



PA Core Standards: English Language Arts

The 2020–21 school year presents a unique set of opportunities and challenges due to the disruption to instruction in spring 2020 as well as the uncertainty as the school year unfolds. Educators know that every school year there are students who require support in addressing unfinished learning from prior grades, a challenge that will be felt more prominently in the 2020–21 school year. It is vitally important that educators are supported to make deliberate instructional choices that allow all students to effectively engage with grade-level work.

The most effective and equitable way to support students in their learning is to ensure that the vast majority of time is spent engaging with grade-level content, remediating with precision and accelerating as needed. It is entirely possible to hold high expectations for all students while addressing unfinished learning in the context of grade-level work. Since time is a scarce commodity in classrooms — made more limited by anticipated closures and remote or hybrid learning models in the fall of 2020 — strategic instructional choices about which content to prioritize must be made.¹

Assessing students at the start of the year will identify learning gaps and provide data to inform grade level instruction — as well as incorporating both remediation and acceleration along the way. Diagnostic Assessments determine student strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills. Administering diagnostic assessments permits the instructor to intervene at the point where students begin to struggle or when they are performing below grade level expectations (running record, informal reading assessments, surveys, initial writing prompts, Classroom Diagnostic Tests [CDT]). Diagnostic assessments allow teachers to adjust the curriculum to meet the unique needs of all students. While some concepts have greater emphasis in a particular year, all standards deserve a defined level of instruction. Neglecting concepts may result in learning gaps in student skill and understanding and may leave students unprepared for the challenges of a later grade.

This guidance document is designed to identify and define areas of high-level focus in English Language Arts instruction supported by key PA Academic Standards. Note that while all standards deserve a defined level of instruction, neglecting key concepts may result in learning gaps in student skill and understanding and may leave students unprepared for the challenges of a later grade.

The focus areas detailed in each grade level, as stated in the [Pennsylvania State Literacy Plan](#) (PaSLP), offer guidance as to where instruction should occur to meet 2020–2021 critical grade level expectations of the standards:

- Reading at the secondary level is characterized by increasing text complexity and focusing on informational text.
- Strategic writers create writing appropriate to task, i.e., on-demand, drafting or redrafting over time.
- Students must become effective speakers and listeners.
- Key concepts for the knowledge of language include understanding how language functions, making effective choices for meaning, and comprehending more completely when reading or listening.

¹ Adapted from 2020–21 Priority Instructional Content in English Language Arts/literacy and Mathematics, Student Achievement Partners/Achieve the Core. May 2020

GRADE K FOCUS OF INSTRUCTION (2020-2021)

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Focus Areas of Instruction	PA Academic Standards
<p>Reading</p>	<p>CC.1.1.K.A Utilize book handling skills.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing foundational skills (book handling, print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics/word recognition, and fluency). Establishing the development of word recognition skills, vocabulary, and comprehension skills/strategies. Practicing fluency daily. Engaging in direct, explicit, systematic, differentiated instruction and interventions. Employing complex oral language and engaging in structured language and literacy learning tasks which promote interactive play and inquiry. Participating in peer-assisted or collaborative learning. 	<p>CC.1.1.K.B Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print...</p> <p>CC.1.1.K.C Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes)...</p> <p>CC.1.1.K.D Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words...</p> <p>CC.1.1.K.E Read emergent-reader text with purpose and understanding.</p> <p>CC.1.2.K.A / CC.1.3.K.A With prompting and support, identify the main idea and retell key details of text / With prompting and support, retell familiar stories including key details.</p> <p>CC.1.2.K.B / CC.1.3.K.B With prompting and support, answer questions about key details in a text.</p> <p>CC.1.2.K.C / CC.1.3.K.C With prompting and support, make a connection between two individuals, events, ideas... / With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events...</p> <p>CC.1.2.K.E / CC.1.3.K.E Identify parts of a book...and parts of a text... / Recognize common types of text.</p> <p>CC.1.2.K.G / CC.1.3.K.G Answer questions to describe the relationship between illustrations and the text in which they appear / Make connections between the illustrations and the text in a story...</p>
<p>Writing</p>	<p>CC.1.2.K.H / CC.1.3.K.H With prompting and support, identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text / Compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participating in Kindergarten pre-writing. Writing for different purposes and audiences. Engaging in systematic and explicit instruction in basic writing skills including handwriting, spelling, and grammar. Writing daily with guidance for a variety of purposes. 	<p>CC.1.2.K.K / CC.1.3.K.I Determine/clarify the meaning of unknown or multiple-meaning words and phrases...</p> <p>CC.1.2.K.J / CC.1.3.K.J Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading, being read to...</p> <p>CC.1.2.K.L / CC.1.3.K.K Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.</p>
<p>Speaking & Listening</p>	<p>CC.1.4.K.B / CC.1.4.K.H / CC.1.4.K.N Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing... / Form an opinion by choosing between two given topics / Establish who and what the narrative will be about.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participating daily in a teacher-created environment to practice speaking and listening skills during discussions (collaborative communication). Establishing skills of being a good listener, taking turns, collaborating, and supporting ideas with facts. 	<p>CC.1.4.K.C / CC.1.4.K.I / CC.1.4.K.O With prompting and support, generate ideas and details to convey information... / Support the opinion with reasons / Describe experiences and events.</p> <p>CC.1.4.K.E / CC.1.4.K.P With prompting and support, illustrate using details and dictate/write using descriptive words / Recount a single event...tell about events in order...provide a reaction...</p> <p>CC.1.4.K.F / CC.1.4.K.L / CC.1.4.K.R Demonstrate a grade-appropriate command of the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling...</p>
<p>Language</p>	<p>CC.1.4.K.X Write routinely over short time frames.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilizing conventions of standard English grammar, usage, and mechanics, as well as learning other ways to use language to convey meaning effectively. Focusing on the use of language as a tool for communication - as a means for writers to express themselves with style and clarity, as a means for speakers to express ideas clearly, and as a means for readers to understand the author's explicit and implicit message. 	<p>CC.1.5.K.A Participate in collaborative conversations with peers and adults in small and larger groups.</p> <p>CC.1.5.K.B Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or presented orally...</p> <p>CC.1.5.K.C Ask and answer questions...to seek help, get information, or clarify something...</p> <p>CC.1.5.K.D Share stories, familiar experiences, and interests, speaking clearly enough to be understood by all audiences using appropriate volume.</p> <p>CC.1.5.K.E Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.</p> <p>CC.1.5.K.G Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English when speaking...</p>