

Part 1

The Common Core State Standards

Reading

The grades 6–12 standards on the following pages define what students should understand and be able to do by the end of each grade. They correspond to the College and Career Readiness (CCR) anchor standards by number. The CCR and grade-specific standards are necessary complements—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity—that together define the skills and understandings that all students must demonstrate.

Key Ideas and Details

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Craft and Structure

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to one another and the whole.
6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.*
8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

Note on Range and Content of Student Reading

To become college and career ready, students must grapple with works of exceptional craft and thought whose range extends across genres, cultures, and centuries. Such works offer profound insights into the human condition and serve as models for students' thinking and writing. Along with high-quality contemporary works, these texts should be chosen from among seminal U.S. documents, the classics of American literature, and the timeless dramas of Shakespeare. Through wide and deep reading of literature and literary nonfiction of steadily increasing sophistication, students gain a reservoir of literary and cultural knowledge, references, and images; the ability to evaluate intricate arguments; and the capacity to surmount the challenges posed by complex texts.

* Please consult the full Common Core State Standards document (and all updates and appendices) at <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy>. See “Research to Build Knowledge” in the Writing section and “Comprehension and Collaboration” in the Speaking and Listening section for additional standards relevant to gathering, assessing, and applying information from print and digital sources.

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for

Reading

The College and Career Readiness (CCR) anchor standards are the same for all middle and high school students, regardless of subject area or grade level. What varies is the specific content at each grade level, most notably the level of complexity of the texts, skills, and knowledge at each subsequent grade level in each disciplinary domain. The guiding principle here is that the core reading skills should not change as students advance; rather, the level at which they learn and can perform those skills should increase in complexity as students move from one grade to the next.

Key Ideas and Details

This first strand of reading standards emphasizes students' ability to identify key ideas and themes in a text, whether literary, informational, primary, or foundational and whether in print, graphic, quantitative, or mixed media formats. The focus of this first set of standards is on *reading to understand*, during which students focus on *what* the text says. The premise is that students cannot delve into the deeper (implicit) meaning of any text if they cannot first

grasp the surface (explicit) meaning of that text. Beyond merely identifying these ideas, readers must learn to see how these ideas and themes, or the story's characters and events, develop and evolve over the course of a text. Such reading demands that students know how to identify, evaluate, assess, and analyze the elements of a text for their importance, function, and meaning within the text.

Craft and Structure

The second set of standards builds on the first, focusing not on *what* the text says but *how* it says it, the emphasis here being on analyzing how texts are made to serve a function or achieve a purpose. These standards ask readers to examine the choices the author makes in words and sentence

and paragraph structure and how these choices contribute to the meaning of the text and the author's larger purpose. Inherent in the study of craft and structure is how these elements interact with and influence the ideas and details outlined in the first three standards.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

This third strand might be summed up as *reading to extend or deepen one's knowledge* of a subject by comparing what a range of sources have said about it over time and across different media. In addition, these standards emphasize the importance of being able to read the arguments; that is, they look at how to identify the claims the texts make and evaluate the evidence used to support those claims

regardless of the media. Finally, these standards ask students to analyze the choice of means and medium the author chooses and the effect those choices have on ideas and details. Thus, if a writer integrates words, images, and video in a mixed media text, readers should be able to examine how and why the author did that for stylistic and rhetorical purposes.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

The Common Core State Standards document itself offers the most useful explanation of what this last standard means in a footnote titled "Note on range and content of student reading," which accompanies the reading standards:

To become college and career ready, students must grapple with works of exceptional craft and thought whose range extends across genres, cultures, and centuries. Such works offer profound insights into the human condition and serve as models for students'

own thinking and writing. Along with high-quality contemporary works, these texts should be chosen from among seminal U.S. documents, the classics of American literature, and the timeless dramas of Shakespeare. Through wide and deep reading of literature and literary nonfiction of steadily increasing sophistication, students gain a reservoir of literary and cultural knowledge, references, and images; the ability to evaluate intricate arguments; and the capacity to surmount the challenges posed by complex texts. (CCSS 2010, p. 35)

Reading 1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Literature

6 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

7 Cite **several pieces** of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

8 Cite the textual evidence **that most strongly** supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Informational Text

6 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

7 Cite **several pieces** of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

8 Cite the textual evidence **that most strongly** supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

History/Social Studies

6 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

7 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

8 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

Science/Technical Subjects

6 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts.

7 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts.

