

## **ELA/Literacy and ELD in Action in Grade Two**

The research-based implications for ELA/Literacy and ELD instruction have been outlined above, in the grades two and three grade span section, and in Chapters 1 and 2. In the following section, detailed examples illustrate how the principles and practices discussed in the preceding sections look in California classrooms. The examples provided are not intended to present the only approaches to teaching and learning. Rather, they are intended to provide concrete illustrations of how teachers might enact the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards in integrated ways that support deep learning for all students.

Both the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards acknowledge the importance of reading complex texts closely, intentionally, and thoughtfully to derive meaning. Teachers should prepare repeated reading lessons of complex texts carefully and purposefully before teaching them, taking into consideration the challenges and opportunities the text presents, as well as students' readiness to address these challenges. Teachers should select challenging texts that are worth reading and rereading, analyze the texts ahead of time in order to determine critical areas of focus and challenging aspects, and plan a sequence of lessons that build students' abilities to read the text—and others—with increasing independence. This requires teachers to analyze the cognitive and linguistic demands of the texts, including the sophistication of the ideas and content of the text, students' prior knowledge of the ideas and content, and the complexity of the vocabulary, grammar, and organization of the text.

During instruction, teachers should model how to read text closely by thinking aloud for students, modeling how they ask themselves questions as they are reading and highlighting the language and ideas that stand out to them. Teachers should provide concrete methods for students to read more analytically and guide students to frequently read complex texts using these methods with appropriate levels of scaffolding. Second graders need many opportunities to read a wide variety of both literary and informational complex texts and to discuss the texts they are reading, asking and answering literal (“on the surface”) and inferential (“below the surface”) text-dependent questions to determine the meanings in the text and to analyze and evaluate how well authors present their ideas.

California’s ELA/ELD Framework  
SECOND GRADE

Importantly, especially for ELs and other language minority students, and in fact for all students, teachers should explicitly draw attention to text structure and organization and to particular language resources (e.g., text connectives, long noun phrases, types of words used) in the complex texts that help authors convey particular meanings. Examples of specific language resources teachers can point out are text connectives (e.g., *for example, suddenly, in the end*), which create cohesion; long noun phrases (e.g., *the tiny green caterpillar hidden behind the leaf*), which expand and enrich the meaning of sentences; and complex sentences (e.g., *After it rained, the seeds emerged from the soil*), which combine ideas and create relationships between them (in this case, to show *when* something happened). Providing students with opportunities to discuss the language of the complex texts they are reading enhances their comprehension of the texts while also developing their language awareness.

When planning lessons, teachers should enact the principles and practices discussed in this chapter and throughout this framework. Lesson planning should look forward to year-end and unit goals, respond to students’ needs, and incorporate the framing questions displayed in Figure 4.21.

Figure 4.21. Framing Questions for Lesson Planning

<b>Framing Questions for Lesson Planning</b>	
<b>Framing Questions for All Students</b>	<b>Add for English Learners</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the big ideas and culminating performance tasks of the larger unit of study, and how does this lesson build toward them?</li> <li>• What are the learning targets for this lesson, and what should students be able to do at the end of the lesson?</li> <li>• Which clusters of CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy does this lesson address?</li> <li>• What background knowledge, skills, and experiences do my students have related to this lesson?</li> <li>• How complex are the texts and tasks that I will use?</li> <li>• How will students make meaning, express themselves effectively, develop language, and learn content? How will</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the English language proficiency levels of my students?</li> <li>• Which CA ELD Standards amplify the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy at students’ English language proficiency levels?</li> <li>• What language might be new for students and/or present challenges?</li> <li>• How will students interact in meaningful ways and learn</li> </ul>

California’s ELA/ELD Framework  
SECOND GRADE

<p>they apply or learn foundational skills?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What types of scaffolding, accommodations, or modifications will individual students need to effectively engage in the lesson tasks?</li> <li>• How will my students and I monitor learning during and after the lesson, and how will that inform instruction?</li> </ul>	<p>about how English works in collaborative, interpretive, and/or productive modes?</p>
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**ELA/Literacy and ELD Vignettes**

The following two vignettes (more detailed than snapshots) illustrate how a teacher might implement the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards using the framing questions for planning and considerations for close reading provided above. The ELA/Literacy Vignette is an example of appropriate instruction for all CA classrooms, and additional attention is provided for using the CA ELA/Literacy and CA ELD Standards in tandem for EL children. Vignette 4.2 presents a designated ELD lesson that builds into and from the ELA/literacy lesson in order to support EL children in their steady development of English. This vignette focuses on closer analysis of the language of the texts students are reading in ELA.

***ELA/Literacy Vignette***

Vignette 4.1 presents a glimpse into an instructional unit and a closer look at a reading lesson. In this vignette, the focus of instruction is *close reading* using *text-dependent questions*.

