
English Standards of Learning

for Virginia Public Schools



**Board of Education
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English Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools

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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 Five

In fifth grade, there is an emphasis on reading comprehension by comparing fiction and nonfiction texts. In fiction texts, students will explain plot development and conflict resolution and differentiate between first and third person points of view. Fifth grade students will have an increased emphasis on nonfiction reading by identifying authors' organizational patterns, and using the text to support opinions and conclusions. The student will continue to expand vocabulary using knowledge of roots, affixes, synonyms, antonyms, and homophones. Students will use the writing process to write in a variety of forms including narrative, descriptive, expository, and persuasive. Students will demonstrate the ability to collaborate with diverse teams working respectfully with others, using active listening skills, and showing value for individual contributions. Students will deliver multimodal presentations and compare/contrast a variety of techniques used in media messages. The student will demonstrate comprehension of the research process by evaluating the relevance, reliability, and credibility of information collected to create a research product. The student will define the meaning and consequences of plagiarism.

Communication and Multimodal Literacies

- 5.1 The student will use effective oral communication skills in a variety of settings.
 - a) Listen actively and speak using appropriate discussion rules with awareness of verbal and nonverbal cues.
 - b) Participate in and contribute to discussions across content areas.
 - c) Summarize information gathered in group activities.
 - d) Orally express ideas clearly in pairs, diverse groups, and whole class settings.
 - e) Use evidence to support opinions and conclusions.
 - f) Summarize the main points a speaker makes, and connect comments to the remarks of others.
 - g) Demonstrate the ability to collaborate with diverse teams, while sharing responsibility for the work.
 - h) Work respectfully with others and show value for individual contributions.
- 5.2 The student will create multimodal presentations that effectively communicate ideas.
 - a) Effectively use verbal and nonverbal communication skills to plan and deliver collaborative and individual, formal and informal interactive presentations.
 - b) Maintain eye contact with listeners.
 - c) Organize content sequentially around major ideas.
 - d) Use language and style appropriate to the audience, topic, and purpose.
 - e) Ask and answer questions to gather or clarify information presented orally.
- 5.3 The student will learn how media messages are constructed and for what purposes.
 - a) Identify the purpose and audience of auditory, visual, and written media messages.
 - b) Identify the characteristics and effectiveness of a variety of media messages.
 - c) Compare and contrast techniques used in a variety of media messages.

Reading

5.4 The student will expand vocabulary when reading.

- a) Use context to clarify meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases.
- b) Use context and sentence structure to determine meanings and differentiate among multiple meanings of words.
- c) Use knowledge of roots, affixes, synonyms, antonyms, and homophones to determine the meaning of new words.
- d) Identify an author's use of figurative language.
- e) Use word-reference materials.
- f) Develop and use general and specialized content area vocabulary through speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

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

- a) Summarize plot events using details from text.
- b) Discuss the impact of setting on plot development.
- c) Describe character development.
- d) Identify theme(s).
- e) Explain the resolution of conflict(s).
- f) Identify genres.
- g) Differentiate between first and third person point-of-view.
- h) Differentiate between free verse and rhymed poetry.
- i) Explain how an author's choice of vocabulary contributes to the author's style.
- j) Draw conclusions and make inferences with support from the text.
- k) Identify cause and effect relationships.
- l) Compare/contrast details in literary and informational nonfiction texts.
- m) Use reading strategies throughout the reading process to monitor comprehension.

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

- a) Use text features such as type, headings, and graphics, to predict and categorize information.
- b) Skim materials to develop a general overview of content and to locate specific information.
- c) Identify the main idea.
- d) Summarize supporting details.
- e) Identify organizational pattern(s).
- f) Identify transitional words and phrases that signal an author's organizational pattern.
- g) Locate information from the text to support opinions, inferences, and conclusions.
- h) Identify cause and effect relationships.
- i) Differentiate between fact and opinion.
- j) Compare and contrast details and ideas within and between texts.
- k) Use reading strategies throughout the reading process to monitor comprehension.

Writing

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

- a) Engage in writing as a process.
- b) Select audience and purpose.
- c) Use a variety of prewriting strategies.
- d) Introduce and develop a topic, incorporating evidence and supporting details.
- e) Organize information to convey a central idea.
- f) Recognize different forms of writing have different patterns of organization including story structure for narrative writing.
- g) Write a clear topic sentence focusing on the main idea.
- h) Clearly state a position including supporting reasons and evidence to persuade the intended audience.
- i) Write multiparagraph compositions.
- j) Use precise and descriptive vocabulary to create tone and voice.
- k) Vary sentence structure by using transition words and prepositional phrases.
- l) Revise writing for clarity of content using specific vocabulary and information.

5.8 The student will self- and peer-edit writing for capitalization, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, paragraphing, and Standard English.

- a) Use plural possessives.
- b) Use adjective and adverb comparisons.
- c) Use interjections.
- d) Use prepositional phrases.
- e) Use quotation marks with dialogue.
- f) Use commas to indicate interrupters, items in a series, and to indicate direct address.
- g) Use a hyphen to divide words at the end of a line.
- h) Edit for fragments and run-on sentences.
- i) Eliminate double negatives.
- j) Use correct spelling of commonly used words.
- k) Use coordinating conjunctions.

Research

5.9 The student will find, evaluate, and select appropriate resources to create a research product.

- a) Construct questions about a topic.
- b) Collect and organize information from multiple resources.
- c) Evaluate the relevance, reliability, and credibility of information.
- d) Give credit to sources used in research.
- e) Avoid plagiarism and use own words.
- f) Demonstrate ethical use of the Internet.