
Grade 1: Oral Communication, Reading, and Writing

Overall Expectations

By the end of Grade 1, students will:

- demonstrate basic communication skills;
- talk about familiar topics using simple words;
- use both verbal and non-verbal cues to understand spoken language;
- demonstrate a basic understanding of vocabulary and language structures appropriate for this grade;
- demonstrate a basic understanding of the reading process;
- demonstrate a basic understanding of the writing system used in the program;
- demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of aspects of the Native culture under study.⁴

Specific Expectations

Oral Communication

By the end of Grade 1, students will:

- talk about familiar topics using basic vocabulary (e.g., identify members of the family);
- demonstrate basic communication skills by participating in simple activities (e.g., work with peers to classify objects in the classroom by colour);
- follow simple instructions (e.g., by making a physical response – see Total Physical Response (TPR) in “Explanatory Notes”, p. 42);
- respond appropriately to simple questions (e.g., *Who are you? When are you going? Where are you going?*);
- listen to simple oral messages using both verbal and non-verbal cues (e.g., tone of voice, facial expression, gestures).

Reading

By the end of Grade 1, students will:

- demonstrate familiarity with the writing system used in the program (alphabet or syllabics chart);
- read simple words, using the alphabet or syllabics chart, pictures, and other visual aids;
- participate in structured reading activities appropriate for the grade (e.g., read the alphabet or syllabics chart, match words to pictures);
- use pictures and other visual cues to develop reading skills;
- recognize words and language structures that have been introduced orally;
- read familiar words aloud using pictures.

4. Native-language teachers may wish to approach knowledgeable members of the community for assistance with this expectation.

Writing

By the end of Grade 1, students will:

- demonstrate a basic understanding of the writing system used in the program (alphabet or syllabics chart);
- write the letters of the alphabet or syllabic characters correctly;
- write simple words, using the alphabet or syllabics chart, pictures, and other visual aids;
- demonstrate an understanding of words introduced orally by creating vocabulary lists for specific topics (e.g., words associated with the family, special days).

Grammar, Language Conventions, and Vocabulary

Students should develop and apply knowledge of the language elements, vocabulary, and spelling items listed below through communicative activities in all three strands. The language elements and vocabulary introduced in a specific grade are not repeated in subsequent grades unless they are combined with new elements or studied in a new context. This method of citing language elements and vocabulary is not meant to imply that students will work with the language elements and vocabulary of a given grade only while they are in that grade. On the contrary, it is expected that students will continue to work with all the language elements, vocabulary, and spelling items listed in the document as they advance through the grades, and that they will apply them in progressively more complex and sophisticated contexts.

Since a number of different Native languages are used in Ontario, the most commonly used language elements have been selected, and all the examples have been given in English. Native-language teachers will need to adapt these lists and prepare their own materials to accommodate the distinctive features of the Native language being studied.

Language elements

nouns and pronouns

- singular form of nouns
- personal pronouns – singular form (e.g., *I, you, she/he*)
- pronoun as subject – singular form (e.g., *I, you*)
- demonstrative pronouns – singular form (e.g., *this, that*)
- demonstratives with nouns – singular form (e.g., *this house, that boat*)
- possessive pronouns – singular form (e.g., *it's mine, it's yours*)
- possessive form of nouns (e.g., *my car, your car, my hat, your hat*)
- independent locatives (e.g., *beside, behind, under, up, in front*)

verbs

- present tense of verbs with a singular pronoun or noun (e.g., *I am eating, John is talking*)

interrogative constructions

- question words (e.g., *where, what, who*)

negative constructions

- words expressing simple negation (e.g., *no*)

Vocabulary

- words used to designate simple colours (e.g., *white, black, red, blue, yellow, brown, green, orange*)
- numbers from 1 to 10; numbers to 100 by 10's
- words associated with objects found in the classroom, time, days, weather, and the immediate family (e.g., *mother, father, brother, sister*)
- words associated with money (e.g., *penny, nickel, dime, quarter, loonie, two-dollar coin*)

Spelling

- correct use of syllabic characters or letters of the alphabet
- use of resources (e.g., consonant/vowel charts, syllabics chart)