



Common Core State Standards Professional Learning Module Series

English Language Arts: Writing to Inform, Argue, and Analyze

Pre-Assessment and Unit 1

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Tom Torlakson, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Welcome to the Series

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Professional Learning Modules

Available on the Brokers of Expertise Web Site at www.myboe.org

Welcome Message

Lupita Alcala, Deputy Superintendent
Instruction and Learning Support Branch
California Department of Education (CDE)

<http://myboe.org/portal/default/Group/Viewer/GroupView?action=2&qid=2996>

2 | California Department of Education

Pre-Assessment

Assess your knowledge of the CCSS Writing Standards prior to beginning the module:

- Complete the “Pre-Assessment”
- Work independently, without discussion or assistance from others

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Welcome to Unit 1:

Unit 1: Understanding and Teaching the Common Core Writing Standards

- *College and Career Readiness (CCR) Anchor Standards for Writing*
- *California English Language Development (ELD) Standards*
- *California's Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy)*

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Unit 1: Learning Objectives

Throughout and upon completion of Unit 1, you will:

- Examine how and why the CCR Anchor Standards for Writing are interrelated and interconnected
- Understand the relationships between and among writing text types, genres, and subgenres
- Examine the impact of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy on writing instruction across grade levels

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CCR: What Students Need to Do, Know, and Understand

How do the CCR Anchor Standards for Writing set the expectations for what students write and how are the standards interrelated and interdependent?

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CCR: What Students Need to Do, Know, and Understand

Using your copy of the *College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing* (Handout 1.1), review the standards two times as follows:

1. On the first reading, mark or note phrases that describe what students need to **do** in their writing.
1. Read through each standard again and mark or note what students need to **know and understand** to successfully meet the requirements of each standard.

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CCR: What Students Need to Do, Know, and Understand

Share and discuss what you noticed and highlighted:

- *What did you highlight for what students need to **DO**?*
- *What did you highlight for what students need to **KNOW and UNDERSTAND**?*

Compare your observations to the key terms and phrases highlighted in bold in Handouts 1.1.1a and 1.1.1b: CCR “DO” and CCR “KNOW”.

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CCR: What Students Need to Do, Know, and Understand

Did you notice that each of the CCR Anchor Standards begins with an action verb that tells what students are expected to **do**?

- What students need to **know and understand** to produce writing that meets and exceeds these expectations — convey complex ideas; assess credibility; strengthen writing — requires higher order thinking skills.

Wilhelm, 2012

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CCR: Note on Range and Content in Student Writing

Note on range and content in student writing:

“To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students need to learn to use writing as a way of offering and supporting opinions, demonstrating understanding of the subjects they are studying, and conveying real and imagined experiences and events. They learn to appreciate that a key purpose of writing is to communicate clearly to an external, sometimes unfamiliar audience, and they begin to adapt the form and content of their writing to accomplish a particular task and purpose. They develop the capacity to build knowledge on a subject through research projects and to respond analytically to literary and informational sources. To meet these goals, students must devote significant time and effort to writing, producing numerous pieces over short and extended time frames throughout the year.”

CCSS Initiative, 2010

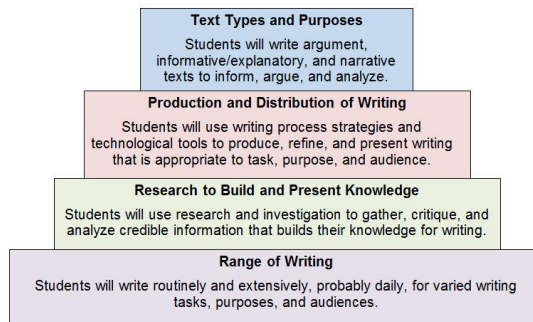
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CCR: Note on Range and Content in Student Writing

- *How is this statement a rationale for what students are being asked to learn in writing?*
- *How have the writers of the rationale have combined the CCR Anchor Standards for Writing to emphasize the interrelatedness of the standards?*

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Relationship Between and Among the CCR Anchor Standards for Writing



A Classroom of Production

A “classroom of production” approach:

Wilhelm (2012) describes a classroom that supports students in doing the work and learning of CCSS writing as a “place of production.”

The foundation for a classroom of production is one that provides extensive opportunities for students to write for varied tasks, purposes, and audiences. Such a classroom — be it a first grade class where students are learning to create a shared story, a fifth grade writing workshop class, a middle school class working on cross-disciplinary inquiry projects, or a transition to college class for English Learners — builds students’ capacity for learning and applying higher order thinking skills on a foundation of production.

