# Chapter Three

of the

# English Language Arts/ English Language Development Framework

*for California Public Schools*
*Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*

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Chapter 3

# Content and Pedagogy: Transitional Kindergarten Through Grade One


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# Overview of the Span

The first years of schooling are critical ones. In transitional kindergarten through grade one, children acquire the skills, knowledge, and dispositions that establish the foundation for a lifetime of learning. They develop new understandings about how the world works, and they begin to build autonomy in their own learning. Children experience and thoughtfully engage with a range of high-quality literary and informational texts. They comprehend and use increasingly varied vocabulary, grammatical structures, and discourse practices as they share with one another their understandings and ideas about texts and other learning experiences. They learn about the English written system and acquire the foundational skills that enable them to interact independently with print as readers and writers in the years ahead. Children achieve these skills and understandings through carefully specified and strategically sequenced instruction and rich, authentic experiences in a developmentally appropriate environment that recognizes and responds to their social-emotional, physical, and cognitive needs, all of which are critical to long-term literacy development (Dickinson, McCabe, and Essex 2006; see also the position statement on developmentally appropriate practice by the National Association for the Education of Young Children 2009 at http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/PSDAP.pdf).

*Children achieve these skills and understandings through carefully specified and strategically sequenced instruction and rich, authentic experiences in a developmentally appropriate environment that recognizes and responds to their social-emotional, physical, and cognitive needs, all of which are critical to long-term literacy development.*

Children who are English learners (ELs) participate fully in the ELA and other content curricula at the same time as they are learning English as an additional language. In transitional kindergarten through grade one, EL children, too, learn to interact in meaningful ways with texts and with others. They learn to collaborate with peers, exchanging information about the texts they are listening to or reading and contributing their ideas and opinions in conversations. They produce language in an increasing variety of ways through writing and discussing, and they develop an awareness about how language works. They make great strides during the grade span by participating in a carefully designed instructional program that immerses them in rigorous and meaningful content. It is important to note that, even as children are learning English as an additional language, California values the primary languages of its students and encourages their continued development. This is recognized by the establishment of the State Seal of Biliteracy. (See the introduction to this *ELA/ELD Framework*.) In addition, and as discussed in chapters 2 and 9, California takes an *additive* stance to language development for all children. This *ELA/ELD Framework* views the nonstandard dialects of English (such as African American English or Chicana/Chicano English) that linguistically and culturally diverse students may bring to school from their homes and communities as valuable assets—resources in their own right and solid foundations to be built upon for developing academic English.

*It is important to note that, even as children are learning English as an additional language, California values the primary languages of its students and encourages their continued development.*

California's diverse population includes children with disabilities. These children also participate in the rigorous ELA/literacy curriculum. Expectations are high, but accompanying high expectations are appropriate instruction (including collaborations among specialists, teachers, and families) and supports and accommodations that allow for students'

achievement of the skills and knowledge called for by the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and, as appropriate, the CA ELD Standards.

This chapter provides guidance for supporting all children's progress toward[1] and achievement of the kindergarten and grade one CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy, and additionally for ELs, the CA ELD Standards. It begins with a brief discussion of the importance of the integrated and interdisciplinary nature of the language arts, and then highlights the key themes of ELA/literacy and ELD instruction. Grade-level sections provide additional guidance for transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, and grade one.

## An Integrated and Interdisciplinary Approach

The CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy include strands in Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening[2], and Language. As noted in chapters 1 and 2 of this *ELA/ELD Framework*, although the strands are presented separately in the standards, they are interrelated; they are not distinct, independent areas of the curriculum. Just as adults discuss or write about what they read in order to clarify or express their understandings, children should have opportunities to confer and write in response to text. Just as adults read to learn more about a topic under discussion or to inform their writing, children should have opportunities to engage with text to learn more about a subject of interest, investigate questions raised in discussions, and gather ideas for writing. Language is the basis for each of these communicative acts, and vocabulary and an understanding of conventions and the purposes for using language are inseparable from reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Both the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards call for the integration of reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

*The strands of CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards are not only integrated among themselves, they are deeply interwoven with content learning. Reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language are inextricably linked to every area of the curricula.*

The strands of CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards are not only integrated among themselves, they are deeply interwoven with content learning. Reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language are inextricably linked to every area of the curricula. Learning subject matter requires that students understand and use the language of the subject to comprehend, clarify, and communicate concepts. The language arts are crucial tools for the acquisition and construction of knowledge and the development of clear, effective communication across the disciplines (National Research Council 2012). And, conversely, learning subject matter enriches development of the language arts as children acquire new vocabulary, new ways of conveying meaning, and new understandings to bring to subsequent interactions with written and spoken text. Thus, this *ELA/ELD Framework* calls for an integrated and interdisciplinary approach to teaching the language arts.

The relationship between the language arts and content learning is apparent throughout California's subject matter content standards. A few examples from kindergarten and grade one standards in various content areas include the following:

1 The CA CCSS and the CA ELD Standards do not include standards for transitional kindergarten. Children in transitional kindergarten are expected to make progress toward the kindergarten CA CCSS and, as appropriate, the kindergarten CA ELD Standards.

2 As noted throughout this framework, speaking and listening should be broadly interpreted. Speaking and listening should include students who are deaf and hard of hearing using American Sign Language (ASL) as their primary language. Students who are deaf and hard of hearing who do not use ASL as their primary language but use amplification, residual hearing, listening and spoken language, cued speech and sign supported speech, access general education curriculum with varying modes of communication.

- Ask questions, based on observations, to classify different objects by their use and to identify whether they occur naturally or are human-made. (NGSS K-PS1-c)
- Use the vocabulary of theatre, such as actor, character, cooperation, setting, the five senses, and audience, to describe theatrical experiences. (California Kindergarten Visual and Performing Arts Theatre Content Standard 1.1)
- Describe, extend, and explain ways to get a next element in simple repeating patterns. (California CCSS Grade One Mathematics Standard 4.1)
- Educate family and peers to protect against skin damage from the sun. (California Grade One Health Standard 8.1.P)
- Describe the rights and individual responsibilities of citizenship. (California Grade One History–Social Science Content Standard 1.1)

California's public school programs, including transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, and grade one, ensure that the strands of Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language are taught as mutually supportive elements of the language arts and are a rich and thoughtful aspect of instruction in every subject area.

