



***Mississippi
College- and Career-Readiness
Standards for English Language Arts
2014***

Scaffolding Document



Mississippi Department of Education

Post Office Box 771

Jackson, Mississippi

39205-0771

Office of Curriculum and Instruction

601-359-2586

www.mde.k12.ms.us/ci

The Mississippi State Board of Education, the Mississippi Department of Education, the Mississippi School for the Arts, the Mississippi School for the Blind, the Mississippi School for the Deaf, and the Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science do not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, national origin, age, or disability in the provision of educational programs and services or employment opportunities and benefits. The following office has been designated to handle inquiries and complaints regarding the non-discrimination policies of the above mentioned entities:

Director, Office of Human Resources

Mississippi Department of Education



INTRODUCTION

Mission Statement

The Mississippi Department of Education is dedicated to student success including the improvement of student achievement in English Language Arts in order to produce citizens who are capable of making complex decisions, solving complex problems, and communicating fluently in a global society. The Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to know and be able to do by the end of each grade level or course. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that students need for success in college and careers and to compete in the global economy.

Purpose

The primary purpose of the 2014 Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards Scaffolding Document is to provide teachers with a deeper understanding of the Standards as they plan for classroom instruction. Based on the 2014 Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards, this document provides a close analysis of the requirements for student mastery. Because of the rigor and depth of the Standards, scaffolding instruction to meet the needs of all learners is essential to individual success. The Scaffolding Document will aid teachers' understanding of how to teach the Standards through a natural progression of student mastery.

Organization of the 2014 Mississippi College- and Career-Standards Scaffolding Document

The 2014 Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards Scaffolding Document is divided by grade level. Within each grade level, the Scaffolding Document is separated into the four strands identified in the Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards for English Language Arts: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language.

Each standard is then broken down into three categories: Prerequisite Knowledge, Conceptual Understanding, and Evidence of Knowledge. The Prerequisite Knowledge column lists the skills that students should have mastered in previous grades in order to work towards mastery of the grade-specific standard. In other words, this column details what a student needs to **KNOW** before mastering the grade-specific standard. The Conceptual Understanding column explains the deeper understanding of concepts, not actions or skills, that are required for mastery of the grade-specific standard. In other words, this column explains what a student needs to **UNDERSTAND** before mastering the grade-specific standard. The last column, Evidence of Knowledge, explains what student mastery looks like, including what work a student produces to exhibit mastery of the

grade-specific standard. In other words, this column describes what a student needs to DO to show mastery of the grade-specific standard.

Finally, key terms are included for each standard. These key terms include the ideas, concepts, and verbs that are necessary for mastery of the standard.

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

OVERVIEW

The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (“the Standards”) are the culmination of an extended, broad-based effort to fulfill the charge to create next generation K–12 standards in order to help ensure that all students are college and career ready in literacy no later than the end of high school.

The Standards set requirements not only for English language arts (ELA) but also for literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. Just as students must learn to read, write, speak, listen, and use language effectively in a variety of content areas, so too must the Standards specify the literacy skills and understandings required for college and career readiness in multiple disciplines. Literacy standards for grade 6 and above are predicated on teachers of ELA, history/social studies, science, and technical subjects using their content area expertise to help students meet the particular challenges of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language in their respective fields. It is important to note that the 6–12 literacy standards in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects are not meant to replace content standards in those areas but rather to supplement them.

As a natural outgrowth of meeting the charge to define college and career readiness, the Standards also lay out a vision of what it means to be a literate person in the twenty-first century. Indeed, the skills and understandings students are expected to demonstrate have wide applicability outside the classroom or workplace. Students who meet the Standards readily undertake the close, attentive reading that is at the heart of understanding and enjoying complex works of literature. They habitually perform the critical reading necessary to pick carefully through the staggering amount of information available today in print and digitally. They actively seek the wide, deep, and thoughtful engagement with high-quality literary and informational texts that builds knowledge, enlarges experience, and broadens worldviews. They reflexively demonstrate the cogent reasoning and use of evidence that is essential to both private deliberation and responsible citizenship in a democratic republic. In short, students who meet the Standards develop the skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening that are the foundation for any creative and purposeful expression in language.

