Clinton Public Schools
K-12 District
Foundation Skills and Competencies

Empowering learners to embrace and influence the future with courage and compassion.

The purpose for establishing a set of common learning competencies is the belief that all teaching and learning should be meaningful, relevant, and connected. Therefore, there should be a common thread to link all disciplines. The following K-12 Foundation Skills and Competencies are essential for all students to become independent and collaborative learners, and must be incorporated in all disciplines. The foundation competencies are not intended to limit any discipline; rather, they are intended to provide teachers, students, and the community with a set of common expectations that will enhance curriculum development and continuity of purpose, assist teachers in planning instruction and assessment, and improve student performance.

1. Reads a variety of literary, informational, and persuasive texts with understanding; is able to analyze, interpret, evaluate text; and reads for enjoyment.

2. Uses appropriate forms of expression and conventions of Standard English to communicate and develop thoughts, share ideas, influence and persuade, and create and entertain.

3. Applies understanding of a writing process (drafting, revising, editing, and rewriting) to improve writing.

4. Applies computational skills, number sense, and mathematical techniques to solve problems and judge reasonableness of results.

5. Listens to and views verbal and nonverbal presentations in order to understand, clarify, analyze, and make connections.

6. Delivers oral and visual presentations that demonstrate a coherent sequence of thought; the use of standard English conventions; and forms of expression, vocabulary, and tools appropriate for the purpose and audience.

7. Works collaboratively to accomplish a goal by exchanging ideas, synthesizing information, investigating solutions to a problem, sharing workload, and completing assigned tasks.

8. Designs and applies techniques for identifying and investigating real-world issues and problems by observing and posing questions, hypothesizing, collecting and analyzing data, and communicating findings.

9. Investigates and evaluates information and arguments from a wide range of resources and perspectives to convey knowledge, establish a personal stance, or defend a position.

10. Develops digital literacy through the responsible use of digital tools to engage and collaborate within a global community of learners.

> *Reads a variety of literary, informational, and persuasive texts with understanding, and is able to analyze, interpret, evaluate text, and reads for enjoyment.*

A GOOD READER:

Reads with understanding
1. Formulates a response that exhibits knowledge and understanding of the text.
2. Understands vocabulary in given context.
3. Uses background knowledge and experience to enrich understanding of the text.
4. Fills in gaps in the text and makes plausible assumptions from subtle cues.
5. Employs a range of strategies and applies them appropriately, persistently, and successfully to the text to promote understanding.
6. Identifies relations among ideas, text structure, or other textual features to evaluate how they support an advanced understanding of the text.

Analyzes
7. Supports judgments and associations with apt, ample, and varied examples from the text and/or personal experience.
8. Determines the impact of word choice on meaning or tone.
9. Recognizes and differentiates between literal and figurative meaning.

Interprets
10. Makes sound predictions and draws reasonable conclusions from clearly identified evidence in the text.
11. Demonstrates understanding of the whole work as well as an awareness of how the parts work together to create the whole.
12. Generates, validates, expands, and reflects on his/her own ideas by employing appropriate evidence from the text.

Evaluates
13. Makes reasonable judgments, predictions, inferences, and models based on information in the text.
14. Challenges the text: poses questions, postulates answers, takes exception, evaluates claims and counterclaims, and recognizes contradictions and bias.

Reads for Enjoyment
15. Selects texts related to interests.
16. Reads widely and savors language.

> *Uses appropriate forms of expressions and conventions of Standard English to communicate and develop thoughts, share ideas, influence and persuade, and create and entertain.*

A GOOD WRITER:

Uses Conventions of Standard English
1. Demonstrates effective use of Standard English conventions and mechanics while attending to the norms of the discipline in which s/he is writing.
2. Skillfully constructs sentences that display appropriate variety in length and structure.
3. Follows standard format for citation.

Communicates thoughts and shares ideas (Expository and Persuasive)
4. Crafts a thesis statement that delineates the topic, establishes a clear position, and outlines the main points to be discussed.
5. Uses credible sources for evidence and follows standard format for citation.
6. Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the task and purpose; and a recognition of audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

Develops Thoughts
7. Employs an effective structure which organizes thoughts logically, making purposeful connections between and among ideas.
8. Demonstrates fluency of expression.
9. Uses appropriate and varied transitional devices to create cohesion.
10. Provides a strong conclusion that supports the topic and examines its implications and significance.
11. Effectively integrates relevant and sufficient support from a variety of sources.
12. Paraphrases and summarizes key information from a source, avoiding plagiarism.
13. Demonstrates a confident voice: enhances expression with judicious word choice, style, and tone.
14. Effective use of a variety of elaborative techniques.

Influences and Persuades
15. Uses a range of reasons and/or appeals to convince the reader to care or to generate curiosity about the topic.
16. Employs sufficient evidence to back up claims and address counterclaims.

