

Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum – School Library Media Expectations for Students in Grades Pre K – 1

A consistent concern expressed by individuals reading the curriculum document is that the perceived expectations for students in grades Pre K – 1 are not age appropriate. This document is intended to address these concerns by clarifying terminology and providing examples of the behaviors expected of both staff and students. Sample “seeds” are provided to further clarify expectations.

Underlying concepts to keep in mind are:

- Students are not expected to demonstrate the behaviors themselves.
- Students are not expected to be assessed on this content.
- Focus is on media specialists and teachers introducing and modeling concepts by verbalizing their own thought processes and actions related to materials being used with the students.

Definition of terms:

The following terms are used consistently throughout the curriculum document.

When it says, “**explore**” a concept, what is expected is that the adult working with the students will introduce the concept by naming it and providing an age appropriate definition, followed by verbalizing the connection between the concept and the current instructional interaction. This can be just a casual statement or involve a bit of a discussion with the students.

When it says, “**explore and discuss**” the adult will provide basic information related to the concept and ask appropriate questions to spark student discussion of the concept in the context of what is being learned.

When it says, “**model**” the adult will verbalize his or her own actions while demonstrating a skill or procedure. Students are not expected to demonstrate understanding or skill required to apply the skill or procedure themselves. You are merely saying this is how I think and act when I use this type of resource.

When it says, “**provide guided practice**” the expectation is that with help the student tries to apply what has been modeled for them. Still no expectation they can do the task independently.

When it says, “**discover**” the student has an “Ah Ha” experience while watching the adult model/verbalize, a behavior related to interacting with information in a meaningful way.

When it says, “**recognize**” it means the adult will provide examples and non-examples of the concept allowing students to begin to discriminate the critical attributes associated with the concept. In other words, students can recognize it when they see it, but are not expected to be able to generate examples on their own.

Specific examples:

The remainder of this document will provide specific illustrations for implementing the curriculum with Pre K – 1 students. Illustrations are intended to serve as examples of what might be done and to spark the generation of locally developed instructional interactions. Illustrations will be linked to topics that have generated concern related to “age appropriateness”.

1.0 Literature Appreciation

A.1.c. Explore and discuss use of story structure terminology

Introduce and use terminology; i.e., characters, setting, conflict, resolution, etc. when sharing stories with students. Ask students if they can think of other stories with a similar character, or with the same setting, or in which the character had a similar problem/conflict and how it was resolved in that story, etc. Begin to use story structure terminology to facilitate discussions comparing and contrasting multiple stories.

A.1.d. Use informational materials to build background knowledge

Be sure to share emergent non-fiction as well as stories when reading to students. Talk about factual concepts presented in the book and help students make text-to-self connections to build/reinforce background knowledge.

A.4.a. Recognize connection between the ability to read and success in daily life

Share anecdotes casually mentioning examples from daily life where reading is important; i.e., ability to read directions to do any number of tasks; read to be able to fill out forms; read for fun – sports page, comics, win on game shows, etc. Share examples from local news that highlight impact of ability to read on individual's situation; i.e., high school sports star gets scholarship to college.

2.0 Locate Information

A.1.a. Select books to match topics of interest or need

Get in the habit of responding to a student's request such as, "Can you help me find a dog book?" with "Do you want information or a story about dogs?" Asking this question prompts the student to consider what their need is and to begin to recognize the important difference between fiction and non-fiction materials.

A.1.b. Explore age appropriate computer/online resources

When using this type of resource with an individual or group of students (including the OPAC to locate a book) verbalize the decisions you are making as you navigate the resource. Identify the search term you used and why you chose that term; tell the students why you chose the item you did from the list of hits; etc. By doing this, you are raising their awareness of what is involved in using these resources efficiently and effectively.

A.2.a. Use concepts related to content of and arrangement on the shelf

When helping a student locate a book verbalize the cues you are using as you scan the shelf to locate the item they requested. Talk about the need to move down and to the right when moving from A to Z while searching for materials shelved in alphabetical order or when moving to a larger number while searching in Dewey categories. Similarly comment on the need to move up and left to move toward the beginning of the alphabet or toward a smaller call number.

A.2.b. Recognize the difference between content of narrative (Fiction) and expository/informational (Non-fiction) materials.

SEED: Provide students with opportunities to explore pairs of age appropriate books on the same subject, one being Fiction and the other Non-fiction. Generate a database of titles in your collection to facilitate pulling pairs of books when preparing to teach the lesson. Discuss with the students the key differences between Fiction books and Non-fiction books including content, arrangement on the shelf, and visual clues found on the book itself. Pass out one book to each student, and allow him or her to analyze it to determine which it is Fiction or Non-fiction. Next, ask the students to form two lines – one for students with fiction books and the other for students with Non-fiction books. (Look the lines over and adjust as needed.) Have the student at the head of the fiction line share the title of their book and ask who thinks they have a non-fiction match? Have group verify correct response and then have those two students sit together. Continue process until all pairs of books have been matched and partners seated. Allow some time for the partners to compare their two books. Review concepts related to differentiating between Fiction and Non-fiction books.