*Snapshots and longer vignettes of practice presented in grade-level sections of this chapter illustrate how the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy strands, the CA ELD Standards, and content area instruction can be integrated to create an intellectually rich and engaging early literacy program.*

Similarly, in classrooms with ELs, the components of the CA ELD Standards—"Interacting in Meaningful Ways," "Learning About How English Works," and "Using Foundational Literacy Skills"—are integrated throughout the curricula, rather than being addressed exclusively during designated ELD. (See chapter 2 and subsequent sections of this chapter for discussions of integrated and designated ELD.) Snapshots and longer vignettes of practice presented in grade-level sections of this chapter illustrate how the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy strands, the CA ELD Standards, and content area instruction can be integrated to create an intellectually rich and engaging early literacy program.

## Key Themes of ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction

*Teachers in the grade span recognize their critical role in ensuring children's initial steps on the exciting pathway toward ultimately achieving the overarching goals of ELA/literacy and ELD instruction . . .*

This section discusses each of the five themes of California's ELA/literacy and ELD instruction described in the introduction to this framework and chapters 1 and 2 as they pertain to transitional kindergarten through grade one (see figure 3.1): **Meaning Making**, **Language Development**, **Effective Expression**, **Content Knowledge**, and **Foundational Skills**. Impacting each of these for ELs is learning English as an additional language, and impacting all students is the context in which learning occurs. Displayed in the white field of the figure are the characteristics of the context for instruction called for by this *ELA/ELD Framework*. Highlighted in figure 3.2 is research on **motivation and engagement**, discussed in the introduction and chapter 2 of this framework. Teachers in the grade span recognize their critical role in ensuring children's initial steps on the exciting pathway toward ultimately achieving the overarching goals of ELA/literacy and ELD instruction (displayed in the outer ring of figure 3.1): students develop the readiness for college, careers, and civic life; attain the capacities of literate individuals; become broadly literate; and acquire the skills for living and learning in the 21st century.

***Figure 3.1. Circles of Implementation of ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction***

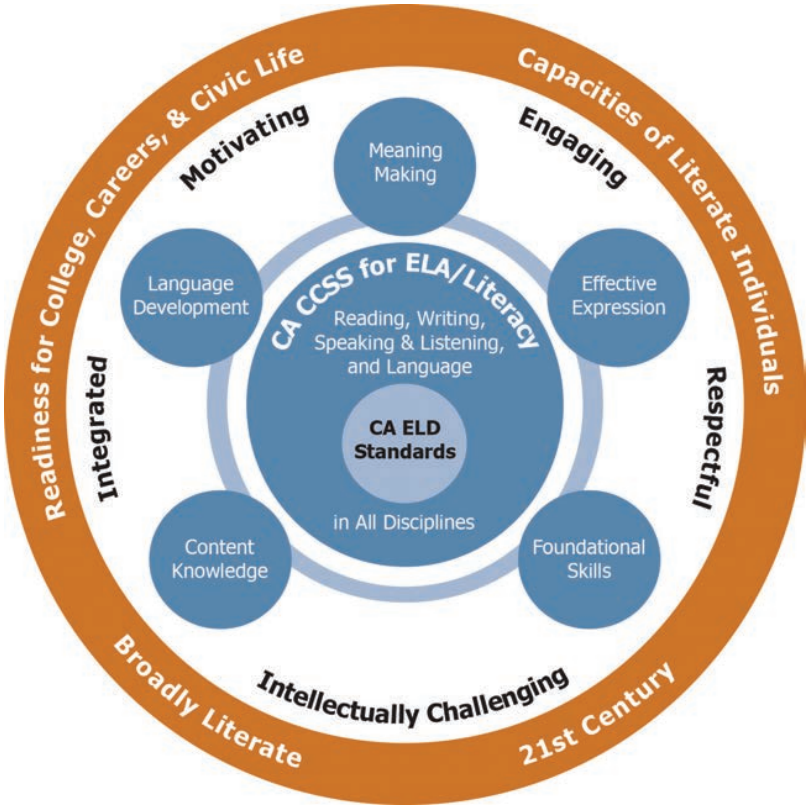


***Figure 3.2. Motivation and Engagement***

Educators should keep issues of motivation and engagement at the forefront of their work to assist students in achieving the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and CA ELD Standards. The panel report *Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade* (Shanahan, and others 2010) makes clear the importance of addressing motivation and engagement in primary grade literacy programs and recommends the following practices:

- Help students discover the purpose and benefits of reading by modeling enjoyment of text and an appreciation of the information it has to offer and creating a print rich environment (including meaningful text on classroom walls and well stocked, inviting, and comfortable libraries or literacy centers that contain a range of print materials, including texts on topics relevant to instructional experiences children are having in the content areas).
- Create opportunities for students to see themselves as successful readers. Texts and tasks should be challenging, but within reach given appropriate teaching and scaffolding.

- Provide students reading choices, which includes allowing them choice on literacy-related activities, texts, and even locations in the room in which to engage with books independently. Teachers' knowledge of their students' abilities will enable them to provide appropriate guidance.
- Provide students the opportunity to learn by collaborating with their peers to read texts, talk about texts, and engage in meaningful interactions with texts, such as locating interesting information together.

Contributing to the motivation and engagement of diverse learners, including ELs, is the teachers' and the broader school community's open recognition that students' primary languages, dialects of English used in the home, and home cultures are valuable resources in their own right and also to draw on to build proficiency in English and in all school learning (de Jong and Harper 2011; Lindholm-Leary and Genesee 2010). Teachers are encouraged to do the following:

- Create a welcoming classroom environment that exudes respect for cultural and linguistic diversity.
- Get to know students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds and how individual students interact with their primary/home language and home cultures.
- Use the primary language or home dialect of English, as appropriate, to acknowledge them as valuable assets and to support all learners to fully develop academic English and engage meaningfully with the core curriculum.
- Use texts that accurately reflect students' cultural and social backgrounds so that students see themselves in the curriculum.
- Continuously expand their understandings of culture and language so as not to oversimplify approaches to culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy. (For guidance on implementing culturally and linguistically responsive teaching, see chapters 2 and 9 of this *ELA/ELD Framework*.)

## *Meaning Making*

Each of the kindergarten and grade one strands of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy make clear the attention that meaning making should receive throughout language arts instruction, as do all components of the CA ELD Standards. The CA CCSS reading standards center on meaningful interactions with literary and informational text. For example, they require that children learn to ask and answer questions about the content of texts (RL/RI.K–1.1), attend to the meaning of words in texts (RL/RI.K–1.4), learn about text structures as different ways to tell stories and share information (RL/RI.K–1.1), explore the role of illustrations in contributing to text meaning (RL/RI.K–1.7), and make comparisons among events or information in one or more texts (RL/RI.K–1.9). Much of this occurs during read aloud experiences in this grade span.