Creates and Entertains
17. Crafts a strong hook that captures the attention of the audience.
18. Demonstrates deliberate use of narrative techniques (dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines) to develop experiences, events, and characters.
19. Uses precise words and phrases, revealing details, mood, and figurative and sensory language to convey a vivid picture.
20. Engages and orients the reader by developing a conflict, describing situations, and making observations.

> *Applies understanding of a writing process (drafting, revising, editing, and rewriting) to improve writing.*

A GOOD WRITER:

Drafts to improve writing
1. Applies prewriting strategies purposefully and efficiently to create a workable first draft.

Revises to improve writing
2. Obtains and uses feedback from others to make purposeful changes to improve the initial draft.
3. Responds to questions in order to clarify ideas.
4. Reads and reviews initial draft to identify focus areas for improvement.
5. Utilizes rubric to evaluate draft.

Edits to improve writing
6. Eliminates errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and sentence structure.

Rewrites to improve writing
7. Creates a final product that represents evidence of the application of the writing process, resulting in an exemplary document.

> *Applies computational skills, number sense and mathematical techniques to solve problems and judge reasonableness of results.*

IN ORDER TO SOLVE PROBLEMS, A GOOD MATHEMATICIAN:

Applies Computational Skills
1. Demonstrates mathematical fluency when performing basic operations.
2. Executes algorithms completely and correctly including variables, expressions, and equations.
3. Derives accurate solutions and produces work that contains no mathematical errors.

Applies Number Sense
4. Identifies patterns and relationships between and among numbers and operations.
5. Selects an approach that demonstrates awareness of mathematical concepts and principles.
6. Monitors the efficiency of the strategies applied and makes adjustments when necessary.

Applies Mathematical Techniques
7. Plans and completes work in an organized and sequenced manner.
8. Uses precise math language, including appropriate terms and notation.
9. Employs effective strategies and tools based on the mathematical situation.
10. Represents the problem with appropriate models and diagrams.

Judges Reasonableness of Results
11. Evaluates the strategies and processes employed.
12. Justifies the accuracy of the solution and revises the work when necessary.

Listens and views verbal and nonverbal presentations in order to understand, clarify, analyze, and make connections.

A GOOD LISTENER AND VIEWER:

Understands
1. Demonstrates engagement through appropriate posture and eye contact.
2. Eliminates distractions and prepares mentally to engage with the presentation.
3. Comprehends and retains essential information and concepts using a variety of appropriate strategies.
4. Sustains focus throughout the presentation and interacts when appropriate.

Clarifies
5. Identifies and summarizes main ideas and key concepts incrementally.
6. Asks questions and provides feedback.

Analyzes
7. Identifies and interprets purpose and point of view.
8. Synthesizes information and questions validity when appropriate.
9. Makes insightful inferences based on information presented.

Makes connections
10. Utilizes prior knowledge and experience to make relevant connections.
11. Reflects and generates new questions to extend learning.

> *Delivers oral and visual presentations using standard conventions, forms of expression, coherent sequence of thoughts, suitable vocabulary, and tools appropriate for the purpose and audience.*

AN EFFECTIVE PRESENTER:

Uses standard conventions
1. Identifies and credits sources of information clearly and appropriately.
2. Displays text without errors in grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.
3. Demonstrates command of formal language when speaking.

Uses forms of expression
4. Engages the audience through the use of facial expressions, body language, and tone.
5. Appears poised, confident, and composed.
6. Speaks with command of information and maintains eye contact with audience.
7. Speaks at a pace and volume that promotes clear and engaging communication.

Uses coherent sequence of thoughts
8. Provides an introduction that sets the purpose and engages the audience.
9. Moves from one idea to the next in a logical order, emphasizing main points and supporting information in a focused, coherent manner.
10. Plans for and implements appropriate pacing throughout.
11. Shows understanding and evaluation of the topic that includes appropriate evidence, examples, and explanations.
12. Incorporates a closing that reinforces key understandings.

Uses suitable vocabulary
13. Speaks appropriately for the context and task.
14. Rarely uses breaks in speech or filler words.

Uses suitable tools appropriate for the purpose and audience
15. Uses well-produced visual aids or media to clarify information, emphasize important points, strengthen arguments, and add interest.
16. Chooses appropriate graphics, video, audio or other enhancements to enrich the presentation and convey the intended meaning.

Works collaboratively in a group to accomplish a goal by exchanging ideas, synthesizing information, investigating solutions to a problem, sharing workload and completing assigned tasks.

AN EFFECTIVE COLLABORATOR:

Exchanges Ideas
1. Facilitates effective discussion by clearly expressing ideas and asking probing questions.
2. Contributes ideas that are on task and often move the conversation forward.
3. Actively solicits and thoughtfully considers opinions, ideas, or contributions of other group members.
4. Acknowledges other perspectives; disagrees diplomatically when challenged.
5. Encourages participation and does not dominate.
6. Demonstrates active listening through body language and tone of voice.
7. Gives specific, supportive, and feasible feedback so the team can improve its work.