<p><b>Vignette 4.1 ELA Instruction in Grade Two: Close Reading of Narrative Texts</b></p>
<p><b>Background:</b> Each month, Mrs. Hernandez’s class of thirty-five second graders conducts an author study. Mrs. Hernandez selects the authors based on the rich language used in their books and the many opportunities the literary texts provide for students to make inferences and engage in extended discussions about their ideas. The engaging plots of the texts ensure that the children are excited about reading the books multiple times. This month, the children are enjoying the books of author Kevin Henkes. Mrs. Hernandez’s class is comprised of twenty-five children who are native English speakers or bilingual children who are proficient in English and ten children who are ELs. Two are at the Emerging level of English language proficiency, six are at the Expanding level, and two are at the Bridging level.</p> <p><b>Lesson Context:</b> Mrs. Hernandez reads aloud some of the Kevin Henkes books to the whole class, and students read others in small reading groups while their classmates work in partners or small groups at literacy stations (e.g., the listening station, the writing station, the partner reading station). During her read alouds, she sometimes “code switches” between English in Spanish to provide scaffolding for her two Spanish-speaking ELs who are at the Emerging level of English language proficiency and are fairly new to English (newcomer ELs). She sometimes previews the stories for them in Spanish or asks a parent who is fluent in Spanish to do so.</p>

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California's ELA/ELD Framework  
SECOND GRADE

Today, Mrs. Hernandez is working with a small reading group of six children (two are ELs at the Bridging level, two are bilingual students who are not ELs, and two are native speakers of English only), and they are reading the book, *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse*. Her focus for instruction is to support her students to read the text closely by thinking about and discussing text-dependent questions. Yesterday, the group read the book for the first time, and Mrs. Hernandez asked text-dependent questions focused on literal comprehension. Today, she will stop at strategic points in the text and guide the children to discuss text-dependent questions focused on inferential comprehension of the text. The learning target and cluster of CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and CA ELD Standards in focus for today's lesson are the following:

**Learning Target:** The students will answer “on-the-surface” and “below-the-surface” text dependent questions while reading a text closely.

**Primary CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy Addressed:**

*RL.2.1 - Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text; RL.2.3 - Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges; W.2.1 - Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply reasons that support the opinion, use linking words (e.g., because, and, also) to connect opinion and reasons, and provide a concluding statement or section; SL.2.1 - Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners ...*

**Primary CA ELD Standards Addressed (Bridging):**

*ELD.PI.1 - Contribute to class, group, and partner discussions, including sustained dialogue, by listening attentively, following turn-taking rules, asking relevant questions, affirming others, adding pertinent information, building on responses, and providing useful feedback; ELD.PI.3 - Offer opinions and negotiate with others in conversations ...; ELD.PI.6 - Describe ideas, phenomena (e.g., erosion), and text elements (e.g., central message, character traits) using key details based on understanding of a variety of grade-level texts ... with light support; ELD.PI.11 - Support opinions or persuade others by providing good reasons and detailed textual evidence ...*

**Lesson Excerpts:** Mrs. Hernandez signals for her class to proceed to their literacy stations, and within moments, her reading group is seated at the teaching table with their materials. She points to the “On-the-Surface” question card in front of her and has the children chorally read with her what is written on it. She reminds the children that they used the questions as they read the story the previous day, and she also reminds them that good readers are constantly asking themselves questions about what they’re reading.

**On-the-Surface Question Card**

What is this part mostly about?  
What is happening?  
Who is involved in what’s happening?  
When and where is it happening?

Mrs. Hernandez: Yesterday, we learned a lot about Lilly, didn’t we? Can anyone tell me what we know about Lilly and about this book so far?

Jamal: It’s about Lilly. She’s a mouse. At the beginning, she really likes her teacher, but then she was being really annoying, and he took her purse, so she was mad. (Pauses.)

Ana: I have something to add on to you. Then Mr. Slinger gave her back her purse, and she liked him again.

Mrs. Hernandez: Okay, that was a nice review of what we discussed yesterday, and great

California's ELA/ELD Framework  
SECOND GRADE

use of the word *annoying*, Jamal. Today, we're going to go below the surface to read the story even more closely.

Mrs. Hernandez places the “below-the-surface” card on the table and asks the students to read what's written on it with her. She explains that they'll be using this card to ask themselves questions as they read today.

**Below-the-Surface Question Card**

How does the author let us know \_\_\_\_?  
Why does \_\_\_\_ happen? How do we know?  
What if \_\_\_\_? How do we know?  
Would \_\_\_\_? How do we know?

Mrs. Hernandez: Often, the author will not come right out and tell you what is happening or what a character is thinking or feeling, so you have to go “below the surface” to get to the deeper meanings. These questions will help us to do that.