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Learning the Skills of Production

An “if-then” approach:

- If students are deeply involved in generating ideas and gathering credible information from print and digital texts, **then** they must learn to use writing process strategies and technological tools to produce, refine, and present written products that address a range of writing tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- If students are learning to address a wide range of writing tasks and audiences, **then** they must learn the skills of narrative, informative/explanatory, and opinion/argument writing, as well as the purposes of writing to inform, argue, and analyze.
- If students receive instruction in and extensive practice across all ten interconnected anchor standards and are writing to inform, argue, and persuade, **then** they are building the foundation for the writing of college and career.

In a classroom that provides the conditions for students to become producers of writing, the teacher’s role is to help them learn the **skills of production** — **research, investigation, building knowledge, composing** — along with the higher order thinking skills of writing to inform, argue, and analyze.

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Doing the Work of Writing

“Doing the work” approach:

Writing Standards 4 through 10 “illuminate how students should go about doing the work of the first three standards.”

Source: Calkins, 2012

- How does this approach support the writing classroom as a place of production?
- How does it describe the interrelatedness of the CCR Anchor Standards in Writing?

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Reflect, Write, and Share

- **Consider anchor standards 1–3:**
 - How will the increased emphasis on argument and informative/explanatory writing impact your current teaching?
- **Consider anchor standards 4–6:**
 - Which standard(s) would bring the most significant changes to your teaching of writing at your current grade level? Why?
- **Consider anchor standards 7–9:**
 - Which standard(s) might present the greatest challenges for your students?
- **Consider anchor standard 10:**
 - How might you collaborate with your colleagues to ensure that all students are exposed to the range required by this standard?

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Relationship of the CCR Anchor Standards for Writing: Conclusion

Important Take Away: The ten anchor standards in writing do not just complement each other. They need to be addressed instructionally as interconnected, interrelated, and interdependent. Lessons developed for both short and extended time frames will cluster and address most of the writing standards simultaneously.

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Text Types, Purposes, and Genres

Texts Types and Purposes (Standards 1–3):

“These broad types of writing include many subgenres. See Appendix A [pages 23–25] for definitions of key writing types.”

Source: Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2010

Consider the following questions:

- What does “broad types” of writing mean?
- What are the connections between and among text types, genres, and subgenres? What are the differences?

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Text Types, Purposes, and Genres

What is Genre?

Traditional Definition: Distinguished between drama, fiction, and poetry

1980's: Began to refer to a broader set of text types (letters, memos, essays, proposals); also began to inform the teaching of writing

The above uses of the term only identified text types and made generalizations about their usual forms. Teaching focused on patterns and organizations — or on what and how to write a letter or a proposal but not why we write these genres.

Current uses of the term: Every genre of writing “occurs in a situation.”

- That situation has an audience, a purpose, a context or setting, a set of expected and appropriate responses, and a reason for the writer to write.

Source: Fox, 2004

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Text Types, Purposes, and Genres

Situational Example

To make this concept less abstract, author Deborah Dean offers a concrete example: Sending a greeting card for a special occasion. The card you select depends on the occasion or situation.

- **Context and Setting:** Is the card for a birthday, graduation, retirement, or Mother's Day?
- **Audience:** Is the card for someone who is turning eight or eighty; for a single parent working and attending school after hours; for a high school graduate; or for a mother, mother-in-law, or a grandmother?
- **Purpose:** Should the card amuse, inspire, touch the heart? Should it be funny, sweet, inspirational, or sentimental?
- **Presentation/Format:** Should the card be paper or electronic? Mailed or e-mailed? Musical?

If you consider carefully the situation, context, audience, purpose, and presentation, you are more likely to choose an appropriate card for the occasion and the recipient.

Source: Dean, 2008

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Text Types and Purposes

Anchor Standards 1 through 3 — Writing Text Types and Purposes — ask students to master three basic forms of writing:

- writing arguments
- writing to inform and explain
- writing narratives

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Text Types and Purposes: Argument

Arguments are used for many purposes - to change the reader's point of view, to bring about some action on the reader's part, or to ask the reader to accept the writer's explanation or evaluation of a concept, issue, or problem. An argument is a reasoned, logical way of demonstrating that the writer's position, belief, or conclusion is valid.