A.2.c. Recognize there are advantages and disadvantages related to using print, non-print, and computer/online resources

When setting up equipment to use non-print or computer/online resources with students, comment on the need to have special equipment to be able to use the resource. Make comparisons to the requirements for using a book or other printed resource. When appropriate, comment on the value of color or motion to facilitate understanding of a concept (advantage of live action or animation motion media).

A.3.a/b. Explore ways to express questions in order to help them find what they need/want to know

When a student comes with an ineffective “research question,” talk with them as you start to help them try to locate information. Demonstrate why a question that is too broad or too narrow becomes frustrating. Suggest a revised question and demonstrate how revising the question led to locating requested information.

SEED: Provide groups of research questions related to the same information need; i.e., like in the Three Bears one too broad, one too narrow, one just right. Demonstrate what happens when you try to use each to locate needed information. Lead into discussions of attributes of a “good” research question. Have students verbalize a possible research question. Have the group make suggestions for revising the question. Focus on need for “How” and “Why” kinds of questions rather than questions that lead to one word or yes/no type answers.

3.0 Collect Information

A.1-3 Use print, non-print and computer/online resources effectively

Much of what will happen related to collecting information will involve students participating in adult controlled activities. Focus on verbalizing your own decision-making and search behaviors related to zeroing in on needed information. When working with a student if you are using an index in a book, explain what word you are looking for and how the index tells you what page the information will be on etc. The underlying message to students at this stage is that materials are organized in a systematic way in the library and that information is organized within each resource. Specific skills can be introduced to selected students, as they become readers that are more independent and gain an understanding of the systems used to organize materials within the library media center and within a specific resource.

A.4-6 Evaluate content of specific resources

When using a resource with students, make a casual comment related to the author's credentials and or the date the resource was produced if that is relevant. The message at this stage is that the source of the information and the date it was compiled is important to know in order to judge the value/reliability of the information being collected. It is assumed any resource being used with young students is accurate and without bias. Making a comment related to the quality of the information being used plants the idea this is something to look for.

A.7. Use age appropriate graphic organizers to record relevant information

Much of what will happen related to recording information will involve students participating in adult controlled activities. The adult asks for student responses and records them using an age appropriate graphic organizer. Modeling how to record data to facilitate interpretation will raise student awareness as to the importance of this step in the overall research process. Once students have gained experience through group projects, they can begin recording data themselves if sufficient structure is provided. Use of appropriate graphic organizers can facilitate collection of data/information with minimal writing skills. The structure of the graphic organizer can facilitate recognition of relationships and overall organization related to the topic.

SEED: Use a sheet divided into sections labeled with both a graphic of a facial expression and the word to collect student responses to the following question: What is your reaction when I say the word “bat” (flying creature)? Choices include:

1) harmful, 2) interesting, 3) curious, 4) dirty or 5) helpful. Next, read some non-fiction books about bats to build background knowledge. Then go back and collect responses from the students again. Using simple bar graphs compare the two sets of data. This activity can be expanded, by having students collect data from other classes who do not receive the intervention of reading about bats and therefore learning of their beneficial behaviors. A first grade class, who participated in this activity as part of Halloween activities, independently concluded that background knowledge influences individual's opinions.

SEED: Graph part of the plant you are eating when you eat various vegetables. Provide students with a sheet divided into sections labeled: root, stem, leaf, seed, and seed pod/fruit. Have students put a tally mark in the appropriate section for each vegetable presented and discussed. When tallying process is complete, generate a bar graph illustrating the results. This can be done by providing students with a template to count and color in or by using an age appropriate computer program such as Graph Club.

SEED: First graders studying animals can use emergent non-fiction books to look at pictures and read as skill permits to identify name for animal, term for their shelter, and building materials used. Using big screen TV and computer, media specialist keystrokes data dictated by students into database (fields: Animal, Structure, Materials with records for each student's animal.) Demonstrate/model need for the use of common terminology within a field to facilitate sorting – if one student says nest built of twigs and grass and another says nest built of branches and leaves discuss and select the term to be used throughout. When all the data entered, demonstrate the advantages of sorting alphabetically by animal vs. sorting by type of structure or building materials.

A.8. Use own words to capture concepts and avoid plagiarism

It is important that right from the start young students do not learn bad habits they will need to unlearn. Copying word for word is not acceptable at any age level. Media specialists and classroom teachers need to provide modeling of appropriate note taking – recording key words and phrases not whole sentences. Establishing the concept of what a fact is, and isn't and participating in class group activities related to recognizing and recording facts from expository passages are essential prerequisites for independent note taking.