8 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts.

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Common Core Reading Standard 1

What the **Student** Does

Literature

6 Gist: Say what happens or is said in the text, citing a piece of evidence from the text that supports your inference.

- What happens or is said in this text?
- What piece of evidence supports your inference as to the explicit meaning of the text?

7 Gist: Say what happens or is said in the text, citing several pieces of evidence from the text that support your inferences.

- What happens or is said in this text?
- What pieces of evidence support your inference as to the explicit meaning of the text?

8 Gist: Say what happens or is said in the text, citing the strongest, most compelling evidence from the text itself that supports your inferences.

- What happens or is said in this text?
- What pieces of evidence provide the strongest support for your inferences?

History/Social Studies

6 Gist: Say what the primary or secondary source says, citing evidence from the text that supports your analysis.

- Is this a primary or secondary source?
- What does the text say?
- What evidence can you cite to support your analysis of the text's meaning?

7 Gist: Say what the primary or secondary source says, citing evidence from the text that supports your analysis.

- Is this a primary or secondary source?
- What does the text say?
- What evidence can you cite to support your analysis of the text's meaning?

8 Gist: Say what the primary or secondary source says, citing evidence from the text that supports your analysis.

- Is this a primary or secondary source?
- What does the text say?
- What evidence can you cite to support your analysis of the text's meaning?

Informational Text

6 Gist: Say what happens or is said in the text, citing a piece of evidence from the text that supports your inference.

- What happens or is said in this text?
- What piece of evidence supports your inference as to the explicit meaning of the text?

7 Gist: Say what happens or is said in the text, citing several pieces of evidence from the text itself to support your inferences.

- What happens or is said in this text?
- What pieces of evidence support your inference as to the explicit meaning of the text?

8 Gist: Say what happens or is said in the text, citing several pieces of evidence from the text itself to support your inferences.

- What happens or is said in this text?
- What pieces of evidence provide the strongest support for your inferences?

Science/Technical Subjects

6 Gist: Say what the scientific or technical text says, citing evidence from the text that supports your analysis.

- Is this a primary or secondary source?
- What does the text say?
- What evidence can you cite to support your analysis of the text's meaning?

7 Gist: Say what the scientific or technical text says, citing evidence from the text that supports your analysis.

- Is this a primary or secondary source?
- What does the text say?
- What evidence can you cite to support your analysis of the text's meaning?

8 Gist: Say what the scientific or technical text says, citing evidence from the text that supports your analysis.

- Is this a primary or secondary source?
- What does the text say?
- What evidence can you cite to support your analysis of the text's meaning?

Common Core Reading Standard 1

What the **Teacher** Does

To teach students how to “read closely,” do the following:

- Provide students access to the text—via tablet or photocopy—so they can annotate it as directed.
- Model close reading for students by thinking aloud as you go through the text with them or displaying your annotations on a tablet via an LCD projector; show them how to examine a text by scrutinizing its words, sentence structures, or any other details needed to understand its explicit meaning.
- Display the text via tablet or computer as you direct students’ attention—by highlighting, circling, or otherwise drawing their attention—to specific words, sentences, or paragraphs that are essential to the meaning of the text; as you do this, ask them to explain what a word means or how it is used in that sentence, or how a specific sentence contributes to the meaning of the larger text.
- Pose questions—about words, actions, or details—that require students to look closely at the text for answers.

To get students to determine “what the text says explicitly,” do the following:

- Ask students to “say what it *says*”—not what it means, since the emphasis here is on its literal meaning.
- Offer students an example of what it means to read explicitly and support your inferences with evidence; then tell them what a passage explicitly says, and ask them to find evidence inside the text to support their statement about its meaning.
- Give students several pieces of evidence and ask them to determine what explicit idea in the text the evidence supports.

To develop students’ ability to “cite specific textual evidence,” do the following:

- Offer them a set of samples of evidence of different degrees of specificity and quality to evaluate, requiring

them to choose the one that is best and provide a rationale for their choice.

- Show students how you would choose evidence from the text to support your inference; discuss with them the questions you would ask to arrive at that selection.

To “make logical inferences,” ask students to do the following:

- Take what they *learn* (from the text about this subject) to what they already *know* (about that subject); then *confirm* that their reasoning is sound by finding evidence that supports their inferences.
- Think aloud (with your guidance) about the process and how they make such inferences, and then have students find and use evidence to support their inferences.