Mrs. Hernandez asks her students to re-read the text with her. At strategic points, she stops and poses a few text-dependent questions, which she has prepared in advance using the language frames on the card. She has the children discuss the questions, locating evidence in the book to support their ideas. She has modeled using textual evidence to answer questions numerous times during teacher read alouds and has engaged the students in discussions about these types of questions, but this is a relatively new task for students to do with the texts they're reading themselves. Discussing the “below-the-surface” questions is challenging for the children at first, and Mrs. Hernandez guides them in articulating their thoughts and finding the textual evidence to support their ideas.

Mrs. Hernandez: Why do you think Mr. Slinger wasn't angry at Lilly for drawing and writing mean things about him?

Steven: I think he wasn't angry because he's nice. And he's a teacher, so he has to be nice.

Elodie: I have something to add on to what you said. I think he wasn't angry because he saw that Lilly was really, really sorry.

Mrs. Hernandez: What do you think, Charles?

Charles: I agree with Steven that Mr. Slinger is a nice teacher, but I also agree with Elodie. I think he wasn't angry because he saw Lilly was sorry. She did all those things.

Mrs. Hernandez: Hmm. Can you say more about what “all those things are?”

Charles: (Shrugs).

Mrs. Hernandez: Let's go into the book to see if we can find some textual evidence to support your idea. (Pauses and waits so the children have an opportunity to find evidence on their own.)

Jamal: I think he saw she was really sorry because it says she wrote a letter and drew a picture. The story says that Lilly is really sorry and everyone forgave her. And in the picture, it says he's kind, good, and nice.

Sara: I have something to add on to you. Lilly's father baked some no-frills cheese balls, and

## California's ELA/ELD Framework SECOND GRADE

her mother wrote a note. And then on this page, he tastes the cheese balls and reads the note. And then he says “wow.”

Eva: Yeah, that’s a good idea, Sara. I think Lilly was proving she was really, really sorry, and he had to forgive her.

Mrs. Hernandez: What do you think he meant when he said “wow.”

Eva: I think he meant “I forgive you.”

Jamal: I think he meant he wasn’t angry at her anymore.

Mrs. Hernandez: Okay, so it sounds like you found evidence that Mr. Slinger wasn’t angry with Lilly anymore just because he was a nice teacher. It looks like the evidence shows that he forgave her because she did all those things you discussed to deserve forgiveness. Do you think he could see that she was really sorry?

Children: (In unison.) Yes!

At the end of the lesson, Mrs. Hernandez sends the group to the writing station to complete a writing task in partners. Their task is to choose one of the text-dependent questions they discussed during reading group, discuss it again, and then use a template for writing their opinion with the supporting textual evidence. Mrs. Hernandez has guided the class to do this before with whole class read alouds, but this will be the first time the children will be doing it on their own.

Before placing their opinion pieces in their writing folders to review the next time they meet with Mrs. Hernandez for small reading group, they must first share what they wrote with two other students and get feedback on whether their statements make sense and whether the textual evidence was strong enough to support their idea. The students can also provide ideas to one another on word choice and help one another find textual evidence to support their opinions. Mrs. Hernandez walks around the room, observing students while they engage in peer discussions. Mrs. Hernandez has taught her students to cross out words or sentences and then rewrite them on the same piece of paper rather than erasing what they wrote. This gives her an idea about how they went about revising their opinion pieces. At the end of the lesson, students write in their reflection journals how well they think they followed pre-established norms for providing peer feedback, and how helpful the peer feedback was for improving their responses.

### Teacher Reflection and Next Steps

The next time this reading group meets with Mrs. Hernandez, she’ll guide them to think more deeply about the meanings the author is trying to convey in the text. She’ll use a “Deeper Dive” question card to guide them with text-dependent questions.

#### Deeper Dive Question Card

What does the author want us to *understand* about \_\_\_\_\_?  
How does the author use special words to show us \_\_\_\_\_?  
How does the author play with *language* to add to meaning?

When Mrs. Hernandez meets with her second grade teaching team, she shares how using the question cards in her reading groups went. Even though the “Below-the-Surface” text-dependent questions were challenging for her students, she could see that they were engaged in talking about the texts and finding evidence to support their ideas. She also shares that she’s noticed that recently, during collaborative conversations about the texts she reads aloud, her students have been attending much more to what it says in the text rather than relying solely on background knowledge or guessing. She concludes that it is the attention she gives to text-dependent questions in both small reading groups and whole group teacher read alouds that is contributing to her students’

California's ELA/ELD Framework  
SECOND GRADE

development of these skills.

**Resources**

Web Sites:

- Achieve the Core has resources for creating text-dependent questions (<http://achievethecore.org/page/710/text-dependent-question-resources>), as well as sample lessons (<http://achievethecore.org/>).

Recommended Reading:

Boyles, Nancy. 2012/13. "Closing in on Close Reading." *Educational Leadership* 70 (4): 36-41.  
<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/dec12/vol70/num04/Closing-in-on-Close-Reading.aspx>