



Wall Township Public Schools

Board Approval Date: November 18, 2025

Course Title: Media and Message 1

Course Description: This course introduces students to the foundations of effective communication, with a focus on public speaking, persuasive techniques, and debate skills. Students will explore how messages are shaped and delivered through various media, developing confidence in presenting ideas clearly and convincingly.



New Jersey Student Learning Standards

Vision for English Language Arts Education in New Jersey

A New Jersey education in English Language Arts builds readers, writers, and communicators prepared to meet the demands of college and career and to engage as productive American citizens with global responsibilities. Throughout their kindergarten through grade 12 experience, students will:

- Develop the necessary skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening that are the foundations for creative and purposeful expression in language.
- Read rich, challenging texts that build their knowledge of the world, grow their confidence and identities as readers, and develop critical thinking skills and vocabulary necessary for long-term success.
- Engage in regular, meaningful writing, authentic tasks, exploring valued topics, writing for impact and expression, and sharing their work with others (including authentic audiences).
- Leverage complex texts and digital media to develop comprehension, active listening, and discussion skills.
- Ground daily writing and discussion in evidence, fostering an ability to read critically, build arguments, cite evidence, and communicate ideas to contribute meaningfully as productive citizens.
- Evaluate the reliability, credibility, and perspective of authors and speakers across all forms of media.
- Express ideas and knowledge through a variety of modalities and media, and serve as effective communicators who purposefully read, write, and speak across multiple disciplines.

- Learn to persist in reading complex texts, establishing lifelong habits to read voluntarily for pleasure, for further education, for information on public policy, and for advancement in the workplace.

Practices of English Language Arts

The English Language Arts Practices offer the capacities held by students who have progressed through a kindergarten through grade 12 English Language Arts program in New Jersey. These practices describe students who are proficient in literacy, possessing the ability to read deeply, create their own works, and listen and speak to a broad range of ideas. As New Jersey students advance through the grades and demonstrate proficiency in the standards in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language, they are able to exhibit with increasing fullness and regularity the following capacities of the literate individual.

Student capacities include:

- Developing Responsibility for Learning: Cultivating independence, self-reflection, and responsibility for one's own learning.
- Adapting Communication: Adapting communication in response to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.
- Valuing Evidence in Argumentation: Constructing viable claims and evaluating, defending, challenging, and qualifying the arguments of others.
- Building Knowledge: Building strong content knowledge and connecting ideas across disciplines using a variety of text resources and media.
- Leveraging Technology: Employing technology and digital media thoughtfully, strategically, and capably to enhance reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language use.
- Understanding Self and Others: Using literacy as a vehicle to affirm all the aspects of one's own identity, as well as understand, connect to, and respect other perspectives and cultures.

Course Sequence & Pacing	
Unit Title	Estimated Number of Instructional Periods
UNIT 1: Foundations of Communication and Public Speaking	25
UNIT 2: Persuasion and Media Techniques	25
UNIT 3: Debate and Structured Argument	20

Unit 1

Desired Results
Unit 1 Title: Foundations of Communication and Public Speaking
Unit Summary: In this unit, students will explore the fundamentals of communication, including both verbal and nonverbal strategies. They will examine the characteristics of effective public speaking and practice applying these elements to craft and present informative speeches. Emphasis will be placed on audience awareness, clear organization, voice control, and body language.
Learning Standards
NJSLS: L.SS.6.1. Demonstrate command of the system and structure of the English language when writing or speaking.

- A. Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).
- B. Use intensive pronouns (e.g., myself, ourselves).
- C. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.
- D. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).
- E. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive and parenthetical elements.
- F. Recognize spelling conventions.

L.KL.6.2. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

- A. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.
- B. Gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
- C. Vary sentence patterns for meaning (syntax), reader/listener interest, and style/voice.
- D. Maintain consistency in style and tone.

