

---

# 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**

Billy K. Cannaday, Jr., President

Joan E. Wodiska, Vice President

Diane T. Atkinson

Oktay Baysal

James H. Dillard

Daniel A. Gecker

Elizabeth Vickery Lodal

Sal Romero, Jr.

**Superintendent of Public  
Instruction**

Steven R. Staples

Commonwealth of Virginia

Board of Education

Post Office Box 2120

Richmond, VA 23218-2120

© January 2017

Copyright © 2017

by the

[Virginia Department of Education](#)

P. O. Box 2120

Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120

All rights reserved. Reproduction of these materials for instructional purposes in public school classrooms in Virginia is permitted.

**Superintendent of Public Instruction**

Steven R. Staples

**Chief Academic Officer/Assistant Superintendent for Instruction**

Steven M. Constantino

**Office of Humanities and Early Childhood**

Christine A. Harris, Director

Tracy Fair Robertson, English Coordinator

Crystal Page Midlik, Elementary English/Reading Specialist

Denise Bunker Fehrenbach, English Specialist

Jill Holt Noguerras, English/History Specialist

**Statement of Non-Discrimination**

The Virginia Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, political affiliation, or against otherwise qualified persons with disabilities. The policy permits appropriate employment preferences for veterans and specifically prohibits discrimination against veterans.

## **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.

# Grade One

Developing literacy skills is a priority in the first grade. The student will be immersed in a text -rich environment to develop communication skills, phonological awareness, phonetic skills, vocabulary, comprehension, and use reading materials as sources of information and enjoyment. The student will use listening and speaking skills to participate in classroom discussions. The student will use a variety of strategies to read new words and will read familiar selections with fluency, accuracy, and expression. The student will continue to develop an understanding of fiction and nonfiction texts. The student will increase vocabulary and comprehension strategies by cross-content reading with emphasis on materials in mathematics, science, and history and social science. The student will write in a variety of forms to communicate ideas. The student will continue to research to answer questions and solve problems by using available resources.

## Communication and Multimodal Literacies

1.1 The student will develop oral communication skills.

- a) Listen actively and speak using agreed-upon rules for discussion.
- b) Initiate conversation with peers and adults.
- c) Adapt or change oral language to fit the situation.
- d) Use appropriate voice level, phrasing, and intonation.
- e) Participate in collaborative and partner discussions about various texts and topics.
- f) Follow rules for conversation using appropriate voice level in small-group settings.
- g) Ask and respond to questions to seek help, get information, or clarify information.
- h) Restate and follow simple two-step oral directions.
- i) Give simple two-step oral directions.
- j) Express ideas orally in complete sentences.
- k) Work respectfully with others.
- l) Increase listening and speaking vocabularies.

1.2 The student will demonstrate growth in oral early literacy skills.

- a) Listen and respond to a variety of print and media materials.
- b) Tell and retell stories and events in sequential order.
- c) Participate in a variety of oral language activities, including choral speaking and recitation.
- d) Participate in creative dramatics.

## Reading

1.3 The student will orally identify, produce, and manipulate various phonemes within words to develop phonological and phonemic awareness.

- a) Create rhyming words.
- b) Count phonemes (sounds) in one-syllable words.
- c) Blend sounds to make one-syllable words.
- d) Segment one-syllable words into individual phonemes.
- e) Add or delete phonemes to make new words.
- f) Blend and segment multisyllabic words at the syllable level.

- 1.4 The student will apply knowledge of how print is organized and read.
- Read from left to right and from top to bottom.
  - Match spoken words with print.
  - Identify letters, words, sentences, and ending punctuation.
- 1.5 The student will apply phonetic principles to read and spell.
- Use initial and final consonants to decode and spell one- syllable words.
  - Use two-letter consonant blends to decode and spell one-syllable words.
  - Use consonant digraphs to decode and spell one-syllable words.
  - Use short vowel sounds to decode and spell one-syllable words.
  - Blend initial, medial, and final sounds to recognize and read words.
  - Use word patterns to decode unfamiliar words.
  - Read and spell simple two-syllable compound words.
  - Read and spell commonly used sight words.
- 1.6 The student will use semantic clues and syntax for support when reading.
- Use words, phrases, and sentences.
  - Use titles and pictures.
  - Use information in the story to read words.
  - Use knowledge of sentence structure.
  - Reread and self-correct.
- 1.7 The student will expand vocabulary and use of word meanings.
- Discuss meanings of words in context.
  - Develop vocabulary by listening to and reading a variety of texts.
  - Ask for the meaning of unknown words and make connections to familiar words.
  - Use text clues such as words or pictures to discern meanings of unknown words.
  - Use vocabulary from other content areas.
  - Use singular and plural nouns.
  - Use adjectives to describe nouns.
  - Use verbs to identify actions.
- 1.8 The student will use simple reference materials.
- Use knowledge of alphabetical order by first letter.
  - Use a picture dictionary to find meanings of unfamiliar words.
- 1.9 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of a variety of fictional texts.
- Preview the selection.
  - Set a purpose for reading.
  - Relate previous experiences to what is read.
  - Make and confirm predictions.
  - Ask and answer who, what, when, where, why, and how questions about what is read.
  - Identify characters, setting, and important events.
  - Retell stories and events, using beginning, middle, and end in a sequential order.
  - Identify theme.
  - Read and reread familiar stories and poems with fluency, accuracy, and meaningful expression.

- 1.10 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of a variety of nonfiction texts.
- a) Preview the selection.
  - b) Use prior and background knowledge as context for new learning.
  - c) Set a purpose for reading.
  - d) Identify text features such as pictures, headings, charts, and captions.
  - e) Make and confirm predictions.
  - f) Ask and answer who, what, where, when, why, and how questions about what is read.
  - g) Identify the main idea.
  - h) Read and reread familiar texts with fluency, accuracy, and meaningful expression.

## **Writing**

- 1.11 The student will print legibly in manuscript.
- a) Form letters accurately.
  - b) Space words within sentences.
- 1.12 The student will write in a variety of forms to include narrative, descriptive, and opinion.
- a) Identify audience and purpose.
  - b) Use prewriting activities to generate ideas.
  - c) Focus on one topic.
  - d) Organize writing to suit purpose.
  - e) Revise by adding descriptive words when writing about people, place, things, and events.
  - f) Write to express an opinion and give a reason.
  - g) Use letters to phonetically spell words.
  - h) Share writing with others.
- 1.13 The student will edit writing for capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.
- a) Use complete sentences.
  - b) Begin each sentence with a capital letter and use ending punctuation.
  - c) Use correct spelling for commonly used sight words and phonetically regular words.

## **Research**

- 1.14 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.
  - e) Record information.