The writing standards, too, reflect an emphasis on meaning. Children's writing (as dictated or independently produced) is *about something*: the expression of opinions (W.K–1.1), the conveyance of information (W.K–1.2), and the telling of stories (W.K–1.3). Furthermore, children share their writing with others and respond to their questions and suggestions to better communicate their ideas and information in written language (W.K–1.5). In other words, writing is not simply copying text, a rote act devoid of meaning. It is using the understanding that print is meaningful and purposeful in concert with the skills that are being acquired to create and communicate ideas and information.

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The speaking and listening standards also focus on meaning. Beginning in the first years of schooling, children are taught to participate in conversations that center on the meaning of texts, media, and peers' and adults' comments (SL.K–1, Standards 1–3) as well as to express ideas and thoughts so that others understand (SL.K–1, Standards 4–6). Children learn to ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or provide clarification (SL.K–1, Standards 1–3).

Language standards, too, include a focus on meaning. Children determine and clarify the meaning of words and phrases based on grade-level reading and content, and they use newly acquired language meaningfully (L.K–1, Standards 4–6).

The CA ELD Standards also center on meaning making. Children learn to interact in meaningful ways (Part I) through three modes of communication: collaborative, interpretive, and productive. In order to engage meaningfully with oral[3] and written texts, they continue to build their understanding of how English works (Part II) on a variety of levels. They learn how different text types are organized and structured to achieve particular social purposes, how texts can be expanded and enriched using particular language resources, and how ideas can be connected and condensed to convey particular meanings.

*Many factors influence comprehension of text, including proficiency with language (especially academic language, that is, complex sentence and discourse structures and vocabulary), content knowledge, and knowledge of and skill with the alphabetic code.*

In short, Meaning Making is a clear theme in the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards at all grade levels, and the transitional kindergarten through grade one span is no exception. In the next section, guidance centers on meaning making with text.

## Meaning Making with Text

In this section, which focuses on meaningful interactions with text, the terms *meaning making* and *comprehension* are used interchangeably. (See a definition of meaning making in figure 2.6 in chapter 2 of this *ELA/ELD Framework*.) Many factors influence comprehension of text, including proficiency with language (especially academic language, that is, complex sentence and discourse structures and vocabulary), content knowledge, and knowledge of and skill with the alphabetic code. These are addressed briefly in figure 3.3 and more extensively in subsequent subsections of this chapter.

3 For students who are deaf and hard of hearing who use American Sign Language as their primary language, the term *oral* refers to the use of sign language.

***Figure 3.3. Contributors to Meaning Making with Text***

Many strands or clusters of standards contribute to meaning making with text. Among them are the following:

- ***Those that help students develop a deeper understanding of literary and informational text.*** Students respond to probing questions, make inferences, connect new ideas and information to previous knowledge, and engage aesthetically and critically with a range of text. In the transitional kindergarten through grade one span much of this work is done through interactive read alouds. As students become more proficient in reading independently, a combination of interactive read alouds and reading text is used.
- ***Those that help students understand more complex language and discourse structures (i.e., academic language).*** Students build proficiency with more grammatically complex clauses, expanded noun and verb phrases, and complex sentences. Much of this work with young children is done orally at first, and then it is blended with reading text.
- ***Those that focus on developing students' vocabularies and knowledge of the concepts underlying these words.*** Students cannot understand either spoken or written text unless they know nearly all the words being used and the concepts embodied in those words.
- ***Those that contribute to students' knowledge about a subject and the manner by which the content is communicated.*** Knowledge has a major impact on readers' ability to engage meaningfully with the content of a text. Thus, material used in either oral or written form should contribute to students' growing knowledge about the world and of the ways in which that knowledge is conveyed (e.g., different text structures and features).
- ***Those that lead to mastery of the foundational skills so that students can independently—and with ease—access written language.*** Students learn how print works. They learn to decode written words accurately and with automaticity, that is, effortlessly and rapidly. They identify the sounds represented by letters in printed words and blend those sounds into words. With practice, the words become automatically recognized. Eventually, students reach the magic moment when they can use the foundational skills they have been acquiring to recognize enough decodable and high-frequency irregularly spelled words that written text becomes like speech and they can decode and understand new (that is, previously unencountered) text at their level. Most children should be able to read simple text independently by mid-first grade. A significant, but by no means exclusive, focus of the work in the transitional kindergarten through grade one span is devoted to instruction in foundational skills. As children become familiar with more complex spelling-sound patterns and have practiced enough words, their growing lexicon of automatically recognized words allows them to read increasingly complex text fluently and frees them to think about, enjoy, and learn from what they are reading. As children progress through the grades and develop more confidence in their reading ability, they can also productively struggle with text with concept loads, vocabulary, and language structures somewhat above their level.

- ***Those that contribute to motivation to read.*** A variety of interesting topics, acclaimed stories, and engaging activities can be highly motivational and facilitate learning to read. In addition, texts that reflect the cultural, home, and community backgrounds of students enable them to see themselves as part of the literate experience and therefore contribute to the motivation to engage in reading and other literacy experiences. (See also figure 3.2.)

*. . . young children should learn* from the start *that the purposes of written language include conveying information, sharing ideas, provoking questions, igniting curiosity, persuading, and entertaining, and they should be provided instruction that facilitates thoughtful interactions with text.*

A panel of experts in its report *Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade* (Shanahan, and others 2010, 5) makes clear the importance of meaning making as children engage with text: "Students who read with understanding at an early age gain access to a broader range of texts, knowledge, and educational opportunities, *making early reading comprehension instruction particularly critical*" (italics added). In other words, young children should learn *from the start* that the purposes of written language include conveying information, sharing ideas, provoking questions, igniting curiosity, persuading, and entertaining, and they should be provided instruction that facilitates thoughtful interactions with text. Such thoughtful interactions include critical thinking, a crucial 21st century skill (see chapter 10 of this *ELA/ELD Framework*). To delay instruction that targets meaning making until after children have acquired foundational skills is to serve children poorly.

Drawing on scientific evidence, the report outlines the following five recommendations for reading comprehension instruction in kindergarten through grade three:

- Teach students how to use reading comprehension strategies to help them understand and retain what they read.
- Teach students to identify and use the text's organizational structure to comprehend, learn, and remember content.
- Guide students through focused, high-quality discussion on the meaning of text.
- Select texts purposefully to support comprehension development.
- Establish an engaging and motivating context in which to teach reading comprehension.

Further, the panel notes that "To be successful, these five recommendations must be implemented in concert, and clearly explained in a rich educational context that includes the following: a comprehensive literacy curriculum, ample opportunity for students to read and write while being coached and monitored by teachers, additional instruction and practice for students based on the results of formal and informal assessments, and adequate resources for students and teachers" (8). In the following sections, the first two bulleted recommendations are addressed. The final three recommendations are included in other sections of this chapter (specifically, in the subsection on discussion in the section on effective expression and in figure 3.2; see also chapter 2 in this *ELA/ELD Framework*).