L.VL.6.3. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, including technical meanings, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

- A. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- B. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.
- C. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., audience, auditory, audible).
- D. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.
- E. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

L.VI.6.4. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

- A. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., personification) in context.
- B. Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words.
- C. Analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.
- D. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., stingy, scrimping, economical, unwasteful, thrifty).

W.RW.6.7. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

SL.PE.6.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

- A. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
- B. Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
- C. Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.
- D. Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.

SL.PI.6.4. Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate speaking behaviors (e.g., eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation).

SL.AS.6.6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Interdisciplinary Connections	
Career Readiness, Life Literacies, & Key Skills (CLKS): 9.1.8.PB.5: Identify factors that affect one's goals, including peers, culture, location, and past experiences. 9.1.8.CR.2: Compare various ways to give back through strengths, passions, goals, and other personal factors.	
Computer Science & Design Thinking (CS & DT): 8.1.8.DA.3: Identify the appropriate tool to access data based on its file format.	
Interdisciplinary Connections: 6.1.8.EconNE.4.b: Analyze how technological innovations affected the status and social class of different groups of people and explain the outcomes that resulted.	

Learning Targets	
Unit Essential Questions: - What makes a speaker effective? - How do communication techniques influence how a message is received? - Why is it important to adapt our message for different audiences?	Unit Enduring Understandings: - Effective communication requires clarity, structure, and awareness of the audience. - Public speaking is a learnable skill that involves preparation and practice. - Nonverbal cues like body language and tone are crucial in delivering a message.
Vocabulary: Communication, audience, expression, fluency, eye contact, volume, posture, projection, clarity, speaker, confidence, active listening	
Students will be able to: - Identify the components of effective public speaking. - Practice speaking clearly, confidently, and with appropriate body language.	

- Write and deliver a short informative speech.
- Evaluate peer presentations and provide constructive feedback.

Learning Activities:

- Voice & Delivery Warm-Ups
- Nonverbal Communication Charades
- Speaker Observation & Critique
- Write an Informative Mini-Speech
- Speech Practice in Small Groups
- Active Listening Pair-Share
- Adapt Your Message Challenge
- Peer Evaluation Using Rubrics
- Reflection Journal Entries
- Speech Topics with Cultural Connections

Assessment Evidence

Formative Assessments:

- Recorded speech reflections
- Informal Speaking Exercises

Summative Assessments:

- Rubric-assessed Informative Speech Presentation
- Peer evaluations

Core Instructional & Supplemental Materials

TED-Ed Student Talks

Flipgrid or Padlet (student speech uploads)
Anchor Charts (Body Language, Voice Control, Speech Structure)

Accommodations and Modifications: Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners, Students at Risk of Failure, Students with 504s, Gifted & Talented Students

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Students with Disabilities:

Students receiving Special Education programming have specific goals and objectives, as well as accommodations and modifications outlined within their Individualized Education Plans (IEP) due to an identified disability and/or diagnosis. In addition to exposure to the general education curriculum, the instruction is differentiated based upon the student's needs. The IEP acts as a supplemental curriculum guide inclusive of instructional strategies that support each learner.

- Small group/One to one - Additional time - Review of directions - Student restates information - Space for movement or breaks - Extra visual and verbal cues and prompts - Preferential seating - Follow a routine/schedule - Rest breaks - Verbal and visual cues regarding directions and staying on task - Checklists - Immediate feedback

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support English Language Learners

English language learner (ELL) is a national-origin-minority student who is limited-English-proficient. This term is often preferred over limited-English-proficient (LEP) as it highlights accomplishments rather than deficits.