Key Design Considerations

College- and Career- Readiness and Grade-Specific Standards

The College- and Career- Readiness (CCR) standards anchor the document and define general, cross-disciplinary literacy expectations that must be met for students to be prepared to enter college and workforce training programs ready to succeed. The K–12 grade-specific standards define end-of-year expectations and a cumulative progression designed to enable students to meet college and career readiness expectations no later than the end of high school. The CCR and high school (grades 9–12) standards work in tandem to define the college and career readiness line—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity. Hence, both should be considered when developing college and career readiness assessments.

Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year’s grade specific standards, retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades, and work steadily toward meeting the more general expectations described by the CCR standards.

Grade Levels for K–8; Grade Bands for 9–10 and 11–12

The Standards use individual grade levels in kindergarten through grade 8 to provide useful specificity; the Standards use two-year bands in grades 9–12 to allow flexibility in high school course design.

A Focus on Results Rather than Means

By emphasizing required achievements, the Standards leave room for school districts to determine how those goals should be reached and what additional topics should be addressed. Thus, the Standards do not mandate such things as a particular writing process or the full range of metacognitive strategies that students may need to monitor and direct their thinking and learning. Teachers are thus free to provide students with whatever tools and knowledge their professional judgment and experience identify as most helpful for meeting the goals set out in the Standards.

An Integrated Model of Literacy

Although the Standards are divided into Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language strands for conceptual clarity, the processes of communication are closely connected, as reflected throughout this document. For example, Writing standard 9 requires that students be able to write about what they read. Likewise, Speaking and Listening standard 4 sets the expectation that students will share findings from their research.

Research and Media Skills Blended into the Standards as a Whole

To be ready for college, workforce training, and life in a technological society, students need the ability to gather, comprehend, evaluate, synthesize, and report on information and ideas, to

conduct original research in order to answer questions or solve problems, and to analyze and create a high volume and extensive range of print and non-print texts in media forms old and new. Research, media skills, and understandings are embedded throughout the Standards rather than treated in a separate section.

Shared Responsibility for Students’ Literacy Development

The Standards insist that instruction in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language be a shared responsibility within the school. The K–5 standards include expectations for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language applicable to a range of subjects, including but not limited to ELA. The grades 6–12 standards are divided into two sections, one for ELA and the other for history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. This division reflects the unique, time-honored place of ELA teachers in developing students’ literacy skills while at the same time recognizing that teachers in other areas must have a role in this development as well.

Part of the motivation behind the interdisciplinary approach to literacy promulgated by the Standards is extensive research establishing the need for college and career ready students to be proficient in reading complex informational text independently in a variety of content areas. Most of the required reading in college and workforce training programs is informational in structure and challenging in content; postsecondary education programs typically provide students with both a higher volume of such reading than is generally required in K–12 schools and comparatively little scaffolding.

The Standards are not alone in calling for a special emphasis on informational text. The 2009 reading framework of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) requires a high and increasing proportion of informational text on its assessment as students advance through the grades.

Distribution of Literary and Informational Passages by Grade in the 2009 NAEP Reading Framework

| Grade | Literary | Informational |
|-------|----------|---------------|
| 4 | 50% | 50% |
| 8 | 45% | 55% |
| 12 | 30% | 70% |

Source: National Assessment Governing Board. (2008). *Reading framework for the 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

The Standards aim to align instruction with this framework so that many more students than at present can meet the requirements of college and career readiness. In K–5, the Standards follow NAEP’s lead in balancing the reading of literature with the reading of informational texts, including texts in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. In accord with NAEP’s growing emphasis on informational texts in the higher grades, the Standards demand that a significant amount of reading of informational texts take place in and outside the ELA classroom. Fulfilling the Standards for 6–12 ELA requires much greater attention to a specific

category of informational text—literary nonfiction—than has been traditional. Because the ELA classroom must focus on literature (stories, drama, and poetry) as well as literary nonfiction, a great deal of informational reading in grades 6–12 must take place in other classes if the NAEP assessment framework is to be matched instructionally.¹ To measure students’ growth toward college and career readiness, assessments aligned with the Standards should adhere to the distribution of texts across grades cited in the NAEP framework.