**Teaching Comprehension Strategies.** The research panel identifies in its report the following effective comprehension strategies: activating prior knowledge or making predictions; questioning; visualizing; monitoring, clarifying and fix-up strategies; inference making; and summarizing/retelling.

Each of these should be modeled and encouraged as children listen to and read texts. (See figure 4.4 in chapter 4 of this *ELA/ELD Framework* for brief descriptions of these strategies.) Questioning is the focus of this section.

During the transitional kindergarten through grade one span, children build skill in answering and asking questions about grade- and age-appropriate text. Both processes are related to comprehension (NICHD 2000). Teachers strategically use questions to guide and monitor children's understanding of the text. Because their purpose is to support children's understanding of text, questions should be, for the most part, text dependent; that is, they should require attention to the text. When teachers use predominantly text-independent questions, they render engagement with the text unnecessary as children are capable of participating in discussions without having listened to or read the text. Text-dependent questions guide children in attending to, thinking about, and learning from the text. Children learn to examine the text in order to answer questions. An emphasis on text-dependent questions in no way suggests that children are discouraged from drawing on their experiences and understandings of the world to interpret text. In fact, this is what thinking, critical readers do.

Questions posed by teachers include ones that extend children's thinking beyond literal understandings of the text. Higher-level questions, those that prompt inference making, synthesis, analysis, and critical thinking, are crucial for all children to consider throughout the years of schooling, including during transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, and grade one, if they are to achieve the goals described in the introduction and chapter 2 of this *ELA/ELD Framework* and displayed in the outer ring of figure 3.1 in this chapter.

Figure 3.4 provides examples of text-dependent and, for contrast, text-independent questions for *Mr. Popper's Penguins* by Richard and Florence Atwater (Atwater, Atwater, and Lawson 1988). This chapter book may serve as a read aloud selection for kindergarteners and grade one children who are ready to engage with longer texts over a period of weeks.

***Figure 3.4. Examples of Text-Dependent and Text-Independent Questions for* Mr. Popper's Penguins *by Richard and Florence Atwater***

| Text-Dependent Questions | Text-Independent Questions |
|---|---|
| *Literal Comprehension Questions:*<br>• What surprising package arrived in the mail?<br>• Why was the package sent to Mr. Popper?<br>• What reason is suspected for Captain Cook's declining health?<br>• What is Captain Cook's response to Greta?<br>• How do the penguins affect the Poppers' lives?<br>*Inferential Comprehension Questions:*<br>• How do the Poppers feel about owning so many penguins? What in the book contributes to your conclusion?<br>• Based on the events in the story up to this point, what do you think will become of the penguins and the Poppers? Why do you think so? | • What surprise package would you like to receive in the mail?<br>• Have you ever seen a penguin?<br>• What do penguins look like?<br>• Have you been to a zoo? What animals most interested you?<br>• Penguins are birds that cannot fly. Why do you suppose that is?<br>• In this story, Captain Cook is sad. What are some reasons a character might be sad?<br>• Would you like to own several penguins? Why or why not? What animals do you own? |

In addition to responding to teacher-posed questions, children learn to generate their own questions as they or the teacher reads. In doing so, they actively engage with the text and comprehension is enhanced (NIHCD 2000, Shanahan, and others 2010). Teachers model asking themselves questions as they read aloud with children; they prompt children's questions by asking them at points in a selection what they want to know or what the just-read event or information makes them wonder; and they assist students in formulating questions. They discuss and provide examples of who, what, when, where, why, and how questions. The gradual release of responsibility model discussed in chapter 2 of this *ELA/ELD Framework* may be employed. Some children need more modeling and scaffolding than others.

*When teachers make transparent the different ways text types are organized and highlight the language used in different texts and tasks, all children, and ELs in particular, are in a better position to comprehend the texts they listen to and read, discuss the content, and write their own texts.*

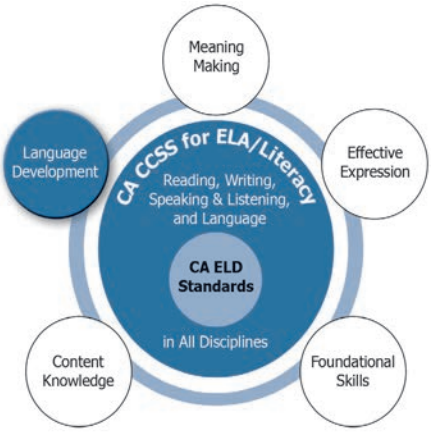
**Developing a Sense of Text Structure.** As noted above, the panel examining research on improving reading comprehension in the primary grades concludes that children's ability to identify and use a text's organizational structure contributes to comprehension (Shanahan, and others 2010). Furthermore, they note that children can develop a sense of text structure as early as kindergarten. A narrative structure is generally used for stories, including fiction and nonfiction (such as Wendy Tokuda's *Humphrey the Lost Whale: A True Story*). It typically includes an introduction to characters, a setting, a goal or problem, a plot focused on achievement of the goal or overcoming the problem, and a resolution. Nonnarrative texts use other structures, such as description, sequence, problem and solution, cause and effect, and compare and contrast. Certain words often signal the type of structure. For example, compare and contrast structures typically employ words such as *both, different, alike, unlike, but,* and *however*.

Beginning in the early years, children should have ample exposure to and sufficient instruction in the range of text structures so that they can use their knowledge of text structures to understand increasingly challenging texts in the grade span and the years ahead. Thus, making available and engaging children as listeners, readers, and writers of a range of literary and informational texts is crucial, as is talking explicitly about different text structures while sharing books and modeling writing that employs the structures. (See figure 2.2 in chapter 2 for the range of text types.)

When teachers make transparent the different ways text types are organized and highlight the language used in different texts and tasks, all children, and ELs in particular, are in a better position to comprehend the texts they listen to and read, discuss the content, and write their own texts. Children experiencing difficulty with meaning making may benefit from more instruction directed at and opportunities to engage with and practice identifying a range of text structures.

## *Language Development*

Language plays a major role in learning. Indeed, its ongoing development is imperative if students are to achieve the goals set forth in the introduction to this *ELA/ELD Framework* and displayed in the outer ring of figure 3.1. Language development should be a central focus of schooling, in all areas of the curricula, beginning in the first years.




