



Considerations for K–12 English Language Arts and Literacy Education

Social-Emotional Support: During this time when external realities may feel more urgent than school, educators will need to consider how best to connect learning to student’s experiences and needs.

Relevance: Do the knowledge and skills associated with grade-level proficiency, engage students in making sense of their present realities? How are educators ensuring active engagement with their students?

Integration of English Language Arts (ELA) Standards: How does the unit, lesson, or project integrate multiple ELA standards and competencies? Will proficiency provide students with the essential knowledge and skill that are necessary for future success (e.g., concepts and skills students need to enter a new grade level or course of study)?

Instructional Practices: Is there crossover application within the content area and to other content areas (e.g., proficiency in creating and interpreting graphs, diagrams, and charts, and subsequently making accurate inferences from them will help students in math, science, social studies, language arts, and other areas)?

Assessment: How are educators using formative assessment as a lever to inform instruction and the next steps of learning?

Special Considerations for ELA:

ELA HABITS OF MIND

How does the unit, lesson, or project promote the ELA habits of mind that all students need to engage with their community and global society through college, career, and life? As students advance through the grades and master the standards in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language, they can exhibit with increasing fullness and regularity these capacities of the literate individual.

- They demonstrate independence.
- They build strong content knowledge.
- They respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.
- They comprehend as well as critique.
- They value evidence.
- They use technology and digital media strategically and capably.
- They come to understand other perspectives and cultures.

ENGLISH ARTS AND LITERACY COMPETENCIES

"...the foundational skills that are regarded as the cornerstone of literacy (print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics, word recognition, and fluency) must be systematically taught and robustly practiced, unit after unit and year after year, in a research-grounded sequence supported by complex text. While it is the major focus of instruction during the years of primary school (kindergarten through grade three) when students are being taught to read, teaching foundational skills—no matter the grade—should be done in tandem with addressing the rest of English Language Arts until reading is automatic and fluent."

–Council of the Great City Schools

K–2 FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS GUIDANCE, ADAPTED FROM CCSSO/ACHIEVE THE CORE

- **Teach reading foundations in a coherent order beginning with missed skills if needed.** The skills of early reading are meant to be taught sequentially. If students missed parts of reading foundations, it is appropriate to go back and teach the skills beginning where they left off.
- **Ensure students receive foundational skills instruction each day.**
- **Focus time and attention on phonological and phonemic awareness.**
- **Ensure instructional time includes:**
 - Explicit teacher modeling of new content.
 - Opportunities for student practice of targeted skill(s) through speaking, reading, writing, and/or listening.
 - Reading of decodable text (i.e., sentences or text containing previously taught sound and spelling patterns and high-frequency words) that students read and reread for automaticity and accuracy.
 - In second grade, some reading of decodable text (i.e., sentences or text containing previously taught sound and spelling patterns and high-frequency words) that students read and reread for fluency.
 - In third grade, reading mostly grade-level complex text, support student's phonics development through use of decodable text only as needed.

K–12 READING COMPREHENSION GUIDANCE, ADAPTED FROM CCSSO/ACHIEVE THE CORE

- **Avoid updating the scope and sequence for ELA reading comprehension** to adjust the order of grade-level texts and units in a new order. Students can progress into the units as anticipated, even if they missed complete units from last year. Reading comprehension rests on background knowledge and vocabulary preparation, which can be embedded in the approach to the new units or aligned across disciplines with science and social studies. Build vocabulary and background knowledge to ensure all students can access grade-level texts during core instruction and targeted intervention development. All students are capable of exploring and discussing the ideas of grade-level text, no matter their reading level. This portion of their reading instruction must allow all students to do so. Helping students access the texts should focus on prioritized vocabulary and background knowledge work. The curriculum should provide suggestions for this targeted remediation. See Lexile level guidance and text feature guidance in [2020–21 Priority Instructional Content in English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics](#).
- **Avoid reteaching full units from the previous year** at the beginning of this year. Similar to the point above, this approach to remediation is unnecessary and will hold students back, wasting time on content that may not be required for grade-level success.
- **Identify which lessons are adaptable for remote learning versus those that are best delivered in person.**
- **Maintain lesson coherence.** The order lessons flow within a unit matters. If you are on a hybrid schedule, pay attention to the lesson order. Pay close attention to ensure students have access to the necessary texts for each lesson. If they are not available virtually, look ahead to send home appropriate texts. Work to sequence deeper and collaborative experiences for in-person time (e.g., Socratic seminars, collaborative group projects on text, second and third reads where eliciting meaning through conversation is critical). For more detail, review [Instruction Partners' ELA Guidelines for Distance Learning Models](#).