Distribution of Communicative Purposes by Grade in the 2011 NAEP Writing Framework

| Grade | To Persuade | To Explain | To Convey Experience |
|-------|-------------|------------|----------------------|
| 4 | 30% | 35% | 35% |
| 8 | 35% | 35% | 30% |
| 12 | 40% | 40% | 20% |

Source: National Assessment Governing Board. (2007). *Writing framework for the 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress, pre-publication edition*. Iowa City, IA: ACT, Inc.

NAEP likewise outlines a distribution across the grades of the core purposes and types of student writing. The 2011 NAEP framework, like the Standards, cultivates the development of three mutually reinforcing writing capacities: writing to persuade, to explain, and to convey real or imagined experience. Evidence concerning the demands of college and career readiness gathered during development of the Standards concurs with NAEP’s shifting emphases: standards for grades 9–12 describe writing in all three forms, but, consistent with NAEP, the overwhelming focus of writing throughout high school should be on arguments and informative/explanatory texts.²

It follows that writing assessments aligned with the Standards should adhere to the distribution of writing purposes across grades outlined by NAEP.

Focus and Coherence in Instruction and Assessment

While the Standards delineate specific expectations in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language, each standard need not be a separate focus for instruction and assessment. Often, several standards can be addressed by a single rich task. For example, when editing writing, students address Writing standard 5 (“Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach”) as well as Language standards 1–3 (which deal with conventions of standard English and knowledge of language). When drawing evidence from literary and informational texts per Writing standard 9, students are also demonstrating their comprehension skill in relation to specific standards in Reading. When

¹The percentages on the table reflect the sum of student reading, not just reading in ELA settings. Teachers of senior English classes, for example, are not required to devote 70 percent of reading to informational texts. Rather, 70 percent of student reading across the grade should be informational.

²As with reading, the percentages in the table reflect the sum of student writing, not just writing in ELA settings.

discussing something they have read or written, students are also demonstrating their speaking and listening skills. The CCR anchor standards themselves provide another source of focus and coherence.

The same ten CCR anchor standards for Reading apply to both literary and informational texts, including texts in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. The ten CCR anchor standards for Writing cover numerous text types and subject areas. This means that students can develop mutually reinforcing skills and exhibit mastery.

Students Who are College- and Career-Ready

The descriptions that follow are not standards themselves but instead offer a portrait of students who meet the standards set out in this document. As students advance through the grades and master the standards in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language, they are able to exhibit with increasing fullness and regularity these capacities of the literate individual.

They demonstrate independence.

Students can, without significant scaffolding, comprehend and evaluate complex texts across a range of types and disciplines, and they can construct effective arguments and convey intricate or multifaceted information. Likewise, students are able independently to discern a speaker's key points, request clarification, and ask relevant questions. They build on others' ideas, articulate their own ideas, and confirm they have been understood. Without prompting, they demonstrate command of standard English and acquire and use a wide-ranging vocabulary. More broadly, they become self-directed learners, effectively seeking out and using resources to assist them, including teachers, peers, and print and digital reference materials.

They build strong content knowledge.

Students establish a base of knowledge across a wide range of subject matter by engaging with works of quality and substance. They become proficient in new areas through research and study. They read purposefully and listen attentively to gain both general knowledge and discipline-specific expertise. They refine and share their knowledge through writing and speaking.

They respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.

Students adapt their communication in relation to audience, task, purpose, and discipline. They set and adjust purpose for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language use as warranted by the task. They appreciate nuances, such as how the composition of an audience should affect tone when speaking and how the connotations of words affect meaning. They also know that different disciplines call for different types of evidence (e.g., documentary evidence in history, experimental evidence in science).

They comprehend as well as critique.

Students are engaged and open-minded—but discerning—readers and listeners. They work diligently to understand precisely what an author or speaker is saying, but they also question an author’s or speaker’s assumptions and premises and assess the veracity of claims and the soundness of reasoning.

They value evidence.