Synthesizes Information
8. Defends/rethinks ideas relating to the group's project goals.
9. Brings individual findings to the team for critique and revision.

Investigates Solutions to a Problem
10. Engages all group members in designing approaches to the task and agrees to strategies for its completion.
11. Accesses information on a project topic and shares that information to probe and reflect on ideas with the team.

Shares Workload
12. Treats others respectfully and shares the workload fairly.
13. Recognizes and uses special talents of each team member to determine roles.
14. Keeps materials and notes organized.
15. Creates a detailed task list that divides project work reasonably among the team.
16. Assumes responsibility for monitoring and managing individual and group tasks.
17. Takes appropriate action when norms are not being followed; attempts to resolve issues without asking the teacher for help.

Completes Tasks
18. Sets a schedule and tracks progress to ensure the task is completed on time.
19. Makes necessary compromises to accomplish a common goal.

> *Designs and applies techniques for identifying and investigating real-world issues and problems by observing and posing questions, hypothesizing, collecting and analyzing data, and communicating findings.*

A GOOD PROBLEM SOLVER:

Designs and applies techniques for identifying real-world issues
1. Utilizes prior knowledge to pose thoughtful and relevant questions related to the issue.
2. Identifies a focused and manageable topic that appropriately addresses relevant aspects of the topic.

Designs and applies techniques for investigating real-world issues and problems
3. Determines relevant and scholarly sources that aid in the design of the investigation.
4. Identifies skills and resources necessary to solve the problem.
5. Shows clear evidence of purposeful inquiry - including exploring, modeling, and designing.
6. Provides a clear explanation detailing how the investigation will be carried out so that the process can be understood and/or replicated.

Observes and poses questions
7. Demonstrates a complete understanding of the variables/aspects of the problem.
8. Identifies all the important elements of the problem and shows understanding of the relationships between them.

Hypothesizes
9. Develops a prediction that is based on research, sound reasoning, and/or prior knowledge.
10. Predicts the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.
11. Explores the interrelationship among events.

Collects and analyzes data
12. Analyzes appropriate data accurately and arrives at reasonable solutions or conclusions.
13. Accepts or rejects the hypothesis; evidence is used to justify and support decisions made and conclusions reached.
14. Organizes data so it is easy to interpret results and identify trends.
15. Accurately and proficiently uses all appropriate sources, tools, and technologies to gather and analyze information.
16. Uses information that is complete and relevant and is the result of multiple trials or sources.

Communicates findings
17. Draws defensible conclusions that can be evaluated by others.
18. Discusses authentic applications, extensions, or generalizations related to the issue.
19. Uses presentation methods suitable for the type of information, purpose, and audience.

> *Investigates and evaluates information and arguments from a wide range of resources and perspectives to convey knowledge, establish a personal stance, or defend a position.*

A GOOD RESEARCHER:

Investigates and evaluates information and arguments from a wide range of resources and perspectives

1. Reviews a variety of sources, determining credibility by considering timeliness, audience, authority, accuracy, and point of view.
2. Demonstrates understanding of the information gathered.
3. Identifies and prioritizes appropriate information to thoroughly address the research question, topic, or idea.
4. Accurately analyzes and interprets relevant research information.

Conveys knowledge, establishes a personal stance, or defends a position.

5. Effectively formulates a clear description of the research question, topic, or idea; when appropriate, provides a clear and persuasive position based on an understanding of both sides of an issue.
6. Demonstrates awareness of his or her purpose and audience.
7. Presents balanced, significant, and valid information that clearly and convincingly supports the argument or explains the topic.
8. Presents content clearly and concisely with a logical progression of ideas and effective supporting evidence.

Develops digital literacy through the responsible use of digital tools to engage and collaborate within a global community of learners.

A RESPONSIBLE DIGITAL CITIZEN:

Develops digital literacy through the responsible use of digital tools
1. Develops independence, efficiency, and adaptability in utilizing digital tools.
2. Creates effective personal electronic learning spaces to organize and manage information.
3. Uses various search strategies and systems to retrieve information in a variety of formats.
4. Evaluates digital sources to determine credibility of both the source and its content.
5. Legally obtains, stores, and disseminates text, data, images, or sounds.
6. Understands what constitutes plagiarism and does not represent others' work as his/her own.
7. Abides by acceptable use policies and guidelines in all respects and uses the internet responsibly and safely.
8. Explores, selects, and applies digital tools appropriate to the task and purpose.
9. Uses digital tools to organize and manage information.
10. Develops individual and group products to demonstrate understandings, perspectives, and innovation.

Engages and collaborates within a global community of learners
11. Participates responsibly, ethically, and appropriately within collaborative online networks to share ideas and knowledge.
12. Collaborates with peers, experts, and other audiences to exchange ideas and information, make decisions, solve problems, and develop new understandings.