

Conventions of Language

Accurate use of the conventions of language (both oral and written) is generally considered to be an attribute of educated, literate people. Thus, a high level of mastery in the use of the conventions of language (capitalization, punctuation, grammar usage) is expected of Highland Park ISD graduates.

Highland Park ISD students need a solid understanding of conventions in order to be able to write successfully. Good writing also comes from the student's ability to formulate compelling ideas and develop those ideas using proper form, genre and structure. This enables the student to develop a unique writer's voice and style. Research informs us that the conventions of punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling are best learned through application. It takes years of experience integrating conventions, language usage and expression for our students to become the successful writers we envision them to be.

An example of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for capitalization:

- 17(B) Kindergarten: capitalize the first letter in a sentence
- 21(B) First: capitalize the first letter in a sentence, pronoun I, names of people
- 22(B) Second: capitalize proper nouns, months/days of a week, salutation and closing of a letter
- 23(B) Third: capitalize official titles of people, geographical names and places and historical periods
- 21(B) Fourth: capitalize historical events and documents, titles of books, stories and essays and languages, races and nationalities
- 21(A) Fifth: capitalize abbreviations, initials and acronyms, organizations
- 20(A) Sixth: capitalize abbreviations, initials and acronyms, organizations
- 20(A) Seventh/Eighth: use conventions of capitalization
- 18(A) English I/II: use conventions of capitalization
- 18(A) English III/IV: correctly and consistently use capitalization

For a complete listing of TEKS that cover all capitalization, punctuation and grammar usage skills, please see the Highland Park ISD website and search your child's grade level curriculum documents.

Resources:

- Texas State Standards: Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills
- Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Basal Series-Journeys; Write Source
- Molt MacDougal Basal Series Literature; Write Source (9-12)
- Pearson Basal Series; Writing Coach (6-8)
- Highland Park ISD Conventions of Language Document