- Pre-teaching of vocabulary and concepts - Personal Glossary - Extended Time - Simplified/Verbal Instructions - Frequent Breaks - Visual learning, including graphic organizers - Use of cognates to increase comprehension - Teacher modeling - Pairing students with beginning English language skills with students who have more advanced English language skills - Scaffolding - Word walls - Think-pair-share - Cooperative learning groups

Students at Risk of Failure

- Home/School Connection - Alternative Assessments - Learning Contracts - Homogenous Grouping - Supplemental Instruction - Think-Pair-Share by Readiness - Homework Options - Differentiated Online Practice - Leveled Rubrics - Tiered Level of Supports - Tiered Activities - Small Group Instruction - Work Alone Choice - Group Work Choice

Students with 504 Plans

Teachers are responsible for implementing designated services and strategies identified on a student's 504 Plan. 504 plans are formal plans that schools develop to give kids the support they need and covers any condition that limits daily activities in a major way. Students' accommodations are outlined in their individual 504 plan.

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Gifted & Talented Students

It is critical that all teachers are able to recognize a high-ability student who may need more depth and complexity in instruction.

-Homogenous Grouping - Small Group In-Depth Instruction - Differentiated Online Practice - Alternative Assessments - Pre-Assess to provide Differentiated Instruction to Accelerate Learning

Unit 2

Desired Results

Unit 2 Title: Persuasion and Media Techniques

Unit Summary: This unit introduces students to the principles of persuasion and rhetorical strategy through the analysis and creation of media messages. Students will explore the influence of advertising and digital media, learning to identify how authors and creators shape content to sway opinions. The unit culminates in students producing their own persuasive content using digital tools.

Learning Standards

NJSLS:

L.KL.6.2. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

- A. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.
- B. Gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
- C. Vary sentence patterns for meaning (syntax), reader/listener interest, and style/voice.
- D. Maintain consistency in style and tone. speaker when appropriate).

RI.PP.6.5. Identify the author's purpose, perspective or potential bias in a text and explain the impact on the reader's

interpretation.

W.AW.6.1. Write arguments on discipline-specific content (e.g., social studies, science, math, technical subjects, English/Language Arts) to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- A. Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- B. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence, that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
- C. Use words, phrases, and clauses to link and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons and evidence.
- D. Establish and maintain a formal/academic style, approach, and form.
- E. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.

SL.ES.6.3. Deconstruct a speaker's argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.

Interdisciplinary Connections

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, & Key Skills (CLKS):

9.4.8.GCA.1: Model how to navigate cultural differences with sensitivity and respect.

9.4.8.GCA.2: Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal.

Computer Science & Design Thinking (CS & DT):

8.1.8.AP.6: Refine a solution that meets users' needs by incorporating feedback from team members and users.

Interdisciplinary Connections:

6.1.8.HistoryCC.4.d: Analyze the push-pull factors that led to increase in immigration and explain why ethnic and cultural conflicts resulted.

Learning Targets

Unit Essential Questions:

Unit Enduring Understandings:

• How do media creators use language and visuals to persuade an audience? • In what ways does the media shape our thoughts, feelings, and actions? • What techniques make a message convincing?	• Persuasive messages are crafted using specific rhetorical techniques. • The media can influence beliefs and decisions, often without us realizing it. • Understanding how persuasion works empowers us to think critically and create responsibly.
Vocabulary: Persuasion, argument, ethos, pathos, logos, bias, audience, message, tone, credibility, purpose, call to action	
Students will be able to: • Identify persuasive techniques used in various forms of media. • Analyze how the media influences opinion and behavior. • Write and deliver a persuasive speech or commercial. • Compare messages across multiple formats and evaluate their effectiveness.	
Learning Activities: • Media Message Breakdown • Persuasion Scavenger Hunt • Bias in Media Mini-Lesson • Create a Persuasive Commercial • Write a Persuasive Speech or Editorial • Debate Day • Visual Rhetoric Gallery Walk • Propaganda Through History • Digital Credibility Check • Media Remix Challenge	

Assessment Evidence

Formative Assessments:

- Persuasive writing journal entries
- Multimedia Advertisement Analysis

Summative Assessments:

- Rubric-assessed Persuasive Speech or Media Project

Core Instructional & Supplemental Materials

iMovie or Canva (for creating media messages)

Sample commercials and public service announcements

Newsela or CommonLit persuasive articles

Accommodations and Modifications: Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners, Students at Risk of Failure, Students with 504s, Gifted & Talented Students

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Students with Disabilities:

Students receiving Special Education programming have specific goals and objectives, as well as accommodations and modifications outlined within their Individualized Education Plans (IEP) due to an identified disability and/or diagnosis. In addition to exposure to the general education curriculum, the instruction is differentiated based upon the student's needs. The IEP acts as a supplemental curriculum guide inclusive of instructional strategies that support each learner.