In English language arts, students make claims about the worth or meaning of a literary work or works. They defend their interpretations or judgments with evidence from the text(s) they are writing about. In history/social studies, students analyze evidence from multiple primary and secondary sources to advance a claim that is best supported by the evidence, and they argue for a historically or empirically situated interpretation. In science, students make claims in the form of statements or conclusions that answer questions or address problems. Using data in a scientifically acceptable form, students marshal evidence and draw on their understanding of scientific concepts to argue in support of their claims. Although young children are not able to produce fully developed logical arguments, they develop a variety of methods to extend and elaborate their work by providing examples, offering reasons for their assertions, and explaining cause and effect. These kinds of expository structures are steps on the road to argument. In grades K-5, the term “opinion” is used to refer to this developing form of argument.

Source: CCSS for ELA Appendix A

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Text Types and Purposes: Informational/Explanatory

Informational/explanatory writing conveys information accurately. This kind of writing serves one or more closely related purposes: to increase reader's knowledge of a subject, to help readers better understand a procedure or process, or to provide readers with an enhanced comprehension of a concept.

Informational/explanatory writing addresses matters such as types (What are the different types of poetry?) and components (What are the parts of a motor?); size, function, or behavior (How big is the United States? What is an X-ray used for? How do penguins find food?); how things work (How does the legislative branch of government function?); and why things happen (Why do some authors blend genres?). To produce this kind of writing, students draw from what they already know and from primary and secondary sources. With practice, students become better able to develop a controlling idea and a coherent focus on a topic and more skilled at selecting and incorporating relevant examples, facts, and details into their writing. They are also able to use a variety of techniques to convey information, such as naming, defining, describing, or differentiating different types or parts; comparing or contrasting ideas or concepts; and citing an anecdote or a scenario to illustrate a point. Informational/explanatory writing includes a wide array of genres, including academic genres such as literary analyses, scientific and historical reports, summaries, and precise writing as well as forms of workplace and functional writing such as instructions, manuals, memos, reports, applications, and resumes. As students advance through the grades, they expand their repertoire of informational/explanatory genres and use them effectively in a variety of disciplines and domains.

Source: CCSS for ELA Appendix A

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Text Types and Purposes: Narrative

Narrative writing conveys experience, either real or imaginary, and uses time as its deep structure. It can be used for many purposes, such as to inform, instruct, persuade, or entertain.

In English language arts, students produce narratives that take the form of creative fictional stories, memoirs, anecdotes, and autobiographies. Over time, they learn to provide visual details of scenes, objects, or people; to depict specific actions (for example, movements, gestures, postures, and expressions); to use dialogue and interior monologue that provide insight into the narrator's and characters' personalities and motives; and to manipulate pace to highlight the significance of events and create tension and suspense. In history/social studies, students write narrative accounts about individuals. They also construct event models of what happened, selecting from their sources only the most relevant information. In science, students write narrative descriptions of the step-by-step procedures they follow in their investigations so that others can replicate their procedures and (perhaps) reach the same results. With practice, students expand their repertoire and control of different narrative strategies.

Source: CCSS for ELA Appendix A

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Text Types and Purposes Across K–12

As students advance through the grades, the CCSS place **increasing emphasis** on analytical writing (argument, informing, and explaining) and **decreasing emphasis** on narrative writing.

Video “*Writing to Inform and Make Arguments*” features authors of the CCSS discussing this topic:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jt_2jI010WU

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Text Types, Genres, and Subgenres in Context

California’s ELD Standards:

- Developed for English learner students; fully aligned with the CCSS
- Provide a clarifying extension to the foundational CCR Anchor Standards by expanding on details regarding purpose, text type, and audience

In the set of standards you have for this activity:

1. Find the page that begins Section 2: *Elaboration on Critical Principles for Developing Language and Cognition in Academic Contexts* (usually on pages 3.4).
2. Read the contents of the sidebar section that appears on all of the pages of Section 2 and note the terms that appear under Purposes, Text Types, and Audiences
3. With a partner, discuss what information in the sidebar adds to your understanding of text types, purposes, audiences, and genres.

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Text Types, Genres, and Subgenres in Context

Informational Text Types: Kindergarten through Grade Five (K–5)

- Include: Description (e.g., science log entry); procedure (e.g., how to solve a mathematics problem); recount (e.g., autobiography, science experiment results); information report (e.g., science or history report); explanation (e.g., how or why something happened); exposition (e.g., opinion); response (e.g., literary analysis); etc.

Informational Text Types: Grades Six through Twelve (6–12)

- Include: Descriptions or accounts (e.g., scientific, historical, economic, technical); recounts (e.g., biography, memoir); information reports, explanations (e.g., causal, factorial); expositions (e.g., speeches, opinion pieces, argument, debate); responses (e.g., literary analysis); etc.

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Text Types, Genres, and Subgenres in Context

Purposes

- Include: Describing, entertaining, informing, interpreting, analyzing, recounting, explaining, persuading, negotiating, justifying, evaluating, etc.