SEED: Model the process of recording a set of facts and using them to generate a report. Read an emergent level non-fiction book to a class. Use chart paper to record facts the students recall from the book. Record facts as key words or phrases and not whole sentences. Go back and code the facts according to sub topics/categories. If topic is an animal, sub topics might include what it looks like, where it lives, what it eats, life cycle stages, etc. If topic is trucks sub topics might be types of trucks, uses of trucks, parts of a truck, etc. Sub topics can be coded using color and or marks such as +, -, o, check mark.

Next, discuss with the students how they want to sequence the sub-topics to create a logical flow within the report. Use a computer hooked up to a large screen TV or data projector and keystroke as the students dictate sentences to you. Encourage them to begin with a topic sentence. Rephrase their initial attempts as needed. Follow the agreed upon sequence of sub-topics. Encourage/model use of transitional sentences as needed to connect sub-topics. End with a summary sentence. Edit as a group and revise as needed. During the group edit ask leading questions and make appropriate suggestions as needed. Print out a copy for each student. Date and keep these drafts to show students how their skills have improved with practice. The complete process involves 2-3 sessions.

SEED: Provide students with an emergent level book on a topic and a note-taking sheet divided into 4-6 interlocking jigsaw puzzle piece shaped sections. Ask the student to read the book and write down one fact in each jigsaw section. Remind them what a fact is and how to write just key words or phrases, not complete sentences. Work with individuals or small groups to assist student's with coding their facts to show which ones "hold hands" (are related to same sub topic) and then numbering to show how they will sequence their facts. Have the student write a draft of their report. Either culminates with students sharing their reports orally or published in a group newsletter. The complete process involves multiple sessions.

A.9. Record appropriate bibliographic information to cite sources

Adult behavior needs to provide an example. When a media specialist or teacher uses a resource with students; i.e., a worksheet from a book or magazine; a reprint from a web page; a cartoon from the comics, etc. they need to get in the habit of verbally stating who created it and where it came from. Better yet, document the source on the item to be handed out. Again, at this level it is a matter of raising awareness and establishing good habits right from the start. Kids at this age understand the concept of "mine" and "not mine" or "someone else's". They can grasp the idea that if you use something that belongs to and was created by someone else (lots of hard work) it is only fair to give them credit for their work. It is not yours. Citations need only be verbal or as they go along the title can be used. Use of a style sheet is not appropriate, nor expected, at this level.

4.0 Organize and manage data/information

A.1. Generate appropriate formats for displaying and managing data/information

At this age level, much of what is done happens in a group setting with the adult doing the actual recording. Student responses to a prompt can be displayed in a simple graph. A web can be generated during the discussion of a topic demonstrating important links and relationships. To reinforce the connections between spoken words, written words and reading words student comments can be recorded and read back. Students can create a picture to demonstrate understanding of a concept, content of a story, or make a prediction. As skill increases, they can add a caption using invented spelling or have an adult write what they dictate. Learning to create graphs, webs, illustrations, etc. enhances

ones ability to interpret similar formats created by others. Understanding how they are created increases their understanding of how to analyze a display format in order to interpret its content. Students at all ages need to have experiences both creating formats to display data/information and interpreting displays created by themselves and others.

SEED: Draw a large circle on a chalkboard or a piece of chart paper. Ask the students to respond to a prompt. Write the responses that are on task inside the circle. Write off task comments outside the circle. For example if you asked students to identify parts of a tree, comments naming leaf, branch, bark, trunk etc. would go inside the circle. Comments such as trees are fun to climb, or we have a tree in our yard would go outside the circle. This process helps raise awareness of relevance of comments while still acknowledging each child's response.

A.2. Interpret data/information displayed in a variety of formats

Use simple graphs, webs, visuals, or text related to topics of interest to help young students to initiate discussions. Focus on what is the message the item is intended to convey. How does it get the message across? What do you as the receiver of the information need to be able to do to get the intended message? Share examples of the same data but presented in different formats and discuss the ease of gaining the information from the different formats.

SEED: Provide the same data in the format of tally marks vs. a colorful bar graph. Ask students what is being communicated? Which format made it easier to get the message? Why? Follow similar process providing data in a list format vs. a web. Focus on the ease of recognizing relationships. Demonstrate the function of categorizing by providing a random listing vs. a database. Examples might be types of foods. The database could be created using pictures or words depending on the age of students. Examples might include kinds of cookies, kinds of chips, and kinds of crackers or it could be more basic and have meat, vegetables, and dairy products.

SEED: Provide opportunities for young students to gain information from pictures. Ask questions such as what might have happened just before the picture was taken? What might happen next? What time of day is it in the picture? What season of the year is it? How do you know? What inferences/guesses can you make about the individuals in the picture? What makes you think that? Use pictures from calendars, from magazines, of famous works of art, etc.

