

Learning Contract for Independent Projects
4th Grade Language Arts Unit 2: Conventions of Writing

ELACC4L1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

- a. Use relative pronouns (who, whose, whom, which, that) and relative adverbs (where, when, why).
- b. Form and use the progressive (e.g., I was walking; I am walking; I will be walking) verb aspects.
- c. Use modal auxiliaries (e.g., can, may, must) to convey various conditions.
- d. Order adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns (e.g., a small red bag rather than a red small bag).

ELACC4W3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

- a. Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
- b. Use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.
- c. Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events.
- d. Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.
- e. Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

ELACC4RL10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in the grades 4-5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

How I Will Work:

-Independently: I will do my best work by myself. If I have questions, I will write them down to share during project meeting times or e-mail them to my teacher. If I get frustrated, because I don't know how to do something, I will move on to a different task. Working independently means I am quiet, because I can work alone.

-By Using Appropriate Materials: I will only access approved websites to do my research. I will only read materials that I need for my project(s). I will not spend my independent time on the computer on anything other than my project(s). I will use books, approved websites, people I know, and other approved materials to do my project(s).

-During Independent Project Time: I will work on my project(s) when my teacher tells me to do so. Usually, this will be during language arts instruction time every day, for about one hour. However, if my teacher tells me that I need to attend the regular classroom language arts instruction, I will do so without protest. And I will do my best and participate in class discussions.

-Humbly: I will not brag about my project(s) to classmates. I will not tell classmates that my work is more fun or better than their work. I will answer questions and share my work in a kind manner with classmates when they ask about it.

-With Purpose: I understand that I am not doing my independent project(s) only because I want to do it/them. I understand that I must do the very best I can do on each of my project(s), because they will be graded. I understand that because I can already do what the class is learning, I do not have to participate in every language arts instruction session, but that I must complete the assignments/tests the rest of the class completes unless my teacher tells me otherwise. I understand that my teacher and I will decide which class assignments can be made more challenging for me, but that ultimately, my teacher decides what I will be doing. I understand that all of my language arts work will be graded.

Consequences of Breaking the Working Guidelines:

Strike 1: After being *warned about your behavior* during independent project time, you and I will have a private conference during recess about which guidelines were broken and how you can improve.

Strike 2: After *three private conferences*, we will take a two-day break from working on independent projects. You will re-join the class for language arts instruction. If you can return to working on your independent project without having to be warned for one week, your two strikes will disappear.

Strike 3: YOU'RE OUT. This will happen if you cannot make it through one week without a behavior warning after returning from a two-day break. This means that you will no longer be able to work on independent projects and will have to re-join the class for language arts for the rest of the school year.

A strike out only happens if you are 1) warned about your behavior, 2) have three private conferences, 3) take a two-day break, AND 4) receive a behavior warning during independent work time in the week following your break.

I, Eileen Johnson, promise to follow the working guidelines on this contract. I promise to produce project(s) in language arts that showcase my abilities. I understand the consequences of not following the guidelines for working on my independent project(s). I will do my best.

Student Signature _____

Date: _____

I, Ms. Asby, promise to help you design a project that will interest and challenge you. I promise to give you help by answering questions during project meeting times. I promise to allow you to show your skills knowledge in ways that are best for both of us.

Teacher Signature _____

Date: _____

Independent Project Ideas:

- Research project(s) about pets, famous women, and/or government.
 - a. Choose a topic and identify a problem to solve in that topic.
 - b. Find resources to investigate possible solutions to your problem.
 - c. Decide how you will present your findings and make it happen.
- Create story books for kindergarten buddies.
 - a. Decide on a topic and write out the text of the book.
 - b. Make a story board of how you want the book to look.
 - c. Make the book and read it to the kindergarteners.
- Write a fiction story and figure out where and how to get it published.
 - a. Write and edit a fiction story.
 - b. Research places (magazines, newspapers, websites) in which to publish.
 - c. Submit your story to be published.
- Demonstrate knowledge about 6th grade level novels.
 - a. Choose a 6th grade level novel and read it.
 - b. Decide what is most interesting about this novel.
 - c. Decide how to share that information and make it happen.