Audiences

- Include: Peers (one-to-one); small group (one-to-group); whole group (one-to-many).

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Reflect, Write, and Discuss

- *When comparing to the CCR Anchor Standards, what important additions to and information about “text types” do you find in the sidebar section of California’s ELD Standards?*
- *How does this information help you describe the differences between broad text types and a variety of subgenres?*
- *How does this information help you name and describe writing tasks for varied audiences and purposes?*

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Text Types, Genres, and Subgenres in Context

Important Takeaway: The broad categories of Common Core writing text types define writing skills that students are expected to learn and teachers are expected to teach. Teachers, grade-level groups, departments, and school and district committees must turn those skills into writing situations and genres and develop the lessons and lesson sequences that will build an all-important writing foundation for college and career readiness.

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Blending and Combining Different Text Types

Most genres draw on the CCSS text types to blend elements of different kinds of writing.

- **Refer to the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy Writing Standards by grade level as you read and annotate three student essays (Handouts 1.3.3a–c):**
 - “The Life of Carmen Alfaro” — 4th grader’s biographical sketch (interview).
 - “Miss Sadie” — 8th grader’s firsthand biography (timed writing assessment).
 - “Stanley Hom Lau: Paper Son” — university freshman’s biographical analysis of a period of California’s immigration history (research paper).
- **Compare your notes to the annotated versions of the essays (Handouts 1.3.3d–f)**
 - *How and where do the writers of each essay blend elements of narrative, informational, and/or argument writing?*

Blending and Combining Different Text Types

Extension Activity: Search through some of the following text resources to see if and how professional and college writers combine text types for rhetorical effect, thereby creating blended or hybrid writing genres:

- **A text you use in class** — picture book, chapter, anthology, essay reader, etc.
- **Digital texts:** *Time for Kids*, *Ranger Rick* — *National Wildlife Federation*, or *National Geographic Kids*.
- **University student examples:** *Prized Writing* (online anthologies of writing across disciplines by University of California Davis undergraduate students).

Record your findings on Handout 1.3.4: *Analyzing Text Type Blending and Significance*.

Blending and Combining Different Text Types

Important Takeaway: As noted earlier, the blending and combining elements of the different writing types for rhetorical effect is an essential skill for success in college writing. All Common Core writing standards build toward the analytical writing of argument, which often blends two or three text types, as well as the purposes of writing to inform, argue, and analyze. As illustrated by the three student essays, students can and should learn this skill early and practice it across the grade levels. Seeing such blending in student and professional writing is again a reminder that the CCSS text types are broad categories of writing, not genres.

Applying Significance to Text Types and Genres

The importance of significance:

“Students may learn the formats of description, narration, exposition, and persuasion, but they may not gain a sense of how to use these formats as strategies to create significance for the reader. They may not use them to think — and then are not helped to write — analytically.”

“Analytical writing requires that each writer create and define significance for the reader, and that the writer cite and explain evidence in a way that will make the reader understand and, if possible, accept the significance defined.”

Source: George Gadda, Chief Reader of the University of California Analytical Writing Placement Examination and Associate Director of the UCLA Writing Program

Applying Significance to Text Types and Genres

Recall the three student essays and consider the following questions:

- *How are the writers explaining the significance of the experience or information they conveyed in their essays?*
- *What significance are they proposing that you as the reader accept?*

With a partner, write a sentence or two that sums up the significance each writer is proposing.

Applying Significance to Text Types and Genres

Refer to the *CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy — Writing “Text Type and Purpose”* (standards 1–3) for your grade level and note your answers to the following questions:

- *Which elements of the standards for each text type are about significance?*
- *How can you teach your students to make the writing of each text type significant?*

Applying Significance to Text Types and Genres

Extension Activity: Return to chart and notes on *Analyzing Texts for Text Type Blending and Significance* (Handout 1.3.4).

- Read the same texts you analyzed before, but this time look for and chart significance using:
 - **A text you use in class** — picture book, chapter, anthology, essay reader, etc.
 - **Digital texts:** Time for Kids, Ranger Rick — National Wildlife Federation, or National Geographic Kids.
 - **University student examples:** Prized Writing (twenty-one years of online anthologies of writing across disciplines by University of California Davis undergraduate students).

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Applying Significance to Text Types and Genres

Important Takeaway: The ultimate purpose of writing is to convince readers of the significance of what is being written about. All students, beginning in the early grades, can learn to write genres about experiences and observations; write genres that link experience, observation, and reading; and write genres exclusively about texts in ways that justify the significance of the writing to a reader.

