

# Introduction to Language Arts 400

Welcome to another year of school! May God bless you as you teach your children not only “the arts of language,” but also the true, godly wisdom that will prepare them for eternity with God.

This teacher’s guide is designed to help you teach Language Arts 400 more effectively. It includes the following features and more:

- Class preparation items
- A systematic list of oral review questions to begin each lesson
- Background information not found in the LightUnits

- Additional lesson activities
- Discussion questions for writing assignments
- Reproducible charts with various lists of rules used in Language Arts

Teaching methods are as varied as students’ learning abilities. Be willing to use different methods in your teaching. The ultimate goal in teaching language arts skills is to enable the child to receive God’s truth and communicate it to others, whether through the spoken or written word.

## Components of Language Arts

Language Arts 400 is comprised of ten consumable LightUnits and includes most of the student’s written activities.

This Teacher’s Guide contains a reproduction

of most of the LightUnit pages with answers and teaching information.

Support material includes this teacher’s guide and extra practice worksheets.

## The Teacher’s Guide

Following is an explanation for each section of the daily lesson plan.

### Objectives

The new concepts and Study Words taught in the lesson are listed here.

### Class Preparation

This list tells what materials are needed to teach the lesson.

### Board Preparation

This list gives sentences, words, and illustrations to write on the board to prepare for class. These items are listed according to the section they are used in—*New* or *Review*. The items are numbered if there is more than one in a section. These numbers indicate which part of a section the board work is used with.

### Review

This list of questions systematically reviews the concepts taught. If students are struggling, insert extra drill at this point. Repetition is essential to the learning process. It establishes what has been taught and builds confidence.

### Vocabulary Words

The Vocabulary Words are terms that students should become familiar with.

Teach Vocabulary by having students read the pronunciations and definitions. Explain the definitions if necessary.

In the LightUnit, the box with Vocabulary Words has a picture of a seagull. The triangle indicates the student should read the words to the teacher or teacher’s aide.

## New – Teaching Box

Here you will find instructions for teaching the new concept for the day. A number in parentheses in this section corresponds with an illustration listed under Board Preparation. Use this example on the board to illustrate the new concept. Be sure to read the “teaching box” in the LightUnit with the students. Work the exercises that involve the new concept as a class.

The exercise just before We Remember is a review of the new concept from the previous day. Reinforce the new concept and work it as a class if it is difficult.

## Penmanship

Does practicing good penmanship make any difference? Try writing with your eyes closed. How can you write without even seeing what you are doing? Scientists have discovered that muscles in our hands have “memory” retention. This enables us to do countless tasks every day without having to think about or often look at what our hands are doing—from tying our shoes to eating our food.

If you have learned how to type, you know that *practice, practice, practice* makes all the difference in speed and accuracy. The same is true for handwriting. Taking the time to tediously force your students to form letters correctly, hold their pencil properly, slant their paper correctly, and use good posture will influence the way they begin to automatically write outside of penmanship class.

The force working against you is all those times poor penmanship is allowed. Each time a student writes a letter incorrectly, it further ingrains that incorrect memory—that poor habit. Therefore, do not allow your students to view penmanship class as the only time to practice writing neatly. Practicing penmanship happens with every stroke your students make throughout the day. Penmanship class is simply where the students’ work is evaluated.

Most lessons have guidelines for penmanship, including teaching good posture, paper slant, pencil position, etc. Your students need to hear frequent reminders of these concepts. Take time

to demonstrate on the board how to form each stroke.

Penmanship lessons should take 10-15 minutes per day. Handwriting quality begins to deteriorate after 15 minutes.

Manuscript and cursive alphabets appear in the back of LightUnits 301-305. In LightUnits 306-310, only the cursive capital and lowercase alphabets are shown.

One method for grading penmanship is based on a 100-point system:

*Formation of letters: 40 points*

*Spacing of letters and words: 10*

*Slant: 10*

*Alignment: 10*

*Line quality (lightness, darkness): 10*

*Size: 10*

*Proportion: 10*

Or you may come up with your own method.

