the girl's coat and into her young brother's ear. The boy started to cry.

"What's wrong?" his father asked.

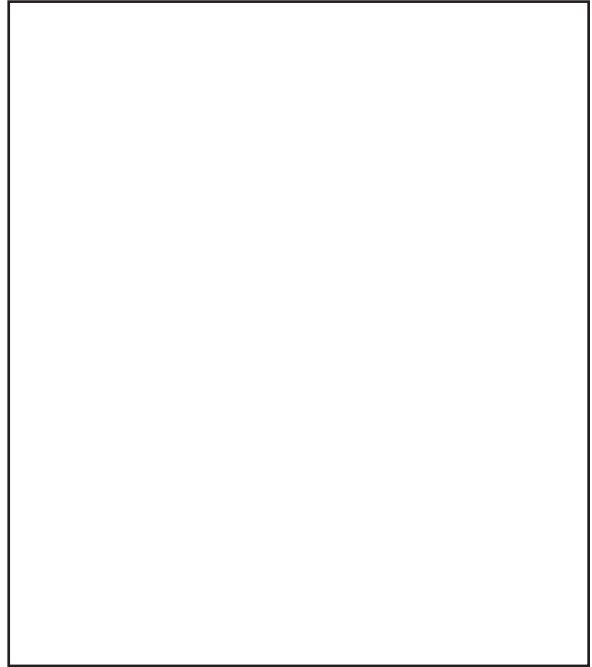
"Ask for a ball of daylight to play with," the speck of dust whispered.

The father was glad to give his favorite son a ball of daylight. He wanted him to be happy, and he had plenty of balls of daylight. The boy took the ball of daylight and left his snow home to play outside. That quickly, the speck of dust turned back into Crow again. He grabbed the ball of daylight in his claws and flew quickly up into the bright sky, heading west back to his people.

When he reached the land of the Inuit again, the people were waiting for him. "Quick!" they exclaimed. "Give us daylight!"

"I could only bring one ball back," Crow said. "There is only enough for half the year." The people didn't mind. They were glad for any daylight at all.

Crow dropped the ball to the ground, where it splintered into a thousand pieces of daylight. As the pieces shone upward, the land of the Inuit became bright and beautiful. The people could see for miles and miles. What a beautiful homeland they had!



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## Characters, Settings, and Events

Answer the questions with complete sentences.

1. On the previous page, draw an illustration for the story. Write a caption beneath it.
2. What are three things you could not do if you lived in total darkness?

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3. Why do you think Crow was willing to go on such a long journey?

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4. What would be the advantage to being able to change your shape like Crow did when he changed himself into a speck of dust? Explain.

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5. Do you think a ball of daylight would be heavy or light? Explain.

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6. Where do the Inuit people live? Use reference materials if you need to.

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Ask your child to draw a detailed illustration of a favorite scene from a book or movie. Admire the finished artwork and ask, "What details about the story's characters, settings, and events are reflected in your illustration?"

## Compare and Contrast

Read the summary of *Shiloh* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor (Aladdin, 2000). Use details from the summary to complete the puzzle. The bold spaces will tell you what award this book received.

In *Shiloh*, an award-winning book, 11-year-old Marty Preston tells about what happens when a dog follows him home. Marty lives with his parents and two sisters, Becky and Dara Lynn, in the hills above Friendly. Friendly is a small town in West Virginia near Sisterville. On a Sunday afternoon, after a big dinner of rabbit and sweet potatoes, Marty goes for a walk along the river. During his walk, Marty spies a short-haired dog. The dog, a beagle with black and brown spots, does not make a sound as he watches and follows Marty. From the dog's behavior, Marty suspects that the dog has been mistreated. Since he found the dog near the old Shiloh schoolhouse, Marty calls the dog Shiloh. Marty soon discovers that Shiloh belongs to mean Judd Travers. After returning Shiloh to Judd, Marty contemplates how he can earn enough money to buy the dog. Before Marty can solve this problem, he is faced with a difficult decision.

1. In what town does Marty live?
2. How old is Marty?
3. What kind of potatoes does the family eat on Sunday?
4. What kind of meat do they eat?
5. What kind of dog is Shiloh?
6. Write the last name of Shiloh's owner.
7. Name one of Marty's sisters.
  
8. What adjective is used to describe Judd Travers?
9. What is Marty's last name?
10. On what day does Marty find Shiloh?
11. Who tells the story?
12. Marty finds the dog by what schoolhouse?