Both the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and CA ELD Standards for kindergarten and grade one reflect the importance of language development. Each strand of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy includes attention to language. For example, children learn to determine the meaning of words and phrases in texts in the Reading strand (RL/

RI.K–1.4). Children make progress toward crafting their written language (including through dictation) in such a way as to express an opinion (W.K–1.1), inform or explain (W.K–1.2), and narrate events (W.K–1.3). In doing so they employ different text structures, grammatical structures, and vocabulary. They build skill in the effective use of language as they engage in focused discussions on grade-level topics and texts (SL.K–1.1). And, they build skill in determining the meaning of words that are used in texts and in grade-level content (L.K–1.4), examining word relationships (L.K–1.5) and appropriately using new language (L.K–1.6). The CA ELD Standards in total center on building ELs' proficiency in the range of rigorous academic English language skills necessary for participation in and achievement of grade-level content. The CA ELD Standards amplify the emphasis on language development and language awareness in the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy.

Transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, and grade one instruction places a premium on language development for all children. Because language is acquired largely through exposure to and purposeful use of language in a range of meaningful contexts, teachers establish language-rich environments for children. They model the use of broad vocabulary and varied grammatical and discourse structures as they interact with children, deliver instruction and facilitate learning experiences across the curricula, and discuss classroom routines. They read aloud texts that stretch children's language, drawing attention to and commenting on interesting sentences and discourse structures and new or key vocabulary. They engage children in genuine discussions about their experiences, their interests, current events, and the curricula. They provide stimulating, social learning activities and investigations that fuel conversations. They act on the knowledge that children learn language by using it.

*Transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, and grade one instruction places a premium on language development for all children. Because language is acquired largely through exposure to and purposeful use of language in a range of meaningful contexts, teachers establish language-rich environments for children.*

These opportunities for oral language are crucial for children's language development, whatever the primary/home language and language of instruction. They are also central to learning an additional language (as in the case of ELs learning English and children participating in dual immersion programs). In addition, they are vital for children who may have had limited exposure to the kind of language found in written texts (Dickinson and Smith 1994).

The CA ELD Standards highlight and amplify language development. Part I of the CA ELD Standards, "Interacting in Meaningful Ways," ensures that EL children have opportunities to use English to engage in dialogue with others (collaborative mode), comprehend and analyze texts (interpretive mode), and create oral and written texts (productive mode). Part II, "Learning About How English Works," focuses on developing children's abilities to use the language resources English affords for different purposes and contexts. Students learn how language is used to create different text types (e.g., how a story is typically organized sequentially with predictable stages, how an opinion piece is organized around a stated point of view and explained with reasons and information), how descriptive vocabulary or prepositional phrases can enrich and expand their ideas (e.g., *I like pizza*. → *Pizza is scrumptious*.), and how language can be used to combine or condense their ideas in particular ways (e.g., *She's a doctor. She's amazing. She saved the animals.* → *She's the amazing doctor who saved the animals.*)

The next section focuses on vocabulary instruction. It is followed by a brief discussion of the impact of reading aloud to children on their language development. Teaching language conventions is addressed in the forthcoming section on effective expression.

## Vocabulary Instruction

In the transitional kindergarten through grade one span, as in all grade levels, children are provided thoughtful and deliberate vocabulary instruction that involves providing children with extensive experiences with language, creating a word conscious environment, teaching specific words, and teaching word-learning strategies. (See chapter 2 of this *ELA/ELD Framework*.) The latter two are discussed here. See the grade-level sections of this chapter for additional information.

*Some words are best previewed before engaging with a text or content area investigation (such as those that substantially impact meaning), some are discussed at the time of use (such as those for which a synonym may be supplied), and some are explored in depth afterwards (such as those that are likely to be encountered in many contexts).*

Selected words from literary and informational texts and content area instruction (e.g., history–social science, science, mathematics, and the arts) are defined and discussed at different points in the instructional cycle. Some words are best previewed before engaging with a text or content area investigation (such as those that substantially impact meaning), some are discussed at the time of use (such as those for which a synonym may be supplied), and some are explored in depth afterwards (such as those that are likely to be encountered in many contexts). The curriculum is designed so that children have multiple exposures to new vocabulary. For example, text sets on a grade-level topic are created so that children experience a target word used in different texts. And, content area curricula are well organized so that new concepts, and the accompanying vocabulary, are developed coherently and over time. In addition, teachers intentionally use the new vocabulary in written and oral interactions, including during discussions and hands-on experiences, with children throughout the day in order to model appropriate and wide application of the words.

Students explore and build an understanding of the relationships among words and nuances in word meanings (L.K–1.5). Importantly, words are learned in an instructional context that contributes to meaning. There is a reason for learning the words: they are relevant to a text being read, the children's lives, or content under study. Words that are taught in depth are those that children need in order to develop as literate individuals.

Word-learning strategies for determining the meaning of unknown words are also part of instruction. Children learn about and use knowledge of word parts (such as the use of the prefixes *un-* and *pre-*) to determine a word's meaning (L.K.4b and L.1.4b and c). In grade one, they also learn to use sentence-level context as a clue for the meaning of a word or phrase (L.1.4).

## Reading Aloud

Reading aloud is a powerful way to develop young children's language. Effective read alouds are interactive, and teachers stop at strategic points in a text to model their thinking, ponder interesting questions with children, and highlight features of language or plot. Teachers read aloud to students daily from a range of texts, and they engage them in discussions about the content and language of the texts. Reading aloud thus provides access for all children, especially ELs and children who have limited read-aloud experiences in English at home, to complex texts that contain general academic and domain-specific vocabulary, a variety of grammatical structures, and ideas worth discussing.

*Effective read alouds are interactive, and teachers stop at strategic points in a text to model their thinking, ponder interesting questions with children, and highlight features of language or plot.*

When reading aloud, teachers create a positive socio-emotional climate for young children. The read aloud is an engaging experience for both the teacher and children. To ensure that read alouds are optimally beneficial for all children, teachers plan high-quality lessons in

*To ensure that read alouds are optimally beneficial for all children, teachers plan high-quality lessons in advance, provide appropriate levels of scaffolding and accommodations, select texts carefully, observe their students during the read aloud, and adjust their teaching accordingly.*

advance, provide appropriate levels of scaffolding and accommodations, select texts carefully, observe their students during the read aloud, and adjust their teaching accordingly.

The quality of the texts used for read alouds matters. Informational texts are rich in content, contain both domain-specific and general academic vocabulary, and are interesting to young children. Narrative texts contain an abundance of general academic vocabulary, are entertaining, and provide multiple opportunities for students to make inferences. They tell great stories, promote reflection and conversation about ideas and events, lend themselves to rich retellings, and are so engaging that children want to experience them over and over again (Beck and McKeown 2001).

Questions posed during and after teacher read alouds not only focus on literal comprehension (e.g., *Who are the characters? What is the setting?),* they also promote deeper student thinking and extended discussions and provide opportunities for children to retell, infer, and elaborate (e.g., *How does Lilly feel about her little brother after he is born? How do you know?*). Teachers observe how students use comprehension strategies and how they develop understandings about content and language during read aloud experiences.