SEED: Provide students with a set of pictures containing elements that have a logical sequence (age progression of characters, increasing amount of items, time sequence of some sort; i.e., leave the house, get on a plane, vacation activities, come back home, etc.) Ask students to put the pictures in a sequence that tells a story. Have them explain why they sequenced the pictures the way they did. With experience, begin providing pictures with a less clear-cut inherent logical sequence and focus on student reasoning for their sequence rather than noticing the clues leading to an obvious sequence. Have student tell the story their picture sequence illustrates.

A.3. Match appropriate strategy/format with inherent structure of content to be organized

When discussing different topics, make mention of how information related to the topic is structured or organized. For example, when talking about the day of the week students come to the media center put it in the context of a day is part of a week, a week is part of a month and a month is part of a year. Focus on the concept of being a part of a bigger whole. If you are talking about taking care of books focus on the concept of "cause and effect" for organizing information; i.e., leaving your library book out where a young sibling can get at it might cause the book to be torn or colored in; eating while reading the book might lead to getting sticky food on the pages. After reading a story ask questions to encourage students to compare and contrast the story with other stories you have shared. Involve students in a variety of activities asking them to categorize objects. Point out how the same objects can be categorized in multiple ways; i.e., by size, by color, by use. These concepts can be the focus of a lesson or just mentioned in passing. Again, it is a matter of raising awareness of the fact that organizing individual items into groups according to useful relationships is beneficial. Further, there are many different ways to organize items and students need to learn to match appropriate strategies/ formats with content to be organized. Not everything can be graphed. Not everything can be alphabetized or put in chronological order. Not everything can be put into a database. Yet all of these approaches are useful in their place.

5.0 Interpret Information

A.1.b. Character or author's point of view

When it is appropriate to the story being shared, ask questions and make comments about the message the author is trying to give. Draw relationships to the theme of the story, the moral of a fable, or what motivates characters to do what they do. Ask questions leading students to consider how the story might be different if the underlying message was different.

A.2. Apply critical thinking and problem solving strategies

Through discussion of stories and informational passages, introduce concepts and strategies for applying various thinking skills and problem solving strategies. Asking students to predict what will happen next is actually asking them to make an inference. Learning to visualize in their mind what the words are describing is essential to developing comprehension skills. Do not always show the pictures as you read. Ask students what picture they see in their mind as you read the story. Then share the illustrator's idea of what the words mean by showing the picture. Encourage students to make text-to-self connections with the content of the story or passage being read in order to encourage students to make a personal connection. Asking open-ended questions related to elements of the story or passage encourages critical and creative thinking. To encourage multiple answers to open-ended questions it is important to respond to students in a way that accepts their response but does not give the impression that it is the one and only correct answer you are looking for. Instead of saying, "Yes that's right" or "Great answer", respond with, "Good idea, does anybody have another idea?" or "That is one possible answer, anyone have another suggestion?" When a student gives an off the wall answer, gently remind them of the known facts and ask them if their response fits the facts. Give them a chance to revise their answer. Create an environment in which students begin to realize you are equally, or maybe more interested in their reason for their answer than the answer itself.

6.0 Share Findings

Sharing findings will most likely happen in the context of classroom assignment/activities. Encourage classroom teachers to provide opportunities for the students to share information they have learned. Facilitate students learning to navigate age appropriate computer programs such as Kid Pix or Graph Club to enable them to create products to share what they have learned. When you share information with students, make casual comments pointing out how the layout on the page/screen helps the viewer grasp the content. Identify elements of formatting such as use of color, size and style of print, placement on the page, quantity on the page, etc. and discuss how these factors impact the ability to understand the content being communicated. Beginning to point these things out at this age will help students make better decisions in later grades when they begin to create Power Point projects etc. The message needs to be focus on communicating the content not the bells and whistles available in the program.

7.0 Ethical Use of Information

It is important that the basic concept of plagiarism be introduced when appropriate. Students who are allowed to copy complete sentences from the resource at this age will find it difficult to understand why all of a sudden in an upper grade it is no longer allowed. Most experiences with gathering information at this age are done in a group setting with adult supervision and direction. It is essential that the adults model/verbalize appropriate behaviors; i.e., paraphrase and cite the source. It is actually the behaviors of teachers, media specialists, siblings, and parents that either instill respect for, or condone ignoring, the intellectual property rights of others.

Summary:

There is a sizable difference in what is appropriate for pre-school and end of first grade. Remember there are a number of Kindergarteners and first graders who are reading well and are ready for more independence in interacting with information. As with each of the segments of the VSC document, they cover a span of grade levels and are aimed at identifying proficiencies expected at the end of the range not the beginning.