To find the textual evidence “that most strongly supports _____,” do the following:

- Create with your students—through collaborative groups or class discussion—a list of different pieces of evidence they might cite; together, develop and apply criteria by which to evaluate the different pieces to identify those which would offer the strongest, most effective support; then ask them to apply these same criteria to new evidence they find themselves as they read the rest of this article or another.

To help your English Language Learners, try this one strategy:

- Repeat the process used to make such inferences, verbally labeling each step as you demonstrate it; then ask them to demonstrate their ability to do it on their own or with your prompting. Post the steps (e.g., “Inferences = What You Know + What You Learned”) with an example on a poster or handout they can reference on their own as needed.

Notes

Common Core Reading Standard 1

Academic Vocabulary: Key Words and Phrases

Analysis of primary and secondary sources: Primary sources are those accounts recorded from people who witnessed or participated in the event themselves; these sources include journals, letters, and oral history recordings; secondary sources are those written by others *based on* primary sources and the opinions of scholars past and present.

Cite specific textual evidence: All claims, assertions, or arguments about what a text means or says require evidence from within the text itself, not the reader’s opinion or experience; students should be able to quote or refer to a specific passage from the text to support their idea.

Conclusions drawn from the text: Readers take a group of details (different findings, series of events, related examples) and draw from them an insight or understanding about their meaning or importance within the passage or the text as a whole.

Evidence that most strongly supports an analysis: Evidence in general includes facts, data, quotations, and any other sources of data that support the claims writers make; in this case, however, it refers to only that evidence that “most strongly supports an analysis.” Such evidence would typically be more precise, specific, and effective in its ability to back up one’s analysis.

Explicitly: This refers to anything clearly stated in great or precise detail; it may suggest factual information or literal meaning, though not necessarily the case.

Informational text: These include nonfiction texts from a range of sources and written for a variety of purposes, everything from essays to advertisements, historical documents to op/ed pieces. Informational texts include written arguments as well as infographics.

Literature: This refers to fiction, poetry, drama, and graphic stories but also artworks such as master paintings or works by preeminent photographers.

Logical inferences [drawn from the text]: To infer, readers add what they *learned* from the text to what they already *know* about the subject; however, for the inference to be “logical,” it must be based on evidence *from the text*.

Primary and secondary sources: *Primary sources* are those documents—letters, journals, oral histories, and the like—recorded by those who participated in or observed the events firsthand; *secondary sources* are those articles that draw on such primary sources and others to examine or explain events authors did not witness themselves.

Read closely (close reading): This refers to reading that emphasizes not only surface details but the deeper meaning and larger connections between words, sentences, and the full text; it also demands scrutiny of craft, including arguments and style used by the author.

Several pieces of textual evidence: Evidence is described above; this phrase refers to the act of including evidence not from several *different* texts but different pieces of textual evidence—a number of quotations, some data, several specific examples, for example—from *one* text the student is reading.

Support analysis: This is related to “citing textual evidence.” This phrase requires readers to back up their claims about what a text says with evidence, such as examples, details, or quotations.

Text: In its broadest meaning, a text is whatever one is trying to read: a poem, essay, or article; in its more modern sense, a text can also be an image, an artwork, speech, or multimedia format such as a website, film, or social media message, such as a Tweet.

Textual evidence: Not all evidence is created equal; students need to choose those examples or quotations that provide the best example of what they are saying or most compelling quotation to support their assertion.

Notes

Reading 2: Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

Literature

6 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

7 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and **analyze its development over the course of the text**; provide an **objective** summary of the text.

8 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, **including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot**; provide an objective summary of the text.

Informational Text

6 Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

7 Determine **two or more** central ideas in a text and **analyze their development over the course of the text**; provide an **objective** summary of the text.

8 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, **including its relationship to supporting ideas**; provide an objective summary of the text.

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Common Core Reading Standard 2

What the **Student** Does

Literature

6 Gist: Identify a main idea or theme, examining how the author introduces and develops this idea or theme through specific details, and summarizing the text without commenting on or evaluating it.

- What key idea and theme does the author introduce and develop?
- What specific details does the author use to convey this idea?
- What details and facts must a summary of the text include (that offer no opinion or judgment)?

7 Gist: Identify a main idea or theme, examining how the author introduces and develops this idea or theme throughout the text, and summarizing the text with objectivity.

- What key idea and theme does the author introduce and develop throughout?
- What specific details does the author use to convey this idea?
- What details and facts must an objective summary of the text include?