## Spelling

Many of the spelling words come from Ayer’s list of 1,000 most frequently used words.

The spelling list for each LightUnit section has 15 words. A daily direction line instructs students to write the spelling words for that section on other paper. Assign the number of times for each day according to the needs of your class.

The spelling word lists for each section are included as bookmarks at the back of the LightUnit. A direction line is given in Lessons 2, 7, and 12 for students to cut out these bookmarks.

A spelling test is given on each quiz and self check. The LightUnit Spelling Test given along with the LightUnit Test includes twenty-five spelling words. There are three options for getting a final spelling grade. See *Scoring and Grading* for instructions on how to grade spelling tests.

## Creative Writing

The creative writing in Language Arts 400 is divided into five steps: Explore, Draft, Edit, Proofread, and Final Draft. Creative writing is Lesson 15 and 16 of each LightUnit, but may be done sooner or later in the LightUnit if desired. If creative writing is omitted, the Language Arts course will not be a full year’s worth.

## Introduction

The goal in creative writing class is for students to become as proficient in writing as speaking. Besides encouraging students to express themselves, creative writing puts into practice grammar skills that Language Arts teaches. We recommend reading *On Teaching Writing: A Handbook* by Jennifer Crider, available from Christian Light.

A suggested topic is given for creative writing in each LightUnit. Your students will especially enjoy hearing your versions of their writing assignments if you do them, too.

Presentation is important. At this age it may be best for teachers to read the stories and then allow students to guess who wrote them. Other presentation options are given with each creative writing lesson.

Further explanation of the philosophy of creative writing is given in the Teacher's Guide, with the first creative writing assignment on pages 39 and 40.

### Symbols in the Teacher's Guide

Symbols in the Teacher's Guide alert you to activities, ideas for class discussion, or things you can do to help students.



– Activities that require teacher participation.



– Activities written on the board.



– LightUnit page for the activity.



– Important information for the teacher.



– Additional information for teachers.

– Optional activities related to the lesson.

### Appendixes in the Teacher's Guide

Take time to familiarize yourself with the appendixes so that you will know how they can help you.

#### *Appendix A: LA 300 Skills Index*

Use this one to find where a concept was introduced in Level 300. It includes a main index of concepts and skills.

#### *Appendix B: LA 400 Scope and Sequence*

This is a sequential listing of the concepts and skills taught in LA 400. It gives an overview of what is taught and when.

If you are homeschooling, and your state requires that you submit a more detailed course outline, you could photocopy and submit Appendix B.

#### *Appendix C: LA 400 Skills Index*

Use this appendix to find where LA 400 teaches any concept or skill. It also includes indexes for the Glossary and Study Words, poems, penmanship, abbreviations, and spelling words.

#### *Appendix D: Alternate LightUnit Tests*

Copy one of these any time a student needs to retake a LightUnit Test. Answer keys are included. These tests cover the same concepts and skills covered by the LightUnit Tests.

#### *Appendix D: Spelling Words for Alternate Tests*

A spelling word list with the words used in sentences is provided for each Alternate Spelling Test.

#### *Appendix E: Language Arts Reproducible Charts*

These charts may be copied for classroom use.

## The LightUnits

Each LightUnit has sixteen lessons and is divided into three sections. Each lesson is one day's work, usually four or five pages in length and consisting of four standard sections: *New*, *We Remember*, *Penmanship*, and *Spelling*. The exception is the creative writing lessons.

### We Remember

Exercises in this section systematically review concepts from previous lessons. The goal is for students to do this section with minimal teacher assistance.


New concepts are not tested on a LightUnit Test until they have been reviewed at least four times.


## Poetry LightUnit


LightUnit 409 emphasizes poetry. Take time to read the poems in the LightUnit and Teacher's Guide aloud to your students. Give them ample opportunity to read poems they enjoy. Let them bring other poems to read to the class. Have students memorize and present to the class a poem of their choice from the LightUnit.


Although the main part of each lesson in Language Arts 409 deals with poetry, the *We Remember*, *Penmanship*, and *Spelling* sections continue the same pattern of review and work as other LightUnits.


