

Special Education District of Lake County

English Language Arts Common Core State Standards Guidance Document



Exceptional Services for Exceptional Students

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Understanding the Common Core State Standards

What makes the Common Core State Standards different from the Illinois State Standards?

Illinois adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics in June 2010, with full implementation in the 2013-2014 school year. Illinois refers to the CCSS as the New Illinois Learning Standards (NILS).

The Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI) is coordinated by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). This has been a state-led and driven initiative from the beginning. States will voluntarily adopt the standards based on the timelines and context in their state. The standards, developed in collaboration with teachers, school administrators, and education experts, establish clear and consistent goals for learning that will prepare our children for college and the workforce. These standards define the knowledge and skills students should have within their K-12 education careers so that they will graduate from high school able to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs. The Standards are (1) research and evidence based, (2) aligned with college and work expectations, (3) rigorous, and (4) internationally benchmarked.

English Language Arts Six Instructional Shifts

In order for educators to meet the demands of the CCSS for ELA, they must “shift” their materials and classroom instruction. The six shifts for ELA & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects require us to:

Shift 1: Increase Reading of Informational Text

Classrooms are places where students access the world – science, social studies, the arts and literature – through informational and literary text. In elementary, at least 50% of what students read is informational; in middle school, it is 55%; and by the end of high school, it is 70% ([CCSS Introduction](#)). Increasing the amount of informational text students read K-12 will prepare them to read college and career-ready texts.

For more information on Increasing Reading of Informational Text see [Informational Text Prezi](#). Additional readings and resources can be found [here](#).

Shift 2: Text Complexity

In order to prepare students for the complexity of college and career-ready texts, each grade level requires growth in text complexity ([Appendix A, pp. 4-16](#)). Students read the central, grade-appropriate text around which instruction is centered ([see exemplars and sample tasks, Appendix B](#)).

Teachers create more time in the curriculum for close and careful reading and provide appropriate and necessary supports to make the central text accessible to students reading below grade level.

For more information on Text Complexity see [Reading Complex Text Prezi](#). Additional resources and readings can be found [here](#).

Shift 3: Academic Vocabulary

Students constantly build the vocabulary they need to access grade-level complex texts. By focusing strategically on comprehension of pivotal and commonly found words (such as “discourse”, “generation”, “theory”, and “principled”) teachers constantly build students’ ability to access more complex texts across the content areas ([Appendix A, pp. 32-35](#)).

For additional information on Academic Vocabulary see [Academic Vocabulary Prezi](#). Additional resources and readings can be found [here](#).

Shift 4: Text-Based Answers

Students have rich, rigorous conversations which are dependent on students reading a central text. Teachers ensure classroom conversations stay deeply connected to the text and that students develop habits for making evidentiary arguments based on the text, both in conversation and in writing, to assess their comprehension of the text. ([Appendix A, pp. 24-25](#)).

For additional information on Text-Based Answers see [Reading Closely to Answer Text-Dependent Questions Prezi](#). Additional resources and readings can be found [here](#).

Shift 5: Increase Writing from Sources

Writing instruction emphasizes the use of evidence to inform or to make an argument; it includes shared, focused research projects K-12. Students K-12 develop college and career-readiness skills through written arguments that respond to the ideas, facts, and arguments presented in texts they listen to and read ([Appendix A, pp. 24-25](#)).

For additional information on Writing from Sources see [Writing From Sources Prezi](#). Additional resources and readings can be found [here](#).