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CCSS Impact on Writing Instruction

- *What are the key changes that the CCSS brings to ELA/Literacy, and how does that affect writing instruction?*
- *Why are the three text types applied to every grade level?*
- *Why doesn't the CCSS list specific writing applications in the way the 1997 California ELA Content Standards did — friendly, personal, or formal letters, summaries, fictional narratives, persuasive compositions, historical investigation reports, etc.?*

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CCSS Impact on Writing Instruction

The CCSS calls for an increased emphasis on analytical writing:

- Every student, from Kindergarten through grade twelve, is expected to learn, refine, and produce written genres that exemplify the three text types: **argument, informative/explanatory, and narrative**.
- Focus is on developing writing skills and knowledge for a wide range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

"To be college- and career-ready writers, students must take task, purpose, and audience into careful consideration, choosing words, information, structures, and formats deliberately. They need to know how to combine elements of different kinds of writing — for example, to use narrative strategies within argument and explanation within narrative — to produce complex and nuanced writing."

CCSS Initiative, 2010

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Key Changes for ELA/Literacy

Three key shifts to the CCSS for ELA/Literacy

- Shift 2 (writing from sources) indicates a key change for writing:

Shift 1: Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction	Students read a balance of informational and literary texts, moving from a 50/50 balance in K-5 to increasing emphasis on literary nonfiction (across content areas) in grades 6-12.
Shift 2: Reading, writing and speaking grounded in evidence from text - both literary and informational	Writing from sources rather than relying solely on prior knowledge and experience. For example, using evidence from texts to present careful analyses, well-defended claims, and clear information.
Shift 3: Regular practice with complex text and academic language	Building upon a "staircase of text complexity" to prepare students for the demands of college- and career-level reading; focus on academic vocabulary across content areas.

Source: AchievetheCore.org

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Key Change: Sources and Evidence

Why the increased focus on citing evidence from text?

- Most college and career writing requires students to take a position or inform others by citing evidence rather than sharing personal opinion.
- Across the grades, students need to develop the skill of gathering evidence from text to support their claims.

Video "Shift 5: Writing from Sources" addresses this key shift and its implications: <http://vimeo.com/27076961>

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Key Change: Sources and Evidence

Discuss with a partner:

- How will the increased emphasis on writing from sources affect my current instructional practices?
- What challenges will I face as I make this shift?

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Key Change: Building Knowledge through Research

- How does the emphasis on using research to build knowledge play out by grade levels?
- How do the standards increase in complexity as students move through the grades?

To answer these questions, refer to California's Common Core writing standards 7–9 (7 and 8 in K–3) that appear in the category, "Research to Build and Present Knowledge."

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Key Change: Building Knowledge through Research

Grade 1:

7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of "how-to" books on a given topic and use them to write a sequence of instructions).
8. With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

Grade 3:

7. Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.
8. Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.

Grade 5:

7. Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
8. Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.
9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

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Key Change: Building Knowledge through Research

Grade 7:

7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.
8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
 - a. Apply grade 7 Reading standards to literature (e.g., "Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history").
 - b. Apply grade 7 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., "Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims").

46

Key Change: Building Knowledge through Research

Grade 9 and 10:

7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
8. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation **including footnotes and endnotes** [bold indicates California addition].
9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
 - a. Apply grades 9–10 Reading standards to literature (e.g., "Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work [e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare]").
 - b. Apply grades 9–10 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., "Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning").

47

Key Change: Building Knowledge through Research

Grade 11 and 12:

7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
8. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation including footnotes and endnotes [bold indicates California addition].
9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
 - a. Apply grades 11–12 Reading standards to literature (e.g., "Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics").
 - b. Apply grades 9–10 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., "Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning [e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court Case majority opinions and dissents] and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy (e.g., The Federalist, presidential addresses)").

48

Key Change: Building Knowledge through Research

Review your own grade level standards in the category of “*Research to Build and Present Knowledge*” and compare them to the standards for the grades immediately preceding and following your current grade level.

Discuss:

- *How will your teaching of the standards at your current grade level depend on how these standards were taught in prior grade levels?*
- *How will you prepare your students for the expectations of the grade level standards of the next grade(s)?*

49

Looking Forward

Write your responses to the following questions:

- *How are my students currently writing to inform, or argue, or analyze?*
- *Am I currently teaching them to write for varied tasks, purposes, and audiences?*
- *What more do they need to do, know, and understand to effectively accomplish these tasks?*
- *How can I support my students to make the subject or topic for their writing significant?*

50