When teachers read aloud texts that contain complex grammatical and discourse structures and academic vocabulary, young children are provided access to language and content that they are not yet able to interact with in written form themselves. Children who are not yet fluent readers are then free to focus their mental energy on the language and ideas presented in the text. They learn vocabulary, grammatical structures, and discourse practices as they gain familiarity with high-quality literature and acquire content knowledge. These experiences help prepare them to read rich and complex texts independently as they progress through the grades. Figures 3.5 and 3.6 present examples of the rich language found in many high-quality literary and informational texts.

***Figure 3.5. Selected Academic Vocabulary and Complex Grammatical Structures from* Rumpelstiltskin *by Paul O. Zelinsky***

| General Academic Vocabulary | Complex Grammatical Structures |
|---|---|
| encountered<br>impress<br>passion<br>slightest<br>delighted<br>rejoiced<br>scarcely<br>piteously<br>inquiries | • Now, the king had a passion for gold, and such an art intrigued him.<br>• There sat the poor miller's daughter, without the slightest idea how anyone could spin straw into gold.<br>• So he led the miller's daughter to a larger room filled with straw, and he ordered her to spin this straw too before dawn, if she valued her life. |

***Figure 3.6. Selected Academic Vocabulary and Complex Grammatical Structures from* Surprising Sharks *by Nicola Davies***

| General Academic Vocabulary | Domain-Specific Vocabulary | Complex Grammatical Structures |
|---|---|---|
| avoid (p. 10)<br>blend (p. 10)<br>patterned (p. 11)<br>replace (p. 16)<br>basic (p. 17)<br>sensitive (p. 20)<br>detect (p. 21) | fins (p. 14)<br>scales (p. 15)<br>gill (p. 15)<br>cartilage (p. 17)<br>plankton (p. 22)<br>species (p. 23) | • Inside the gill slits there is a very thin layer of skin that lets oxygen from the water get into the shark's blood, just as our lungs let oxygen from the air into our blood when we breathe. (p. 15)<br>• Every animal has nerves, which are like cables carrying electrical messages around the body. (p. 21) |

Teachers encourage reading aloud at home. They collaborate with parents and other caregivers to share ways of reading aloud, including ways that support school learning. Parents or other caregivers of ELs are encouraged to read aloud in the child's primary language.

Teachers ensure that they and others read aloud from a wide range of books. In addition to promoting language development, exposure to myriad genres and topics contributes to children's progress toward becoming broadly literate, which is one of the overarching goals of California's ELA/literacy and ELD instruction. (See the introduction and chapter 2 of this *ELA/ELD Framework* and the outer ring of figure 3.1 for a discussion of goals. See also the section in chapter 2 on reading aloud.)

## *Effective Expression*

In the earliest grades, children begin to make progress toward expressing themselves effectively. They use their developing language to make their wishes and opinions known. They convey information in such a way that others can understand. They ask questions to meet their cognitive (and other) needs and satisfy their curiosity. Multiple standards across the strands of Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language contribute to children's progress in effective expression. This section includes an overview of effective expression in writing, discussing, and presenting, as well as using grade-appropriate language conventions. Additional guidance is provided in the grade-level sections of this chapter.

### Writing

The writing standards reflect an emphasis on meaningful and skillful communication. Children's writing (as dictated or independently produced) is *about something*: the expression of opinions (W.K–1.1), sharing of information (W.K–1.2), and telling of stories (W.K–1.3). Furthermore, children share their writing with others and respond to their questions and suggestions to more effectively communicate their thinking in written language (W.K–1.5). In other words, as noted in the previous section on meaning making, writing is not simply copying text. It is using the understanding that print is purposeful in concert with the skills that are being acquired to create and communicate, to express ideas and information—for oneself or for others.

In the transitional kindergarten through grade one span, children begin to express themselves through writing by making marks, drawing, and dictating their ideas to an adult or older student.

*During the early years of schooling, children are provided many exemplars of high-quality written language, including through the texts they are exposed to and though the models provided by their teacher who writes with and for them on a daily basis.*

And, they begin to use the alphabetic code as their own tool for their own purposes. (See chapter 4 for a discussion of spelling development.) Children are taught and observe that writing is about conveying meaning, and that written language is the communicative mode by which they can learn much about their world (through reading) and can express their thoughts and, if they wish, to make them available for others to read (through writing). Young children find satisfaction in their increasing abilities to express themselves in print.

During the early years of schooling, children are provided many exemplars of high-quality written language, including through the texts they are exposed to and though the models provided by their teacher who writes with and for them on a daily basis. They examine the author's craft (RL/RI.K–1, Standards 4–9). Children make progress toward developing and organizing their ideas in writing. They, with more or less assistance depending upon the complexity of the task relative to their skills, compose different types of text: opinion, informative/explanatory, and narrative texts (W.K–1, Standards 1–3). They learn to add details to strengthen their writing (W.K–1.5). With guidance and support, they produce and publish their literary and informational writing in a variety of formats, sometimes with the use of technology (W.K–1.6).

In the transitional kindergarten through grade one span, children have many opportunities to write in a range of contexts, for a range of purposes and audiences, and in a range of formats. They write about imaginary or real experiences, about texts they have engaged with, and about subject matter they are learning in every content area. They learn that writing is a powerful skill that can provide an outlet for personal expression and reflection and that it can serve to entertain, inform, and influence others. Children employ their developing writing skills to pursue their goals as learners and as members of a community.

The CA ELD Standards serve as a guide to support ELs' achievement toward effective expression in writing. They highlight and amplify skills that contribute to writing: Children learn through integrated and designated ELD about how texts are structured, how to expand their ideas using rich language, and how to connect their ideas within sentences and throughout entire texts to create more interesting, informative, or persuasive pieces of writing.

### Discussing

The Speaking and Listening strand emphasizes skillful and meaningful informal and formal communication with peers and adults. Beginning in the first years of schooling, children develop their abilities to communicate clearly with others in academic settings. They participate in discussions that center on texts and topics, and they learn to ask and answer questions to clarify understanding (SL.K–1, Standards 1–3). They communicate their understandings and ideas as they engage in one-on-one, small-group, and whole-class discussions. Teachers ensure that children converse with diverse partners, and they teach children how to take turns, listen to others' comments, build on others' ideas, and ask for and provide clarification as needed. Teachers implement a variety of discussion structures to ensure equitable participation. Importantly, they provide interesting, intellectually stimulating environments that promote conversations about academic topics. Teachers of young children recognize the

*Teachers ensure that children converse with diverse partners, and they teach children how to take turns, listen to others' comments, build on one another's ideas, and ask for and provide clarification as needed.*

crucial role these years play in their students' continuum of learning toward—years later—the achievement of the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening in Comprehension and Collaboration (CCR.SL.1–3).