## Compare and Contrast

This book summary is about the much beloved book *Old Yeller* by Fred Gipson (Scholastic Book Services, 1957). *Old Yeller* won a number of awards, including the 1957 Newbery Honor Book award.

*Old Yeller* is about a boy and a dog. When Travis's father left to take their cattle to market, young Travis had to take his father's place on the farm. This required him to plow the fields, chop wood, hunt for food for the dinner table, take care of the livestock, and protect his mother and little brother. This was a lot of responsibility for young Travis and sometimes he did not feel up to it. In the middle of all this, an ugly yellow dog showed up on the farm. At first, Travis hated the dog for stealing the family's meager supply of meat. But later, after the dog saved his little brother from an angry mother bear, Travis came to appreciate the dog's protection and help. He named the dog Old Yeller and the dog became his closest friend. At the end of the story, Old Yeller was bitten by a rabid wolf and Travis had a hard decision to make.

Compare and contrast what you read about *Old Yeller* with the summary of *Shiloh* on the previous page.

1. What are some qualities that Shiloh and Old Yeller have in common?

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2. Compare and contrast how the two boys met the dogs that were to become their best friends.

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3. Tell what you know or might guess about the difficult decisions both Marty and Travis had to make at the end of these books.

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Ask your child to think of another familiar story about a young person and his or her special animal friend. It could be from a book or a movie. Listen as your child compares and contrasts that story with the summaries of *Shiloh* and *Old Yeller*.

## Characters, Settings, and Events

Read the story and follow the directions.

There was an old lady who lived on the edge of town. Everyone referred to her as Granny. Because she kept to herself, she seemed a little different to some. She asked nothing of anyone and did nothing for anyone except her many dogs. The number of dogs varied daily. Some dogs came only when they were hungry and left until they returned to eat again. Some knew that it was a good home and stayed.

One day, the paper boy noticed that Granny’s papers had not been picked up for three or four days. The dogs in her yard were thin and looked almost lifeless as they moved about slowly. He had not seen Granny for about a week. He wondered if she was all right.

He got off his bike and walked up the steps onto the front porch. He walked around and peered in the windows, but he did not see anything. He opened the front door slightly and called, “Hello! Anyone here?” He listened for a minute. He thought that he heard a whimpering sound, so he quickly rode to the closest neighbor’s house and called 911.

When the police arrived, they found that Granny had fallen and had not been able to move to call for help. The paramedics determined that Granny needed to go to the hospital, where she stayed for a few days.

While she was in the hospital, the paper boy came to feed her dogs every day. When Granny came home, neighbors brought food and flowers. Granny was sorry that she had not gotten to know her new friends sooner, but she was glad that she had now “found” them.

1. Circle what Granny’s behavior indicates about her character at the beginning of the story.

She prefers to be alone.

She does not like people.

She is mean.

2. How does Granny’s behavior change?

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3. Write three adjectives that describe the paper boy’s character.

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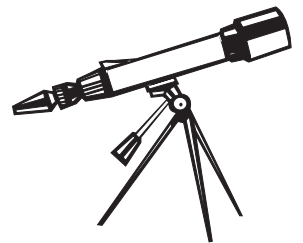


Ask your child to describe a character, setting, or event from a favorite book. Praise your child’s good memory of the story, then have him or her look in the actual book for specific words, sentences, and passages that confirm the description.

## Context Clues

Use context clues to complete each sentence with one of the words in parentheses.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ is one of Tom's favorite subjects. (Astronaut, Astronomy, Atmosphere)
2. He \_\_\_\_\_ liked to follow the movement of the stars. (especially, establish, exceptionally)
3. When Tom was a little boy, his favorite outing was to visit a nearby \_\_\_\_\_. (platform, planetarium, planet)
4. Tom was delighted when his family gave him a \_\_\_\_\_. (telegram, telephoned, telescope)
5. Part of his birthday present was to go camping with his father in a park where \_\_\_\_\_ were good for stargazing. (constellations, conditions, conjunctions)
6. When the night came for Tom to go to the park, he took the necessary equipment with which to make his \_\_\_\_\_. (observes, orbits, observations)
7. Tom saw several \_\_\_\_\_, including Orion and the Dippers. (consultants, constellations, conformations)
8. Tom also saw the North Star, which is almost exactly \_\_\_\_\_ the north pole. (over, other, off)
9. He drew pictures of what he saw and recorded their positions using a \_\_\_\_\_. (compass, confess, congress)
10. He had a wonderful time and asked if his father would take him on another \_\_\_\_\_ to observe the stars. (explore, expedition, experience)



For several items from this page, ask your child to explain the thinking process he or she used to choose one of the words to fill in the blank. Ask your child to underline words in the sentence that provided a context clue.