- Small group/One to one - Additional time - Review of directions - Student restates information - Space for movement or breaks
- Extra visual and verbal cues and prompts - Preferential seating - Follow a routine/schedule - Rest breaks - Verbal and visual cues regarding directions and staying on task - Checklists - Immediate feedback

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support English Language Learners

English language learner (ELL) is a national-origin-minority student who is limited-English-proficient. This term is often preferred over limited-English-proficient (LEP) as it highlights accomplishments rather than deficits.

- Pre-teaching of vocabulary and concepts - Personal Glossary - Extended Time - Simplified/Verbal Instructions - Frequent Breaks - Visual learning, including graphic organizers - Use of cognates to increase comprehension - Teacher modeling - Pairing students with beginning English language skills with students who have more advanced English language skills - Scaffolding - Word walls - Think-pair-share - Cooperative learning groups

Students at Risk of Failure

- Home/School Connection - Alternative Assessments - Learning Contracts - Homogenous Grouping - Supplemental Instruction - Think-Pair-Share by Readiness - Homework Options - Differentiated Online Practice - Leveled Rubrics - Tiered Level of Supports - Tiered Activities - Small Group Instruction - Work Alone Choice - Group Work Choice

Students with 504 Plans

Teachers are responsible for implementing designated services and strategies identified on a student's 504 Plan.

504 plans are formal plans that schools develop to give kids the support they need and covers any condition that limits daily activities in a major way. Students' accommodations are outlined in their individual 504 plan.

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Gifted & Talented Students

It is critical that all teachers are able to recognize a high-ability student who may need more depth and complexity in instruction.

-Homogenous Grouping - Small Group In-Depth Instruction - Differentiated Online Practice - Alternative Assessments - Pre-Assess to provide Differentiated Instruction to Accelerate Learning

Unit 3

Desired Results

Unit 3 Title: Debate and Structured Argument

Unit Summary: In this culminating unit, students will explore argumentation and debate. They will learn to construct logical claims, use credible evidence, and structure arguments with clarity. Through reading and analyzing opinion

texts and participating in classroom debates, students will refine their speaking and listening skills and develop strategies for respectful, evidence-based discourse.

Learning Standards

NJSLS:

RI.AA.6.7. Trace the development of and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.

W.AW.6.1. Write arguments on discipline-specific content (e.g., social studies, science, math, technical subjects, English/Language Arts) to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- A. Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- B. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence, that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
- C. Use words, phrases, and clauses to link and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons and evidence.
- D. Establish and maintain a formal/academic style, approach, and form.
- E. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.

SL.PE.6.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

- A. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
- B. Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
- C. Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.
- D. Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.

SL.PI.6.4. Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate speaking behaviors (e.g., eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation).

Interdisciplinary Connections

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, & Key Skills (CLKS):

9.1.8.PB.5: Identify factors that affect one's goals, including peers, culture, location, and past experiences.

9.1.8.CR.2: Compare various ways to give back through strengths, passions, goals, and other personal factors.

9.1.8.PB.5: Identify factors that affect one's goals, including peers, culture, location, and past experiences.

9.2.8.CAP.5: Develop a personal plan with the assistance of an adult mentor that includes information about career areas of interest, goals, and an educational plan.

Computer Science & Design Thinking (CS & DT):

8.1.8.AP.7: Design programs, incorporating existing code, media, and libraries, and give attribution.