Four factors contribute to the success of young children's discussion of text, according to a research panel (Shanahan, and others 2010, 23–28). Two are related to planning and two are related to sustaining and expanding the discussion. In terms of planning, the panel recommends that teachers:

- Ensure that texts are compelling enough to spark discussion; in other words, the topic should be interesting to the children and the discussion should be worth having
- Prepare higher-order questions that prompt children to think more deeply about the text

In terms of sustaining and expanding discussions, the panel recommends that teachers:

- Ask follow-up questions to encourage and facilitate the discussion
- Provide opportunities, with ample scaffolding, for children to engage in peer-led discussions

As citizens of the 21st century, children begin to engage in discussions with others well beyond the local setting. For example, some teachers facilitate online interactive video calls with partner classrooms in another region or country.

### Presenting

Even in the earliest grades, children begin to build the skills needed for the effective presentation of knowledge and ideas so important to their educations, careers, and civic participation in the years ahead (SL.K–1, Standards 4–6). Presenting requires more formal language use than discussion as well as a heightened awareness of audience. Presenting typically includes preparation, especially in organizing ideas or points. It sometimes includes drawings or other visual displays to provide detail or clarification (SL.K–1.4). Children are given many opportunities, with age-appropriate guidance and support, to present for both small and large groups during the transitional kindergarten through grade one span—often (but not exclusively) in the form of "sharing" (or "show and tell"). Importantly, children are taught how to respond positively, respectfully, and actively as listeners.

*Children are given many opportunities, with age-appropriate guidance and support, to present for both small and large groups during the transitional kindergarten through grade one span . . .*

Effective presentations interest both speakers and listeners, and children have choices in what they wish to present. Furthermore, presenting should be a psychologically safe and affirming experience for all children.

Some presentations, such as small group presentations of songs or poetry, are recorded and shared virtually, with appropriate permissions, with broad audiences. Multilingual presentations may be developed drawing upon the languages of the children.

### Using Language Conventions

One aspect of effective expression is the use of language conventions. Young children differ from one another in their knowledge of and exposure to the conventions of standard English, and teachers teach conventions explicitly, gently guiding young children toward their proficient use in both written and spoken expression. It is important to note that grammar and its usage rarely develop in a linear path, and that as children synthesize new grammatical knowledge with their current knowledge, it may appear that they are making "errors" in areas of language development they have already internalized. However, these incorrect usages (such as saying *goed* to signify past tense of *go*) are a natural part of language development.

Spelling is one of the language conventions in which children make great strides during the transitional kindergarten through grade one span. The language standards related to spelling are closely tied to the foundational skills discussed in a forthcoming section of this chapter. During the span, children:

- Write a letter or letters for most consonant and short-vowel sounds (phonemes). (L.K.2c)
- Spell simple words phonetically, drawing on knowledge of sound-letter relationships. (L.K.2d)
- Use conventional spelling for words with common spelling patterns and for frequently occurring irregular words. (L.1.2d)
- Spell untaught words phonetically, drawing on phonemic awareness and spelling conventions. (L.1.2e)

See the grade-level sections for more information. See also chapter 4 in this *ELA/ELD Framework* for a discussion of spelling development.

## *Content Knowledge*

Content knowledge other than ELA, is largely the purview of other frameworks and model curricula published by the California Department of Education (http://www.cde.ca.gov/). A few examples include frameworks on history–social science, health, visual and performing arts, and the Education and the Environment Initiative Curriculum (http://www.californiaeei.org/Curriculum/). However, given the reciprocal relationship between content knowledge and literacy and language development and the call for integration of the curricula, discussions of content knowledge are included throughout this *ELA/ELD Framework*.

Decades of research indicate that knowledge contributes to reading and writing achievement. The more an individual knows about a topic, the more success he or she likely has engaging meaningfully with text and others about the topic. Furthermore, knowledge of subject matter is accompanied by, and indeed cannot be separated from, language development. Words, sentence structures, and discourse structures differ across subject matter (Shanahan and Shanahan 2012), and so content learning contributes to the development of language, especially academic language. In short, content knowledge facilitates literacy and language development.

> *Words, sentence structures, and discourse structures differ across subject matter, and so content learning contributes to the development of language, especially academic language.*

The reciprocal is true as well. Not only does content knowledge impact literacy and language development, but literacy and language development provide students with the tools to independently access, acquire, and construct domain and general world knowledge. The more skilled children are in the language arts (that is, reading, writing, speaking, and listening), the more they can learn about the world.

Two points about content area instruction are crucial. First, content area instruction should be given adequate time in the school day, including during the earliest years of schooling. Second, content area instruction should include attention to literacy and language development in the subject matter along with subject-matter appropriate pedagogy (e.g., meaningful hands-on investigations, explorations, projects, demonstrations, and discussions).

Three aspects of the ELA/literacy instruction that support content learning are discussed here. These include wide reading, engaging with informational texts, and engaging in research.

## Wide Reading

Interactions with texts contribute to knowledge (Cunningham and Stanovich 1998). Indeed, the more individuals read, the more knowledge they acquire. This knowledge, in turn, supports further literacy and language achievement. Children's exposure to a wide range of texts occurs, in transitional kindergarten through grade one, largely through listening to and engaging with a broad—and cohesive—range of texts read aloud by an adult. As children achieve some independence with text, teachers encourage their individual engagement with texts on a daily basis while continuing to read aloud. They ensure that each child interacts with a range of texts on a range of topics. (See chapter 2 of this *ELA/ELD Framework* for a discussion of wide and independent reading.)

> *They [teachers] have ample selections, in English and in the languages of the children, available to share with children, both as read alouds and for independent exploration.*

Teachers are well versed in high-quality children's literature of all genres; each genre, including fiction, can contribute to children's knowledge. They have ample selections, in English and in the languages of the children, available to share with children, both as read alouds and for independent exploration. Recommendations are exchanged with families. Colleagues, teacher librarians, families, and communities are good resources of materials for classroom teachers. Wide reading begins early and contributes to children's progress toward becoming broadly literate, one of the overarching goals for California's students discussed in the introduction and chapter 2 of this *ELA/ELD Framework* and displayed in the outer ring of figure 3.1.

## Engaging with Informational Text

The CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy include ten standards in the Reading strand that focus on reading informational text (RI.K–1, Standards 1–10). These standards underscore the importance of building children's skill with this genre. Informational text is a valuable source of knowledge. However, engaging with informational texts, though crucial, does not replace the learning experiences and investigations that are essential aspects of content instruction. Instead, it complements them.

