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# English Standards of Learning

## for Virginia Public Schools



**Board of Education  
Commonwealth of Virginia**

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# **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.

# Grade Three

Developing literacy skills continues to be a priority in the third grade. Students will expand their vocabularies while reading by using word analysis skills. Emphasis is on reading texts with fluency, accuracy, and meaningful expression. The student will read a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts, which relate to all content areas and personal interests. The student will use effective communication skills to participate in collaborative activities and will give oral presentations. Students will continue to use comprehension strategies to compare and contrast story elements and differentiate between fiction and nonfiction. The student will use the writing process to plan, draft, revise, and edit writing in a variety of forms. The student also will write legibly in cursive. Students will continue to identify and use appropriate resources to complete a research product. Students will understand plagiarism and will report information using their own words.

## Communication and Multimodal Literacies

- 3.1 The student will use effective communication skills in a variety of settings.
  - a) Use active listening strategies including but not limited to making eye contact, facing the speaker, asking questions, and summarizing.
  - b) Present accurate directions to individuals and small groups.
  - c) Ask and respond to questions from teachers and other group members.
  - d) Orally summarize information expressing ideas clearly.
  - e) Use language appropriate for context and audience.
  - f) Increase listening and speaking vocabularies.
  - g) Participate in collaborative discussions.
  - h) Work respectfully with others in pairs, diverse groups, and whole class settings.
- 3.2 The student will give oral presentations.
  - a) Speak clearly using appropriate volume.
  - b) Speak at an understandable rate.
  - c) Make eye contact with the audience.
  - d) Organize ideas sequentially or around major points of information using appropriate facts and relevant details.
  - e) Use contextually appropriate language and specific vocabulary to communicate ideas.
  - f) Use multimodal tools to create presentations and enhance communication.

## Reading

- 3.3 The student will apply word-analysis skills when reading.
  - a) Use knowledge of regular and irregular vowel patterns.
  - b) Decode regular multisyllabic words.
- 3.4 The student will expand vocabulary when reading.
  - a) Use knowledge of homophones.
  - b) Use knowledge of roots, affixes, synonyms, and antonyms to determine the meaning of new words.
  - c) Apply meaning clues, language structure, and phonetic strategies to determine the meaning of new words.
  - d) Use context to clarify meaning of unfamiliar words.
  - e) Discuss meanings of words and develop vocabulary by listening to and reading a variety of texts.
  - f) Use vocabulary from other content areas.
  - g) Use word-reference resources including the glossary, dictionary, and thesaurus.

3.5 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of fictional texts, literary nonfiction, and poetry.

- a) Set a purpose for reading.
- b) Make connections between reading selections.
- c) Make, confirm, and revise predictions.
- d) Compare and contrast settings, characters, and plot events.
- e) Summarize plot events.
- f) Identify the narrator of a story.
- g) Ask and answer questions about what is read.
- h) Draw conclusions using the text for support.
- i) Identify the conflict and resolution.
- j) Identify the theme.
- k) Use reading strategies to monitor comprehension throughout the reading process.
- l) Differentiate between fiction and nonfiction.
- m) Read with fluency, accuracy, and meaningful expression.

3.6 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of nonfiction texts.

- a) Identify the author's purpose.
- b) Use prior and background knowledge as context for new learning.
- c) Preview and use text features including table of contents, headings, pictures, captions, maps, indices, and charts.
- d) Ask and answer questions about what is read using the text for support.
- e) Draw conclusions using the text for support.
- f) Summarize information found in nonfiction texts.
- g) Identify the main idea.
- h) Identify supporting details.
- i) Use reading strategies to monitor comprehension throughout the reading process.
- j) Read with fluency, accuracy, and meaningful expression.

## **Writing**

3.7 The student will write legibly in cursive.

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

3.8 The student will write in a variety of forms to include narrative, descriptive, opinion, and expository.

- a) Engage in writing as a process.
- b) Identify audience and purpose.
- c) Use a variety of prewriting strategies.
- d) Use organizational strategies to structure writing according to type.
- e) Write a clear topic sentence focusing on main idea.
- f) Elaborate writing by including supporting details.
- g) Use transition words to vary sentence structure.
- h) Express an opinion about a topic and provide fact-based reasons for support.
- i) Write a well-developed paragraph focusing on the main idea.
- j) Revise writing for clarity of content using specific vocabulary and information.

3.9 The student will edit writing for capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and Standard English.

- a) Use complete sentences.
- b) Use the word I in compound subjects.
- c) Use past and present verb tense.
- d) Use adjectives correctly.
- e) Use singular possessives.
- f) Use commas in a simple series.
- g) Use simple abbreviations.
- h) Use apostrophes in contractions with pronouns and in possessives.
- i) Use the articles a, an, and the correctly.
- j) Use correct spelling including irregular plurals.
- k) Indicate paragraphing by indenting or skipping a line.

## **Research**

3.10 The student will demonstrate comprehension of information resources to research a topic and complete a research product.

- a) Construct questions about the topic.
- b) Access appropriate resources.
- c) Collect and organize information about the topic.
- d) Evaluate the relevance of the information.
- e) Avoid plagiarism and use own words.
- f) Demonstrate ethical use of the Internet.