

Parent Guide to Grammar in OJR

8th Grade

Grammar, conventions, and language usage are foundational skills taught as part of the OJR English Language Arts (ELA) Curriculum. These skills are taught within the core curriculum and are aligned with state grade level expectations. The focus for instruction in these areas is on application in reading texts and writing narratives, informational, and persuasive pieces.

Some examples of how of students are taught foundational skills in reading and writing:

- As readers, students are taught to notice authors' use of adjectives in helping to envision setting, dialogue to reveal character traits, verb-tense agreement to indicate time, and commas give dramatic pause or set off important information.
- As writers, students are taught to use conventions to create meaning in narratives, persuasive essays, and informational texts. Writers learn that punctuation signals the reader to attend to important ideas. Conjunctions connect two clauses (e.g., 'and' connects two similar ideas, while 'but' connects opposing ideas), and semicolons link independent clauses with similar ideas (and needed when there are already too many commas in a sentence).

In this handout you will find the expectations, or “non-negotiable,” for your child’s grade level. At home parents can support the mastery and automaticity of these skills by having your child consistently use skills taught in the previous year when publishing writing or completing homework in all subject areas. When students are drafting new pieces of work, the focus is on constructing meaning. In new writing pieces, editing and “non-negotiable” expectations can be addressed in revising and editing work closer to publication. As students learn new skills throughout this year, you can begin to add those new grade level skills to the “non-negotiable” list from previous years.

You may notice some repetition of skills in previous or subsequent grades. This expectation repeats intentionally to support student learning and application of the skills in more complex pieces of writing.

All grade level skills can be found by accessing these documents at: <http://ojrsd.schoolwires.net/Page/6317>

Finally, information on handwriting/keyboarding expectations is included to help reinforce when students should be using those skills consistently.

Grammar, Conventions, & Language Usage ~ Grade 8

	Grade 7 *Reinforce these skills at home and have students use in writing “Non-Negotiables”	Grade 8 *Reinforce and add to the “Non-Negotiables” list as skills are introduced throughout the year	Grade 9 *Students may using, but confusing these skills and do not need to be reinforced at this time
Grammar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the function of phrases and clauses in general and their function in specific sentences. Choose among simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences to signal differing relationships among ideas. Place phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers.* Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.* Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).* Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense.* Ensure subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement.* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the function of verbals (i.e., gerunds, participles, and infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences. Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice. Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.* Place phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers.* Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.* Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).* Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense.* Ensure subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement.* 	<p>Demonstrates command of standard English grammar and usage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verb Tense (consistent) Subject-verb/pronoun-antecedent agreement Active voice Pronoun use Modifiers & Transitions Correct word order and syntax
Punctuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-on sentences.* Use a comma to separate coordinate adjectives (e.g., <i>It was a fascinating, enjoyable movie</i> but not <i>He wore an old[,] green shirt</i>). Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, and dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.* Use punctuation to separate items in a series.* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-on sentences.* Use an ellipsis to indicate omission. Use punctuation to indicate a pause or break. Use punctuation (i.e., commas, parentheses, and dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements). Use punctuation to separate items in a series. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Punctuate correctly (e.g., correctly use commas, semicolons, quotation marks, apostrophes). Demonstrate correct sentence formation (no run-ons, comma splices, fragments)
Spelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., <i>to, too, two; there, their, they're</i>).* Spell correctly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., <i>to, too, two; there, their, they're</i>).* Spell correctly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spell all words correctly. Use capital letters correctly. Consistently checks for spelling errors.
Editing/ Revising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.* Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.* Maintain consistency in style and tone.* Choose punctuation for effect.* Choose words and phrases for effect.* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action, expressing uncertainty, or describing a state contrary to fact). Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.* Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style. Maintain consistency in style and tone. Choose punctuation for effect. Choose words and phrases for effect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use precise language to create clarity, voice, and tone. Revise to eliminate wordiness and redundancy. Revise to delete irrelevant details. Use the correct form of commonly confused words; use logical transitions Combine sentences for cohesiveness and unity. Revise sentences for clarity.
Production and Distribution of Writing Process & Handwriting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. MLA Format for research, argument, and informational 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. MLA Format for research, argument, and informational 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. MLA Format for research, argument, and informational