

Common Core Standards in

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA)

In all classrooms, the focus on literacy standards includes expectations in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. If all students are to be ready for college and career by the end of high school, it is not sufficient to solely address literacy skills; we must also consider the texts to which students apply these skills.

Key Shifts in ELA:

• Content-Rich Nonfiction

This shift does not mean disregarding literature. The standards celebrate the role literature plays in building knowledge and creativity in students. Social studies, health, music, art, business, FACS, TEE, and science courses equip students with disciplinary literacy skills needed to read and gain information from the content-specific nonfiction texts. These texts are powerful vehicles for learning content as students build skills in the careful reading of a variety of texts, such as primary documents in social studies class or descriptions of scientific observations in science class.

Students no longer can rely on prior knowledge and experiences to respond to questions. Quality text-based questions, unlike low-level "search and find" questions, require close reading and deep understanding of the text.

• Reading Grounded in Evidence ✓

• Argumentative Writing →

Writing and speaking using evidence from texts to present careful analysis, well-defended claims, and clear information is the focus of argumentation. Students have vast experience sharing their opinions based on experience and prior knowledge but are challenged when asked to use facts and evidence to defend their point of view.

The ability to comprehend complex texts is the most significant factor differentiating college and career-ready from non-college and career-ready readers. Students who can predict, summarize, and infer while using text as evidence are better able to make meaning from what they read. This shift requires practice through deliberate close reading.

• Complex Text



• Academic Vocabulary

One of the most basic obstacles to comprehension is vocabulary. To understand complex materials, students need support in developing key academic vocabulary common to those texts.