## Symbols in the LightUnits

 *Large Teacher Check.* Indicates students must obtain the teacher's initials before proceeding with work in the LightUnit. Generally found before quizzes and self checks.

 *Small Teacher Check.* Indicates an exercise that requires the teacher's involvement. The teacher needs to grade or assist students with the exercise. The students may continue working beyond this symbol even though the exercise has not been checked.

 *Large Teacher's Aide Check.* Indicates students must obtain the teacher's aide or teacher's initials before proceeding with the work in the LightUnit.

 *Small Teacher's Aide Check.* Indicates an exercise that requires the teacher's aide or teacher involvement. The teacher's aide or teacher needs to grade or assist students with the exercise. The students may continue working beyond this symbol even though the exercise has not been checked.

 *Star.* Indicates students should check with the teacher for instructions on whether to do this optional activity.

## Quizzes and Tests

Tests are in the center of each LightUnit. Quizzes are on perforated pages in the back of the LightUnit. All must be removed before giving the LightUnits to the students. Lessons 5 and 10 are quizzes and follow Sections 1 and 2. The quizzes and LightUnit Test are to be taken closed-book.

Lesson 14 is a Self Check. Self checks test student mastery of the LightUnit and help them prepare for the LightUnit Test. A list of review questions in the Teacher's Guide is also recommended for oral review with the Self Check.

Students must ask you to initial the Self Check before taking it. After they score their work, look at it and give further direction.

If they did well, have them make corrections and prepare for the LightUnit Test by studying the *We Remember* and the checklist. If they did poorly, prescribe remedial work to prepare them for the test.

## Suggestions for Remedial Work

- While correcting, have them write the page numbers from the LightUnit where the correct answers are found.
- Provide more practice work using the extra practice worksheets.
- Have them study the concepts and skills involved. Then quiz them orally.

## Spelling Tests

Students take the spelling tests for Sections 1 and 2 at the same time they take Quizzes 1 and 2. They take the spelling test for Section 3 in conjunction with the Self Check. Lesson 17 is the LightUnit Test. The final spelling test is optional. If used, it is given at the same time as the final LightUnit Test.

## Extra Activities

Quizzes should not take a whole period.

The optional extra activity after each quiz and test gives informal practice in some skill or content area.

## Scoring and Grading

80	100
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 Score \_\_\_\_\_

Score boxes are found on self checks, quizzes, and tests. In the first box, the bottom number is the total number of points possible on a self check, quiz, or LightUnit test. The top number is the number of points the student must score before he can continue working in the LightUnit. Point values in all LightUnit tests, quizzes, and self checks are 100. Write the total number of points scored on the score line. Initial the second box.

### LightUnit Test Grade

To obtain a final LightUnit score, average the two quiz grades and any optional activities. Add this average to the final LightUnit test score and divide by two. This average will be the final score for the report.

Example: Quiz 1 – 96%  
Quiz 2 – 98%  
 Average – 97%  
Test Score – 93%  
 Average – 95%  
 LightUnit score is 95.

### Spelling Test Grade

To calculate the score for an individual test, divide the number of words spelled correctly by the total number of words on the test.

Example:  $14 \div 15 = 93\%$

There are three options for getting a final spelling grade.

1. Use the average of the spelling test scores from the two quizzes and Self Check.
2. Use the spelling score from the final test.
3. Average the spelling scores from the two quizzes and Self Check with the spelling scores from the final test. To do this, triple the final spelling test score, then add the average of the quizzes and Self Check and divide by four.

Example of #3: Spelling grade, Quiz 1 – 85%  
 Spelling grade, Quiz 2 – 86%  
 Spelling grade, Self Check – 90%  
 Average – 87%  
 Final Spelling Test Score – 95%  
 $3 \times 95 + 87 = 372$  divided by 4 = 93%  
 LightUnit spelling score is 93.

## Support Material

### Extra Practice Sheets

Extra practice sheets are available for students who need more practice or for those who need something constructive to do. They are sold separately as a booklet of blackline masters and

may be copied as needed. However, these sheets are not to be copied and shared between schools and homeschools.