## Reading Poetry

Read the poems aloud to another person.

### 'Tis Midnight

- 1 'Tis midnight, and the setting sun  
Is slowly rising in the west;  
The rapid rivers slowly run,  
The frog is on his downy nest.  
The pensive goat and sportive cow  
Hilarious, leap from bough to bough.

**Anonymous**



### The Train Pulled in the Station

- 2 O, the train pulled in the station,  
The bell was ringing wet;  
The track ran by the depot,  
And I think it's running yet.
- 3 'Twas midnight on the ocean,  
Not a streetcar was in sight;  
The sun and moon were shining,  
And it rained all day that night.
- 4 'Twas a summer day in winter,  
And the snow was raining fast;  
As a barefoot boy, with shoes on,  
Stood, sitting on the grass.
- 5 O, I jumped into the river,  
Just because it had a bed;  
I took a sheet of water  
For to cover up my head.
- 6 O, the rain makes all things beautiful,  
The flowers and grasses too;  
If the rain makes all things beautiful,  
Why don't it rain on you?

**An American Folk Song**

## Reading Poetry

Refer back to the poem on page 18, "The Train Pulled in the Station." For each stanza, write one thing that doesn't make sense.

1. Stanza 1 \_\_\_\_\_
2. Stanza 2 \_\_\_\_\_
3. Stanza 3 \_\_\_\_\_
4. Stanza 4 \_\_\_\_\_
5. Stanza 5 \_\_\_\_\_

Write what you think is the silliest part of "'Tis Midnight." Be sure to tell why you think it's silly.

6. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Write the words that make up the compound words found in the stanzas in parentheses.

7. (3) \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
8. (4) \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

Check the meaning of the underlined homograph as it is used in the sentence.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 9. <u>Dates</u> are often used when making muffins.<br>_____ a kind of fruit    _____ a day in a month | 11. Cheese can <u>age</u> rapidly.<br>_____ to grow old    _____ long period of time                               |
| 10. The holy man went on a <u>fast</u> .<br>_____ swift moving    _____ a period of not eating food    | 12. It was almost more than his mother could <u>bear</u> .<br>_____ put up with    _____ a large omnivorous animal |



Think of a topic that interests your child such as horses, shipwrecks, or football. What details about the topic might be included in a poem? What might be explored in a dramatic play? What about the topic would make a good focus for a prose article or essay?

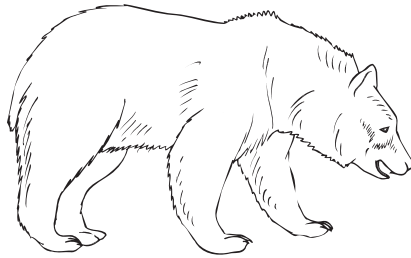
## Point of View

Read the following passages and choose the point of view of each (first person, third person). Then, list the characters in the story, using the word *author* for stories written in the first person.

My family flies out tomorrow morning for a week’s vacation at Yellowstone National Park. How exciting! But I have a problem. I am somewhat afraid of the wild animals that are allowed to roam free in the park. I know this is good for them, but the idea of meeting a buffalo or a bear or a gray wolf on one of the trails scares me to death. Please don’t mention this to anyone.

1. Point of view \_\_\_\_\_

2. Characters in the story \_\_\_\_\_



Tony and Jose decided to order a different kind of pizza. Usually, they preferred sausage or pepperoni toppings. No veggies! No strange ingredients! They agreed to order every third ingredient from the list of possible choices until they had five items. When the list was complete, Tony looked at Jose and said, “You get the side with the anchovies and duck!” Jose wrinkled his nose and said, “Well, then you get the side with the red beets and green peas!”

3. Point of view \_\_\_\_\_

4. Characters in the story \_\_\_\_\_

When Erin made a list of kids to invite to her party, she thought about a couple of things. First, how many kids did she want for her party? If it is to be a sleep-over, she might only want four or five. If it is to be an outing at a frozen yogurt store, she might be allowed to invite a lot more. Then, she thought about who her best friends are. Whose feelings would be hurt if they aren’t invited? Who might not want to come? And, who always invites her to their parties? There were lots of decisions to make.

5. Point of view \_\_\_\_\_

6. Characters in the story \_\_\_\_\_



When your child shares a story about something that happened to him or her, observe that it was told in first person. Challenge your child to tell the same story again in third person and yet again in first person from the point of view of another person involved.