8 Gist: Identify a main idea or theme, examining how the author develops it throughout, focusing on the connection between the main idea and the characters, setting, and plot, then summarizing the text with objectivity.

- What key idea and theme does the author introduce and develop throughout?
- How does the author use characters, setting, and plot to develop this theme?
- What details and facts must an objective summary of the text include?

Informational Text

6 Gist: Identify a main idea or theme, examining how the author introduces and develops this idea or theme through specific details, and summarizing the text without commenting on or evaluating it.

- What key idea and theme does the author introduce and develop?
- What specific details does the author use to convey this idea?
- What details and facts must a summary of the text include (that offer no opinion or judgment)?

7 Gist: Identify two or more big ideas in the text, analyzing how the author introduces and develops them throughout the text, and summarizing the text with objectivity.

- What central ideas does the author introduce and develop throughout?
- How does the author develop this theme or central idea throughout the text?
- What details and facts must an objective summary of the text include?

8 Gist: Identify a main idea or theme, examining how the author develops it throughout, focusing on the connection between the main idea and the supporting ideas, then summarizing the text with objectivity.

- What key idea and theme does the author introduce and develop throughout?
- How does the author use supporting ideas to develop the main idea or theme?
- What details and facts must an objective summary of the text include?

Reading 2: Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

History/Social Studies

6 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

7 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

8 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

Science/Technical Subjects

6 Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; provide an accurate summary of the text distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

7 Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; provide an accurate summary of the text distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

8 Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; provide an accurate summary of the text distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

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Common Core Reading Standard 2

What the **Student** Does

History/Social Studies

6 Gist: Identify the main ideas or information in a primary or secondary source, summarizing the text accurately and without bias.

- What type of source is this: primary or secondary?
- What key ideas or information does the author introduce and develop throughout?
- What details and information must an objective summary of the text include?

7 Gist: Identify the main ideas or information in a primary or secondary source, summarizing the text accurately and without bias.

- What type of source is this: primary or secondary?
- What key ideas or information does the author introduce and develop throughout?
- What details and information must an objective summary of the text include?

8 Gist: Identify the main ideas or information in a primary or secondary source, summarizing the text accurately and without bias.

- What type of source is this: primary or secondary?
- What key ideas or information does the author introduce and develop throughout?
- What details and information must an objective summary of the text include?

Science/Technical Subjects

6 Gist: Identify the main ideas or findings in the text, summarizing the text accurately and without bias.

- What is the subject of this text?
- What key ideas or conclusions does the author discuss in this text?
- What details and information must a summary of the text include (that suggest no opinion or bias)?

7 Gist: Identify the main ideas or findings in the text, summarizing the text accurately and without bias.

- What is the subject of this text?
- What key ideas or conclusions does the author discuss in this text?
- What details and information must a summary of the text include (that suggest no opinion or bias)?

8 Gist: Identify the main ideas or findings in the text, summarizing the text accurately and without bias.

- What is the subject of this text?
- What key ideas or conclusions does the author discuss in this text?
- What details and information must a summary of the text include (that suggest no opinion or bias)?

Common Core Reading Standard 2

What the **Teacher** Does

To have students “determine the central ideas and themes of a text,” do the following:

- Ask students to generate all possible ideas and themes after skimming and scanning the text; then determine which of them the text most fully develops.
- Tell students to figure out which words, phrases, or images recur throughout the text that might signal they are the central idea?
- Have students consider what hints the title, sub-headings, bold words, graphics, images, or captions offer to the central ideas.
- Complete a think-aloud with students when working with new or complex texts to model the questions you ask and mental moves you make as an experienced reader of this type of text to make sense of it.

To have students “analyze the development” of central ideas or themes, do the following:

- Direct students to underline, label, or somehow code all the words, images, or other details related to the central ideas or themes throughout the text; then examine how their use evolves over the course of the text.
- Provide students with sentence frames (“Early on the author says X about _____, then suggests Y, finally arguing Z about _____ by the end.”) or graphic organizers that help them map an idea from the beginning to the end of the text to better see how it develops (through word choice, imagery, figurative speech).
- Ask how one set of images, allusions, or ideas builds on or is otherwise related to those that precede it.
- Use a graphic organizer (e.g., one with two or more columns) to jot down the details related to each key theme, looking for patterns across the columns as you go.
- Have students monitor the author’s diction and tone as they are applied to the central idea(s) over the course of the text to note when, how, and why they change.

