

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 5 FOCUS OF INSTRUCTION (2020-2021)

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Focus Areas of Instruction	PA Academic Standards
<p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning new words, facts, and ideas from reading, as well as interpreting and summarizing texts. • Reading and discussing a variety of texts from multiple genres. • Shifting gradually to deeper comprehension, combining literacy skills and content knowledge. • Engaging in word study instruction and fluency practice as needed. • Interacting with text through close reading, analysis, and interpretation. 	<p>CC.1.1.5.D <i>Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words...</i></p> <p>CC.1.1.5.E <i>Read with accuracy and fluency to support comprehension...</i></p> <p>CC.1.2.5.A / CC.1.3.5.A <i>Determine two or more main ideas...and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text / Determine a theme of a text from details...including how characters...respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.</i></p> <p>CC.1.2.5.B / CC.1.3.5.B <i>Cite textual evidence by quoting accurately...to explain what the text says explicitly and make inferences.</i></p> <p>CC.1.2.5.C / CC.1.3.5.C <i>Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts...based on specific information... / Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text.</i></p>
<p>Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing routinely over extended periods (research, reflection, and revision) and shorter periods (a single sitting) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. • Engaging with systematic and explicit instruction in basic writing skills including handwriting, spelling, and grammar. • Employing detail in writing, sustaining a focus, and producing well-organized writing. • Gathering information, evaluating sources, citing evidence, and responding analytically. • Focusing on the writing process as a means of producing and improving writing. 	<p>CC.1.2.5.D / CC.1.3.5.D <i>Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view... / Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view...</i></p> <p>CC.1.2.5.E / CC.1.3.5.E <i>Use text structure...to interpret information... / Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure...</i></p> <p>CC.1.2.5.F / CC.1.3.5.F <i>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in grade-level text...</i></p> <p>CC.1.2.5.G / CC.1.3.5.G <i>Draw on information...locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently / Analyze how visual...elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text...</i></p> <p>CC.1.2.5.H / CC.1.3.5.H <i>Determine how an author supports particular points in a text through reasons and evidence / Compare and contrast texts...on their approaches to similar themes and topics...</i></p> <p>CC.1.2.5.J / CC.1.3.5.J <i>Acquire and use grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships.</i></p> <p>CC.1.2.5.K / CC.1.3.5.I <i>Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown or multiple-meaning words and phrases...choosing flexibly from a range of strategies and tools.</i></p>
<p>Speaking & Listening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening attentively and critically, responding thoughtfully, and building upon the ideas of others. • Participating in a variety of structured conversations: partner, small group, whole class. • Engaging in collaborative communication and taking part in discussions. 	<p>CC.1.2.5.L / CC.1.3.5.K <i>Read and comprehend literary nonfiction and informational...reading independently and proficiently / Read and comprehend literary fiction...reading independently and proficiently.</i></p> <p>CC.1.4.5.S <i>Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research, applying grade-level reading standards for literature and informational texts. (CC.1.4.5.S-analytical writing-encompasses all writing domains).</i></p> <p>CC.1.4.5.T <i>With guidance...develop/strengthen writing... revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.</i></p> <p>CC.1.4.5.V <i>Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge...</i></p>
<p>Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applying conventions of standard English including grammar, usage, and mechanics, as well as using language to convey meaning effectively. • Determining or clarifying the meaning of words through context clues, understanding word relationships and nuances in meanings, acquiring and using content specific words, and understanding the structure of words. 	<p>CC.1.4.5.X <i>Write routinely over extended time...for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes....</i></p> <p>CC.1.5.5.A <i>Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions...</i></p> <p>CC.1.5.5.C <i>Summarize the points a speaker makes and explain how each claim is supported...</i></p> <p>CC.1.5.5.D <i>Report on a topic ...sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details...speak clearly with adequate volume, appropriate pacing, and clear pronunciation.</i></p> <p>CC.1.5.5.E <i>Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, using formal English when appropriate...</i></p> <p>CC.1.5.5.G <i>Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English...</i></p>