

To become ready for college and career, high school students learn to evaluate intricate arguments and surmount the challenges posed by complex written materials independently and confidently. Through wide and deep reading of literature and literary non-fiction of steadily increasing sophistication, students expand their literary and cultural knowledge and better understand references and images. They also develop the flexibility, concentration, and *fluency* to produce high-quality, first drafts of writing under tight deadlines. And they are able to revisit and make improvements to a piece of writing over multiple drafts if needed. High school students master the essential “rules” of standard written and spoken English and resolve usage issues by consulting style and usage guides. By writing and participating in a variety of conversations, they assert and defend claims and show what they know about a subject using appropriate examples and evidence.

Skills Your Child Will Be Working On

READING

- Understanding more from and making fuller use of written materials, including using a wider range of evidence to support an analysis
- Making more connections about how complex ideas interact and develop within a book, essay, or article
- Evaluating arguments and specific claims; assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is sufficient; and as appropriate, detecting inconsistencies and ambiguities

WRITING

- Making an argument that is logical, well-reasoned, and supported by evidence
- Writing a literary analysis, report, or summary that develops a central idea and a coherent focus and is well supported with relevant examples, facts, and details
- Conducting several research projects that address different aspects of the same topic, using more complex books, articles, and other sources

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

- Responding thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesizing comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; and resolving contradictions when possible
- Sharing research, findings, and evidence clearly and concisely
- Making strategic use of digital media (e.g., animations, video, websites, podcasts) to enhance understanding of findings and to add interest

LANGUAGE

- Determining or clarifying the meaning of words and phrases, choosing flexibly from multiple strategies, such as using context, and consulting specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses)
- Interpreting figures of speech (e.g., *hyperbole*, *paradox*) in context and analyzing their role in the written materials

Learning Activity to Use at Home

- Help your child to be reflective and thoughtful in how he or she approaches schoolwork. Make sure that your child can set priorities for school work and other events such as a part-time job, relaxation and socializing. Show that you value the time your child spends investing in his or her education and talk about how time spent now will translate into long-term success.
- Encourage your child to write in a journal, keep a diary or keep a blog about their interests or hobbies.
- Encourage your child to join an online book club for high school age students. There are many wonderful online book clubs that you can find that specialize in all types of genres for teens.
- Help your child understand the types of reading that you use in your job and/or everyday life and the skills you use to process this information. As your child expresses interest in various careers, find people who are employed in those professions that your child can interview. Ask the child to find out the educational requirements of the job and what high courses are needed to prepare for the career choice.
- Depending on your child's career goals, encourage your child to research colleges, universities and trade schools. Have your child write for their catalogs and entrance requirements and begin studying what they will need to be successful in the career field in which he or she is interested.
- If your child will be taking the ACT or SAT, be sure to find test prep materials to help your child understand the types of questions he or she is likely to see on these important tests. Be sure to spend time building vocabulary and expanding the amount of words that your child can recognize and use in conversation.

Teacher and Parent Conferencing - Topics for ongoing conversations throughout the school year with your child's teacher.

When you talk to the teacher, do not worry about covering everything. Instead, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In the high school years grade, these include:

- Becoming skilled at gathering information, evaluating sources, and citing material accurately
- Asserting and defending claims, conveying what he or she understands about what he or she has read and researched
- Speaking clearly and appropriately, listening attentively when discussing findings and evidence, and building on others' good ideas while expressing his or her own ideas persuasively