



Diocese of Joliet
Catholic Schools

Preschool Curriculum Guide for Parents

Language Arts and Reading

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INTRODUCTION

Academic excellence is a pillar of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Joliet. To assist schools in maintaining academic excellence, the Catholic Schools Office has developed curriculum guides for grades preschool through eight. The purpose of the curriculum guide is to identify what we want our students to know and be able to do at the end of each grade based on Catholic faith standards and content standards. With these guides as a template, each individual school develops a plan to clearly articulate what is taught, how it is taught, and how student achievement is assessed for each grade.



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CARDINAL NEWMAN STANDARDS

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Committee on Catholic Education released a [document](#) in 2014 to guide Catholic schools in their approach to educational standards. The Cardinal Newman Society responded to this call by creating the Cardinal Newman Catholic Curriculum Standards with support from more than eight Catholic universities and colleges.

This curriculum guide is aligned to those standards. The Cardinal Newman Catholic Standards for reading and language arts in this curriculum guide are:

- Identify examples of noble characteristics in stories with virtuous heroes and heroines.
- Identify the causes underlying why people do the things they do.
- Analyze how literature assists in the ability to make judgments about what is true, what is false, and to make choices based on these judgments.
- Use imagination to create dialogue between the readers and the characters in a story.



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SPEAKING & LISTENING SKILLS

The following standards outline what speaking and listening skills the Diocese of Joliet expects students to know and do by the end of Preschool:

- Follow one-, two-, and three- step directions.
- Respond appropriately to questions from others.
- Provide comments relative to the content.
- Identify emotions.
- Use language for a variety of purposes.
- With teacher prompting and support, participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners (e.g., peers and adults in both small and large groups) about age-appropriate topics and texts.
- Continue a conversation through two or more exchanges.
- Engage in agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening, making eye contact, taking turns speaking).
- Describe familiar people, places, things, and events, and with teacher assistance, provide additional details.
- With teacher prompting and support, use complete sentences in speaking with peers and adults in individual and group situations.
- Speak using age-appropriate conventions of Standard English grammar and usage (for example, use negatives [no, not] appropriately).
- Understand and use question words in speaking (who, what, where, when, why).
- With teacher prompting and support, begin to use increasingly complex sentences, combine short sentences into longer sentences.
- Exhibit curiosity and interest in learning new words heard in conversations and books.
- With teacher prompting and support, use new words acquired through conversations and book-sharing experiences.
- With teacher prompting and support, explore word relationships to understand the concepts represented by common categories of words (e.g., food, clothing, vehicles).
- With teacher prompting and support, use adjectives to describe people, places, and things.



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PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

The following standards outline what the Diocese of Joliet expects students to know and do in phonological awareness by the end of Preschool:

- With teacher prompting and support, recognize and match words that rhyme.
- With teacher prompting and support, demonstrate ability to segment and blend syllables in words (e.g., “trac/tor, tractor”).
- With teacher prompting and support, isolate and pronounce the initial sounds in words orally.
- With teacher prompting and support, blend sounds (phonemes) in one-syllable words (e.g., /c/ /a/ /t/ = cat) orally.
- With teacher prompting and support, begin to segment sounds (phonemes) in one-syllable words (e.g., cat = /c/ /a/ /t/).
- With teacher prompting and support, begin to manipulate sounds (phonemes) in words (e.g., changing cat to hat to mat).



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READING

The following standards outline what the Diocese of Joliet expects students to know and do in reading by the end of Preschool:

- Engage in book-sharing experiences with purpose and understanding.
- Look at books independently, pretending to read.
- With teacher prompting and support, ask and answer questions about books read aloud, including Bible/religious stories.
- With teacher prompting and support, retell familiar stories with three or more key events, including Bible/religious stories.
- With teacher prompting and support, identify the main character(s) of the story, including Bible/religious stories.
- Interact with a variety of types of texts (e.g., storybooks, poems, rhymes, songs) including Bible/religious stories.
- Identify the front and back covers of books and display the correct orientation of books and page-turning skills.
- With teacher prompting and support, describe the role of an author and illustrator.
- With teacher prompting and support, discuss illustrations in books and make personal connections to the pictures and story, including Bible/religious stories.
- With teacher prompting and support, compare and contrast two stories relating to the same topic.
- With teacher prompting and support, ask and answer questions about details in a nonfiction book.
- With teacher prompting and support, retell detail(s) about the main topic in a nonfiction book.
- With teacher prompting and support, identify basic similarities and differences in pictures and information found in two texts on the same topic. (e.g., looking to see a tadpole and how it is different from a frog).
- Recognize the differences between print and pictures.



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READING (CONTINUED)

The following standards outline what the Diocese of Joliet expects students to know and do in reading by the end of Preschool:

- During shared reading experiences, begin to follow words from left to right, top to bottom, and page by page.
- During shared reading experience, recognize the one-to-one relationship between spoken and written words.
- With teacher prompting and support, understand that words are separated by spaces in print.
- With teacher prompting and support, recognize that letters are grouped to form words.
- Differentiate letters from numerals.
- Demonstrate an emerging knowledge of the alphabet.
- With teacher prompting and support, recite the alphabet.
- Recognize and name some upper and lowercase letters, especially those in own name.
- With teacher prompting and support, match some upper/lower case letters of the alphabet.
- Recognize own name and common signs and labels in the environment.
- With teacher prompting and support, demonstrate understanding of the one-to-one correspondence of letters and sounds. (e.g., your name starts with the letter “m,” can you remember what sound the letter “m” makes?)



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WRITING

The following standards outline what the Diocese of Joliet expects students to know and do in writing by the end of Preschool:

- With teacher prompting and support, begin to form some letters of the alphabet, especially those in own name.
- With teacher prompting and support, begin to use knowledge of letters and sounds to spell words phonetically.
- Experiment with writing tools and materials.
- Use scribbles, letter-like forms, or letters/words to represent written language.
- With teacher prompting and support, write own first name using appropriate upper/lowercase letters.
- With teacher prompting and support, use a combination of drawing, dictating, or writing to express an opinion about a book or topic.
- With teacher prompting and support, use a combination of drawing, dictating, or writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic. (May include Catholic teaching/values.)
- With teacher prompting and support, use a combination of drawing, dictating, or writing to narrate a single event and provide a reaction to what happened.
- Participate in group projects or units of study designed to learn about a topic of interest.
- With teacher prompting and support, recall factual information, and share that information through drawing, dictation, and writing.