To have students “provide an objective summary of the text,” do the following:

- Create for (or with) your students an objectivity continuum (i.e., that goes from objective at one end to subjective at the other end, with gradations and

descriptors in between); then ask them to put a word, phrase, or idea on there to measure its objectivity, taking time to discuss how they might increase objectivity by rephrasing it.

- Develop with students a continuum of importance to help them learn to evaluate which details are most important to include in a summary.
- Clarify the difference between *objective* and *subjective* by giving examples of each about a different but similar text before they attempt to write an “objective summary” of other texts.
- Have students study models of effective (and ineffective) summaries.
- Provide sentence stems typical of those used to summarize this type of text (In _____, Author X argues that _____).

To have students “determine two or more central ideas in a text,” do the following:

- Have students skim a text to get the gist and discover what ideas the text treats most seriously and thoroughly from beginning to end; then ask them to make a list of those ideas, determining by some criteria you provide or they develop those few ideas that merit scrutiny as a result of the author’s treatment throughout the text.
- Show students how to use the search function of a web browser or an ebook reader to determine (by frequency of reference, repetition of the word) how central an idea is within a text.

To have students determine main ideas in a primary or secondary source, do the following:

- Have them first determine whether it is a primary or secondary source so they can figure out the type of questions they should ask.
- Guide them through the features and context of such a text to show them how to determine the ideas and information most important to the original context in which it was written.

To help your English Language Learners, try this one thing:

- Make a point of confirming that they know the key concepts—themes, analyze, summarize, and supporting details.

Common Core Reading Standard 2

Academic Vocabulary: Key Words and Phrases

Accurate summary: This identifies the key ideas, details, or events in the text and reports them with an emphasis on who did what to whom and when; in other words, the emphasis is on retelling what happened or what the text says with utmost fidelity to the text itself, thus requiring students to check what they say against what the text says happened.

Analyze their development over the course of the text: This refers to the careful and close examination of the parts or elements from which something is made and how those parts affect or function within the whole to create meaning.

Conclusions of a text: In a scientific or technical text, these might be the key discoveries located at the end of the text under a heading such as “conclusions” if the article, chapter, or report follows the conventions of a scientific report or paper.

Conveyed through particular details: This refers to the way authors might explore an idea (e.g., the sense of isolation that often appears throughout dystopian novels) by referring to it directly or indirectly through details that evoke the idea of such isolation.

Determine central ideas: Some ideas are more important to a work than are others; these are the ideas you could not cut out without fundamentally changing the meaning or quality of the text. Think of the “central ideas” of a text as you would the beams in a building: They are the main elements that make up the text and that all the supporting details help to develop.

Development: Think of a grain of rice added to others one at a time to form a pile; this is how writers develop their ideas—by adding imagery, details, examples, and other information over the course of the text. Thus, when people “analyze [the] development” of an idea or theme, for example, they look at how the author does this and what effect such development has on the meaning of the text.

Distinct from prior knowledge or opinions: In the History/Social Studies standard, this phrase

distinguishes objective summary (the facts of what the text says) from personal opinion (what students think, how they feel about the text, and what it says). It is an important difference given the Common Core’s emphasis on analytical thinking versus personal response.

Including its relationship to supporting ideas:

Central ideas rely on the “supporting ideas” to help explore and sustain an idea or theme throughout. The writer might take an idea or theme such as the resiliency of the human spirit, for example, and build on it through examples or anecdotes, all of which complement each other as a way of developing that idea over the course of the text.

Key supporting details and ideas:

Important details and ideas support the larger ideas the text develops over time. These details and ideas appear as examples, quotations, or other information used to advance the author’s claim(s). Not all details and ideas are equally important, however; so students must learn to identify those that matter the most in the context of the text.

Objective summary:

This describes key ideas, details, or events in the text and reports them without adding any commentary or outside description; it is similar to an evening “recap” of the news that attempts to answer the essential reporter’s question—who, what, where, when, why, and how—*without* commentary.

Over the course of the text:

Whether a 14-line sonnet or a 500-page novel, all texts have ideas the writer explores at length and in depth. The idea of love first introduced in the opening chapter, act, or stanza becomes a plaything in the hands of the author who looks at it from different angles, in different contexts, showing how the idea—or our understanding of it—evolves over time in the text.

Themes:

This refers to the ideas the text explains, develops, and explores; there can be more than one, but themes are what the text is actually *about*.