Students cite specific evidence when offering an oral or written interpretation of a text. They use relevant evidence when supporting their own points in writing and speaking, making their reasoning clear to the reader or listener, and they constructively evaluate others’ use of evidence.

They use technology and digital media strategically and capably.

Students employ technology thoughtfully to enhance their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language use. They tailor their searches online to acquire useful information efficiently, and they integrate what they learn using technology with what they learn offline. They are familiar with the strengths and limitations of various technological tools and mediums and can select and use those best suited to their communication goals.

They come to understand other perspectives and cultures.

Students appreciate that the twenty-first-century classroom and workplace are settings in which people from often widely divergent cultures and who represent diverse experiences and perspectives must learn and work together. Students actively seek to understand other perspectives and cultures through reading and listening, and they are able to communicate effectively with people of varied backgrounds. They evaluate other points of view critically and constructively. Through reading great classic and contemporary works of literature representative of a variety of periods, cultures, and worldviews, students can vicariously inhabit worlds and have experiences much different than their own.

Overall Organization of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

The Standards comprise three main sections: a comprehensive K–5 section and two content area–specific sections for grades 6–12, one for ELA and one for history/social studies, science, and technical subjects.

Each section is divided into strands. K–5 and 6–12 ELA have Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language strands; the 6–12 history/ social studies, science, and technical subjects section focuses on Reading and Writing. Each strand is headed by a strand-specific set of College- and Career-Readiness Anchor Standards that is identical across all grades and content areas.

Standards for each grade within K–8 and for grades 9–10 and 11–12 follow the CCR anchor standards in each strand. Each grade-specific standard (as these standards are collectively referred to) corresponds to the same-numbered CCR anchor standard. Put another way, each

CCR anchor standard has an accompanying grade-specific standard translating the broader CCR statement into grade-appropriate end-of-year expectations.

Individual CCR anchor standards can be identified by their strand, CCR status, and number (R.CCR.6, for example). Individual grade-specific standards can be identified by their strand, grade, and number (or number and letter, where applicable), so that RI.4.3, for example, stands for Reading, Informational Text, grade 4, standard 3 and W.5.1a stands for Writing, grade 5, standard 1a. Strand designations can be found in brackets alongside the full strand title.

Who is responsible for which portion of the Standards

A single K–5 section lists standards for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language across the curriculum. Grades 6–12 are covered in two content area–specific sections, the first for the English language arts teacher and the second for teachers of history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. Each section uses the same CCR anchor standards but also includes grade-specific standards tuned to the literacy requirements of the particular discipline(s).

Key Features of the Standards

Reading: Text complexity and the growth of comprehension

The Reading standards place equal emphasis on the sophistication of what students read and the skill with which they read. Standard 10 defines a grade-by grade “staircase” of increasing text complexity that rises from beginning reading to the college and career readiness level. Whatever they are reading, students must also show a steadily growing ability to discern more from and make fuller use of text, including making an increasing number of connections among ideas and between texts, considering a wider range of textual evidence, and becoming more sensitive to inconsistencies, ambiguities, and poor reasoning in texts.

Writing: Text types, responding to reading, and research

The Standards acknowledge the fact that whereas some writing skills, such as the ability to plan, revise, edit, and publish, are applicable to many types of writing, other skills are more properly defined in terms of specific writing types: arguments, informative/explanatory texts, and narratives. Standard 9 stresses the importance of the writing-reading connection by requiring students to draw upon and write about evidence from literary and informational texts. Because of the centrality of writing to most forms of inquiry, research standards are prominently included in this strand, though skills important to research are infused throughout the document.

Speaking and Listening: Flexible communication and collaboration

Including but not limited to skills necessary for formal presentations, the Speaking and Listening standards require students to develop a range of broadly useful oral communication and interpersonal skills. Students must learn to work together, express

and listen carefully to ideas, integrate information from oral, visual, quantitative, and media sources, evaluate what they hear, use media and visual displays strategically to help achieve communicative purposes, and adapt speech to context and task.

Language: Conventions, effective use, and vocabulary

The Language standards include the essential “rules” of standard written and spoken English, but they also approach language as a matter of craft and informed choice among alternatives. The vocabulary standards focus on understanding words and phrases, their relationships, and their nuances and on acquiring new vocabulary, particularly general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.

COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS

COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READINESS STANDARDS: READING

The K–12 standards define what students should understand and be able to do by the end of each grade. The standards correspond to the College- and Career-Readiness (CCR) anchor standards below by number. The CCR and grade-specific standards are necessary complements—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity—that together define the skills and understandings that all students must demonstrate.

| Key Ideas and Details | |
|--|---|
| CCR.R.1 | Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text. |
| CCR.R.2 | Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas. |
| CCR.R.3 | Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text. |
| Craft and Structure | |
| CCR.R.4 | Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone. |
| CCR.R.5 | Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole. |
| CCR.R.6 | Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text. |
| Integration of Knowledge and Ideas | |
| CCR.R.7 | Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words. |
| CCR.R.8 | Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence. |
| CCR.R.9 | Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take. |
| Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity | |
| CCR.R.10 | Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently. |

Note on range and content of student reading

To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students must read widely and deeply from among a broad range of high-quality, increasingly challenging literary and informational texts. Through extensive reading of stories, dramas, poems, and myths from diverse cultures and different time periods, students gain literary and cultural knowledge as well as familiarity with various text structures and elements. By reading texts in history/social studies, science, and other disciplines, students build a foundation of knowledge in these fields that will also give them the background to be better readers in all content areas. Students also acquire the habits of reading independently and closely, which are essential to their future success.

COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READINESS STANDARDS: WRITING

| Text Types and Purposes³ | |
|--|---|
| CCR.W.1 | Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence. |
| CCR.W.2 | Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content. |
| CCR.W.3 | Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences. |
| Production and Distribution of Writing | |
| CCR.W.4 | Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. |
| CCR.W.5 | Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. |
| CCR.W.6 | Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others. |
| Research to Build and Present Knowledge | |
| CCR.W.7 | Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation. |
| CCR.W.8 | Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism. |
| CCR.W.9 | Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. |
| Range of Writing | |
| CCR.W.10 | Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. |

Note on range and content of 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

³ These broad types of writing include many subgenres.

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.

COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READINESS STANDARDS: SPEAKING AND LISTENING

| Comprehension and Collaboration | |
|--|--|
| CCR.SL.1 | Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. |
| CCR.SL.2 | Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. |
| CCR.SL.3 | Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric. |
| Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas | |
| CCR.SL.4 | Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. |
| CCR.SL.5 | Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations. |
| CCR.SL.6 | Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. |

Note on range and content of student speaking and listening

To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students must have ample opportunities to take part in a variety of rich, structured conversations—as part of a whole class, in small groups, and with a partner. Being productive members of these conversations requires that students contribute accurate, relevant information; respond to and develop what others have said; make comparisons and contrasts; and analyze and synthesize a multitude of ideas in various domains.

New technologies have broadened and expanded the role that speaking and listening play in acquiring and sharing knowledge and have tightened their link to other forms of communication. Digital texts confront students with the potential for continually updated content and dynamically changing combinations of words, graphics, images, hyperlinks, and embedded video and audio.

COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READINESS STANDARDS: LANGUAGE

| Conventions of Standard English | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| CCR.L.1 | Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. |
| CCR.L.2 | Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. |
| Knowledge of Language | |
| CCR.L.3 | Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening. |
| Vocabulary Acquisition and Use | |
| CCR.L.4 | Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate. |
| CCR.L.5 | Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. |
| CCR.L.6 | Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression. |

Note on range and content of student language usage

To build a foundation for college and career readiness in language, students must gain control over many conventions of standard English grammar, usage, and mechanics as well as learn other ways to use language to convey meaning effectively. They must also be able to determine or clarify the meaning of grade-appropriate words encountered through listening, reading, and media use; come to appreciate that words have nonliteral meanings, shadings of meaning, and relationships to other words; and expand their vocabulary in the course of studying content. The inclusion of Language standards in their own strand should not be taken as an indication that skills related to conventions, effective language use, and vocabulary are unimportant to reading, writing, speaking, and listening; indeed, they are inseparable from such contexts.