
English Standards of Learning

for
Virginia
Public Schools



**Board of Education
Commonwealth of Virginia**

January 2017

English Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools

**Adopted in January 2017 by the
Board of Education**

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Introduction

The goals of the *English Standards of Learning* are to teach students to read, write, research, and communicate. Students should be prepared to participate in society as literate citizens, equipped with the ability to think analytically, solve problems, communicate effectively, and collaborate with diverse groups in their communities, workplace, and postsecondary education. As students progress through the school years, they become active and involved learners and develop a full command of the English language, evidenced by their use of Standard English and their rich speaking and writing vocabularies.

Students become competent readers of a variety of texts and are encouraged to acquire a lifelong love of reading. In kindergarten through third grade, the primary goal is to teach all students to read fluently and to comprehend a variety of fiction and nonfiction selections that relate to all areas of the curriculum. In fourth through twelfth grades, students continue to acquire and refine strategies for comprehending and analyzing selections that encompass all literary genres, exemplify universal themes, and relate to all content areas. Students in high school become familiar with a wide variety of authors, nonfiction and fiction texts, and classic literary works.

Proficient use of the English language enables students to explore and articulate the complex issues and ideas encountered in public and personal life. By engaging in critical and creative thinking, students are able to solve problems and use language to further educational, career, and personal endeavors.

Organization of the English Standards of Learning

Standards for kindergarten through twelfth grade are organized in four related strands: Communication and Multimodal Literacies, Reading, Writing, and Research. Each grade level is preceded by an overview that describes the major concepts and skills that each student will be expected to understand and demonstrate. The vertically aligned standards reflect a comprehensive instructional program and document a progression of expected achievement in the development of skills.

In the Communication Strand, students learn to participate in classroom discussion and collaborate with diverse groups to achieve a common goal. In grades three through twelve, students learn to prepare, deliver, and critique oral presentations. In grades four through twelve the Communication strand includes a focus on experiencing and creating multimodal presentations. Students also analyze, develop and produce media messages. Students' home language and cultural literacies are the starting point for all language learning; competency in the use of Standard English is a goal for all students. Therefore, daily speaking opportunities, both formal and informal, are a part of every English curriculum.

Reading begins with an awareness of the concepts of print and the sounds and structure of oral and written language. Students in the primary grades acquire a strong foundation in phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension strategies. Students continue to study the structure of words and language and refine comprehension strategies throughout all grades. In middle school and high school, students further analyze what they read and make comparisons across a wide variety of fiction, nonfiction, and cross-curricular texts. Students encounter new information and deepen their learning through reading of nonfiction texts. Students' appreciation for literary texts is enhanced by interaction with a broad array of classic and contemporary literature, which engages the reading skills of students and invites them to develop an appreciation for the power and beauty of the written word.

From kindergarten through twelfth grade, students become increasingly aware of the structure of language and the writing process. Students have the opportunity to explore writing in multiple forms, including narrative, expository, reflective, and persuasive/argumentative. Proficiency in written communication is achieved through frequent opportunities to apply skills for a variety of purposes and audiences. Therefore, daily writing experiences are essential for all students.

Research skills are also developed across grade levels. In this strand, students first learn to create and investigate research questions and access information. Later, students evaluate the validity of sources, appropriately credit sources, and synthesize information into a research-based product. Research skills are the foundation of college and career readiness; by encouraging autonomous problem solving and the ability to critically evaluate and synthesize information, students are prepared to adapt to real world situations.

Although the strands are developed separately, they are expected to be seamlessly integrated in the classroom. Standards that incorporate rigor in English help students develop the expected performance competencies.

Proficiency in reading, writing, communication, and research skills allows students to learn and use knowledge to make meaningful connections between their lives and academic disciplines. Through the rigorous application of the *English Standards of Learning*, students become critical thinkers, effective contributors, and global citizens.

Kindergarten

The kindergarten student will be immersed in a text rich environment to develop communication skills, phonological awareness, print awareness, vocabulary, comprehension, and an appreciation for reading. The exposure to fiction and nonfiction texts will enable students to develop an awareness of reading materials as sources of information and enjoyment. The kindergarten student will expand both listening and speaking vocabularies. The student will recognize and print letters of the alphabet, use basic phonetic principles, identify story elements, and communicate ideas through pictures and writing. The student will be introduced to the research process by asking questions, which will be used to solve problems. Research in kindergarten prepares students for more formalized research in subsequent grades.