Interdisciplinary Connections:

6.2.8.HistoryCC.1.c: Describe how the development of both written and unwritten languages impacted human understanding, development of culture, and social structure.

Learning Targets

Unit Essential Questions:

- What makes an argument convincing?
- How can we respectfully disagree while still making our point?
- Why is it important to consider opposing viewpoints?

Unit Enduring Understandings:

- A strong argument is supported by evidence and logical reasoning.
- Debate builds critical thinking, listening, and communication skills.
- Considering different perspectives deepens understanding and respect in dialogue.

Vocabulary: Claim, evidence, reasoning, counterclaim, rebuttal, bias, persuasion, argument, assertion, discussion, opinion, refutation

Students will be able to:

- Construct a strong claim supported by logical evidence.
- Prepare and participate in a class debate.
- Respond to opposing viewpoints respectfully and thoughtfully.
- Evaluate the strength of arguments in a peer discussion or article.

Learning Activities:

- Argument Analysis Workshop
- Claim vs. Opinion Sorting Game
- Mini Debates / "Hot Seat" Rounds
- Build-An-Argument Graphic Organizer
- Formal Class Debate (Team-Based)
- Debate Reflection Journal
- Multimedia Argument Analysis
- Counterclaim Speed Rounds
- Debate Scorecard & Peer Feedback

Assessment Evidence

Formative Assessments:

- Class Debate (scored with rubric)
- Debate scripts
- Argument graphic organizers

Summative Assessments:

- Reflective writing on debate performance

Core Instructional & Supplemental Materials

Debate timer apps or online platforms (Parlay, Kialo Edu)

Graphic organizers for argument mapping

Sample student and expert debates

Accommodations and Modifications: Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners, Students at Risk of Failure, Students with 504s, Gifted & Talented Students

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Students with Disabilities:

Students receiving Special Education programming have specific goals and objectives, as well as accommodations and modifications outlined within their Individualized Education Plans (IEP) due to an identified disability and/or diagnosis. In addition to exposure to the general education curriculum, the instruction is differentiated based upon the student's needs. The IEP acts as a supplemental curriculum guide inclusive of instructional strategies that support each learner.

- Small group/One to one - Additional time - Review of directions - Student restates information - Space for movement or breaks - Extra visual and verbal cues and prompts - Preferential seating - Follow a routine/schedule - Rest breaks - Verbal and visual cues regarding directions and staying on task - Checklists - Immediate feedback

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support English Language Learners

English language learner (ELL) is a national-origin-minority student who is limited-English-proficient. This term is often preferred over limited-English-proficient (LEP) as it highlights accomplishments rather than deficits.

- Pre-teaching of vocabulary and concepts - Personal Glossary - Extended Time - Simplified/Verbal Instructions - Frequent Breaks - Visual learning, including graphic organizers - Use of cognates to increase comprehension - Teacher modeling - Pairing students with beginning English language skills with students who have more advanced English language skills - Scaffolding - Word walls - Think-pair-share - Cooperative learning groups

Students at Risk of Failure

- Home/School Connection - Alternative Assessments - Learning Contracts - Homogenous Grouping - Supplemental Instruction - Think-Pair-Share by Readiness - Homework Options - Differentiated Online Practice - Leveled Rubrics - Tiered Level of Supports - Tiered Activities - Small Group Instruction - Work Alone Choice - Group Work Choice

Students with 504 Plans

Teachers are responsible for implementing designated services and strategies identified on a student's 504 Plan.

504 plans are formal plans that schools develop to give kids the support they need and covers any condition that limits daily activities in a major way. Students' accommodations are outlined in their individual 504 plan.

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Gifted & Talented Students

It is critical that all teachers are able to recognize a high-ability student who may need more depth and complexity in instruction.

-Homogenous Grouping - Small Group In-Depth Instruction - Differentiated Online Practice - Alternative Assessments - Pre-Assess to provide Differentiated Instruction to Accelerate Learning