



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS FOR ENGLISH-LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY IN HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES, SCIENCE, AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS

The Common Core State Standards for English–Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects define what it means to be a literate person in the 21st century. Students who master the standards will be fluent readers, critical thinkers, informative writers, effective speakers, and engaged listeners. They also will use technology as a source of information and a means of communication.

The standards are divided into four strands: reading (Reading Literature–RL, Reading Informational Text–RI, Foundational Skills–RF), writing (W), speaking and listening (SL), and language (L). The standards are organized by grade level for kindergarten through grade eight and by grade span for high school.

The foundational skills standards for kindergarten through grade five foster students’ understanding and knowledge of concepts of print, the alphabetic principle, and other basic conventions of the English language. Phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, and fluency are the focus of these standards.

For grades six through twelve, the standards for literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects provide additional specificity for the application of reading and writing skills to subject-area content. In lower grades, these skills are integrated into the reading and writing strands.



THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS:

Balance reading literature with reading informational text

At each grade level (K-8) and grade span (9-12), the reading standards emphasize both literature and informational texts. Literature encompasses a broad range of cultures, periods, and genres (e.g., stories, folktales, fantasy, realistic fiction, drama, poetry). Informational texts include biographies and autobiographies; writings about history, social sciences, science, and the arts; technical texts (e.g., directions, maps, charts); and digital sources. The following standards illustrate the balance between literature and informational texts.

- Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels or fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics. (Grade 6, RL 9.)
- Compare and contrast one author’s presentation of events with that of another (e.g., a memoir written by and a biography of the same person). (Grade 6, RI 9.)
- Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature. (Grades 9-10, RL 6.)
- Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text. (Grades 11-12, RI 6.)

Balance narrative writing with informational, expository writing

Beginning in kindergarten, with children drawing, dictating, and writing, and continuing through high school, students write in different genres, building mastery in a range of skills and applications. Students write for different purposes and use technology to produce and publish their writing. The standards below exemplify the varied genres in which students write.

- Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or name of a book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure. (Grade 1, W 1.)
- Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure. (Grade 1, W 2.)
- Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide sense of closure. (Grade 1 W 3.)

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- Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. (Grade 7, W 1.)
 - Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic or convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. (Grade 7, W 2.)
 - Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences. (Grade 7, W 3.)

Focus on critical analysis of both fiction and non-fiction

Students analyze text for the author's perspective and purpose, compare and contrast texts, and evaluate evidence used to support the thesis of the text. They use these skills in their own writing and speaking. The standards below are examples of how students apply analysis skills.

- Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters. (Grade 3, RL 6.)
- Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not. (Grade 6, RI 8.)
- Develop claim(s) and counterclaim(s) fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases. (Grades 11-12, W 1.b.)

Emphasize vocabulary acquisition across the four strands of English–language arts

Vocabulary acquisition and practice are threaded throughout the four strands, reflecting current research on how students best learn new words. Students practice using new vocabulary in their writing and collaborative conversations about grade-level topics and text. The standards below represent vocabulary standards found in each strand.

- Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups. (Grade 2, SL 1.)
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. (Grade 5, L 5.)
- Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. (Grade 7, W 2.d.)
- Determine the meaning of word and phrase as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone.) (Grades 9-10, RL 4.)

Foster oral communication, collaboration, and listening skills

Students learn to express ideas, work together, and listen carefully to integrate and evaluate information. Skills are not learned in isolation, but in connection with reading and analyzing grade-level texts and topics. Technology is used to gather and present information. The standards below convey the range of speaking and listening standards.

- Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information about the topic to explore ideas under discussion. (Grade 3, SL 1.)
- Plan and deliver an opinion speech that: states an opinion, logically sequences evidence to support the speaker's position, uses transition words to effectively link opinions and consequences (e.g., consequently and therefore), and provides a concluding statement related to the speaker's position. (Grade 5, SL 4.a.)
- Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. (Grade 8, SL 1.b)
- Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest. (Grades 9-10 and 11-12, SL 5.)