Communication and Multimodal Literacies

K.1 The student will build oral communication skills.

- a) Listen actively and speak using agreed-upon rules for discussion.
- b) Express ideas in complete sentences and express needs through direct requests.
- c) Initiate conversations.
- d) Follow implicit rules for conversation, including taking turns and staying on topic.
- e) Listen and speak in informal conversations with peers and adults.
- f) Discuss various texts and topics collaboratively and with partners.
- g) Use voice level, phrasing, and intonation appropriate for various language situations.
- h) Follow one- and two-step directions.
- i) Ask how and why questions to seek help, get information, or clarify information.
- j) Work respectfully with others.

K.2 The student will demonstrate growth in oral, early literacy skills.

- a) Listen and respond to a variety of text and media.
- b) Participate in a variety of oral language activities including choral and echo speaking and recitation.
- c) Tell stories orally.
- d) Participate in creative dramatics.

Reading

K.3 The student will orally identify, segment, and blend various phonemes to develop phonological and phonemic awareness.

- a) Begin to discriminate between spoken sentences, words, and syllables.
- b) Identify and produce words that rhyme.
- c) Blend and segment multisyllabic words at the syllable level.
- d) Blend and segment one-syllable words into phonemes including onset and rime.
- e) Identify words according to shared beginning and/or ending sounds.
- f) Blend sounds to make one-syllable words.
- g) Segment one-syllable words into individual phonemes.

K.4 The student will understand how print is organized and read.

- a) Hold print materials in the correct position.
- b) Identify the front cover, back cover, and title page of a book.
- c) Distinguish between print and pictures.
- d) Follow words from left to right and from top to bottom on a printed page.
- e) Match voice with print.

K.5 The student will demonstrate an understanding that print conveys meaning.

- a) Identify common signs and logos.
- b) Explain that printed materials provide information.
- c) Read and explain own writing and drawings.
- d) Read his/her name and commonly used high-frequency words.

K.6 The student will develop an understanding of basic phonetic principles.

- a) Identify and name the capital and lowercase letters of the alphabet.
- b) Match consonant, short vowel, and initial consonant digraph sounds to appropriate letters.
- c) Demonstrate a speech-to-print match through accurate finger-point reading in familiar text that includes words with more than one syllable.
- d) Identify initial consonant sounds in one-syllable words.
- e) Identify final consonant sounds in one-syllable words.

K.7 The student will expand vocabulary and use of word meanings.

- a) Discuss meanings of words.
- b) Increase vocabulary by listening to a variety of texts read aloud.
- c) Use vocabulary from other content areas.
- d) Ask about words not understood.
- e) Use number words.
- f) Use nouns to identify and name people, places, and things.
- g) Use adjectives to describe location, size, color, and shape.
- h) Use verbs to identify actions.

K.8 The student will demonstrate comprehension of fictional texts.

- a) Identify the role of an author and an illustrator.
- b) Relate previous experiences to what is read.
- c) Use pictures to make predictions.
- d) Ask and answer questions about what is read.
- e) Use story elements of characters, settings, and events to retell stories sequentially using beginning, middle, and end.

K.9 The student will demonstrate comprehension of nonfiction texts.

- a) Use pictures to identify topic and make predictions.
- b) Identify text features specific to the topic, such as titles, headings, and pictures.
- c) Ask and answer questions about what is read.

Writing

K.10 The student will print in manuscript.

- a) Print capital and lowercase letters of the alphabet independently.
- b) Print his/her first and last names.

K.11 The student will write in a variety of forms to include narrative and descriptive.

- a) Differentiate pictures from writing.
- b) Use prewriting activities to generate ideas including drawing pictures.
- c) Use letters to phonetically spell words that describe pictures or experiences.
- d) Write left to right and top to bottom.
- e) Compose simple sentences.
- f) Begin each sentence with a capital letter and use ending punctuation.
- g) Share writing with others.

Research

K.12 The student will conduct research to answer questions or solve problems using available resources.

- a) Generate topics of interest.
- b) Generate questions to gather information.
- c) Identify pictures, texts, or people as sources of information.
- d) Find information from provided sources.