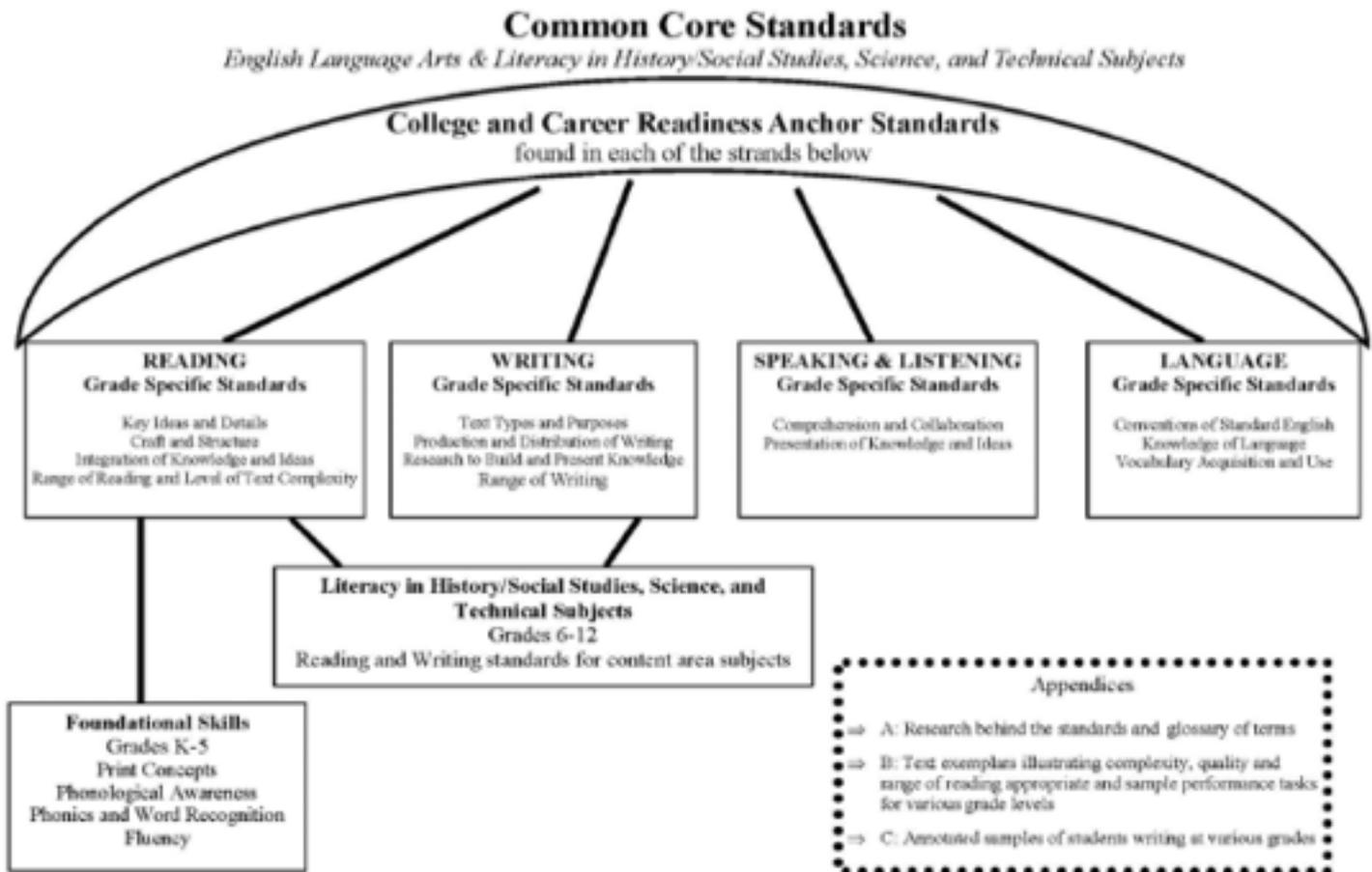
Shift 6: Literacy Instruction in All Content Areas

Content-area teachers emphasize reading and writing in their planning and instruction for teaching the content. Students learn through reading domain-specific texts in history/social studies, science and technical subjects and by writing informative/explanatory and argumentative pieces ([CCSS Introduction](#)).

How do I read the Common Core State Standards?

The College and Career Readiness (CCR) Anchor Standards define the cross-disciplinary literacy expectations that must be met for students to be prepared to enter college and careers. The CCR Anchor standards also provide a backbone to the grade-specific CCSS for ELA. ([CCSS Introduction](#)). To read the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards, click [CCR](#). To read the Common Core State Standards, click [CCSS](#).

Both the CCR and CCSS are divided into four strands (Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking, and Language).



Each grade-specific CCSS builds in task-complexity and text-complexity year to year to meet the expectations of the CCR by the time a student graduates by 12th grade.

In grades K-5, there are an additional set of Foundational Skills standards that address Print Concepts (K-1), Phonological Awareness (K-1), Phonics and Word Recognition (K-5) and Fluency (K-5). In grades 6-12, there are an additional set of standards for Literacy in History/ Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects. These are a set of discipline-specific reading and writing skills that should be taught with the content in those subjects.

Three appendices are included in the standards:

Appendix A: Research behind the standards and glossary of terms ([Appendix A](#)).

Appendix B: Text exemplars illustrating the complexity, quality and range of reading appropriate and sample performance tasks for various grade levels ([Appendix B](#)).

Appendix C: Annotated samples of students writing at various grades ([Appendix C](#)).

Understanding the CCSS Abbreviations

CCR: College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards

CCSS: Common Core State Standards

RL: Reading Literature

RI: Reading Informational

W: Writing

SL: Speaking & Listening

L: Language

RF: Reading Foundations

RI.2.3

(Reading Informational, Grade 2, Standard 3)

For additional information on understanding the organization of the CCSS see [Understanding the Organization of the CCSS Prezi](#). Readings and resources can be accessed [here](#).

How are the CCSS Applicable to Students with Disabilities?

Students with disabilities —students eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)—must be challenged to excel within the general curriculum and be prepared for success in their post-school lives, including college and/or careers. These common standards provide an historic opportunity to improve access to rigorous academic content standards for students with disabilities. The continued development of understanding about research-based instructional practices and a focus on their effective implementation will help improve access to mathematics and English language arts (ELA) standards for all students, including those with disabilities.

The CCSS are supported by the [Council for Exceptional Children \(CEC\)](#), [Council of Administrators of Exceptional Children \(CASE\)](#), and the [International Literacy Association \(ILA\)](#).

To see a list of organizations that support the CCSS click [here](#). To read the CCSS Application to Students with Disabilities click [here](#).

To meet the rigor of the CCSS, SEDOL believes in:

High-quality professional development, job-embedded coaching and on-going professional learning communities.

A balanced literacy approach that combines direct, explicit instruction with multiple opportunities to engage in critical thinking in a literacy-rich environment. To see the components of SEDOL's Balanced Literacy framework see the [ELA Instructional Planning Form \(IPF\)](#).

A comprehensive assessment plan that includes screening, diagnostic, progressing monitoring and accountability measures that improves teaching and learning through measuring progress, diagnosing reading and writing difficulties and evaluating the success of instruction. SEDOL's [ELA Assessment Plans](#)