During the transitional kindergarten through grade one span, about half of the texts children engage with (including those read aloud by teachers) are informational texts. Informational texts are different from narrative texts in several ways, placing different demands on the reader (Duke 2000). Informational texts convey disciplinary knowledge, such as concepts and content in history/social studies, science, and the arts, and are characterized by use of domain-specific and general academic vocabulary. In addition, some informational texts employ features not found in most narratives: tables of contents, glossaries, diagrams, charts, bolded text, and headings. Furthermore, many informational texts make use of organizational structures different than the story grammar (i.e., setting, characters, problem or goal, sequence of events, resolution) used in most narratives, such as cause-effect, problem-solution, and compare-contrast. Experiences with informational texts provide children familiarity with the types of texts that predominate later schooling and careers. The important role of informational text in curriculum and instruction was recognized in California's 2007 *Reading/Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools* (CDE 2007) and continues to be recognized in this *ELA/ELD Framework*.

> *Informational texts capitalize on young children's natural curiosity in their world, and their use is fundamental to building children's competence with a variety of genres as well as to building their knowledge.*

Informational texts capitalize on young children's natural curiosity in their world, and their use is fundamental to building children's competence with a variety of genres as well as to building their knowledge. To support the former, instruction is provided that

*Some texts are read aloud by the teacher due to their more challenging nature and some are read, with instructional support, by children in small or large groups, or independently.*

addresses the features and structures of texts. To support the latter, a coherent program of informational text interactions is implemented. That is, informational texts are not selected randomly. They are chosen on the basis of children's interests and grade-level content standards, topics, and themes. If children show an interest in reptiles, for example, teachers share and make available many texts about reptiles, thus building children's knowledge of the subject, including its language. Some texts are read aloud by the teacher due to their more challenging nature and some are read, with instructional support, by children in small or large groups, or independently.

At the same time, teachers deliberately select informational texts that contribute to grade-level science, social studies, and other curricula. For example, one goal in the visual arts curriculum for California's kindergarteners is that children explore principles of design. When these concepts are introduced and developed, teachers share informational texts that reinforce and extend understanding, such as Nancy Elizabeth Wallace and Linda K. Friedlaender's *Look! Look! Look!* and Molly Bang's *Picture This: How Pictures Work*. The more children learn about their worlds through hands-on experiences, discussions, and text interactions, the more they benefit as future readers and writers in general and as learners in content areas.

### Engaging in Research

Starting as transitional kindergarteners, children participate in shared research projects that may be completed in a single day or that extend over several days or even longer (W.K–1.7). They work in collaboration with peers, with ample guidance from an adult, to pursue topics of interest, seeking information from a variety of sources, including texts (digital and paper), media, peers, and adults. They also, with guidance and support, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question (W.K–1.8). Engaging in these projects contributes to children's knowledge. Notably, the collaborative nature of research projects, in which children interact in meaningful ways with their peers about the rich content they are learning, also promotes language development. Children express themselves, attend carefully to what their peers are saying, interpret information from texts and other resources, and write or create a product that conveys their understanding of the content. Reading and speaking and listening standards of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the collaborative, interpretive, and productive skills outlined in the CA ELD Standards are richly employed in joint research projects. Likewise, writing standards are addressed when children record their questions, processes, and findings in writing.

## *Foundational Skills*

Careful, systematic attention is given to development of the foundational skills during the early years, as these skills play a critical role in reading success (Brady 2012, NICHD 2000) and the achievement of the goals of ELA/ELD instruction discussed in the introduction and chapter 2 to this *ELA/ELD Framework* and displayed in the outer ring of figure 3.1. The CA CCSS Reading Standards for Foundational Skills and Part III of the CA ELD Standards ("Using Foundational Literacy Skills") are directed toward fostering children's understanding and working knowledge of concepts of print, phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, and fluency. Several standards in the Language strand, especially those in which children learn to print upper- and lowercase letters (L.K–1.1) and learn to write a letter or letters for

consonant and short-vowel sounds and spell words phonetically (L.K–1.2), are highly related to the foundational skills standards.

The CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy state, "foundational skills are not an end in and of themselves; rather, they are necessary and important components of an effective, comprehensive reading program designed to develop proficient readers with the capacity to comprehend texts across a range of types and disciplines" (CDE 2013a, 17). This section addresses foundational skills instruction in English. For guidance on teaching foundational skills in Spanish, see the Spanish translation and linguistic augmentation of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy (Common Core en Español, https://commoncore-espanol.sdcoe.net/). Guidance on teaching foundational skills in other languages, including American Sign Language, is forthcoming.

*Acquisition of the foundational skills of reading is essential for independence with printed language.*

Acquisition of the foundational skills of reading is essential for independence with printed language. (See figure 3.7.) During the transitional kindergarten through grade one span, children develop concepts about print and achieve phonemic awareness, the most difficult level of phonological awareness (RF.K–1, Standards 1–2). They develop phonics skills: Children learn letter-sound and spelling-sound correspondences and how to use that knowledge to decode words (RF.K–1.3). They make great strides in fluency, which emphasizes accuracy with progress also being made in automaticity and prosody during this span (RF.K–1.4). When provided supports, accommodations, and research-based instruction, students with disabilities master foundational literacy skills. An overview of each of the foundational skills is presented here. Grade-level specific guidance is provided in the grade-level sections.

***Figure 3.7. Independence with the Code***

A major goal of early reading instruction is to teach children the skills that allow them to independently engage with print. One of these skills is decoding printed words. Mastering this skill begins the process of automatically recognizing words, which frees readers to think about what they read.

By sounding out or decoding a new word, the learner connects the letters or letter combinations with the sounds they represent and blends those sounds into a recognizable spoken word with its attendant meaning. (The spoken word should already be in the beginning reader's vocabulary, and the learner should understand that the point of decoding is to access meaning.) After a word is decoded several times, this sound-symbol-meaning package becomes established. In subsequent encounters with the word in print, the learner recognizes and understands the word at a glance in much the way he or she understands a familiar spoken word.

Ensuring that children know how to decode regularly spelled one-syllable words by mid-first grade is crucial to their progress in becoming independent readers. (Instruction in decoding simple words begins for many children in kindergarten.) Beginning readers need several skills in order to decode printed words. Learners need to be phonemically aware (especially able to segment and blend phonemes); know the letters of the alphabet, letter-sound and spelling-sound correspondences, and other print concepts; and understand the alphabetic principle (that is, that letters and letter combinations represent the sounds of spoken language). Beginning readers are taught to use this knowledge to generate and blend sounds represented

Beginning readers are taught to use this knowledge to generate and blend sounds represented in print to form recognizable words. Instruction begins with simple letter-sound relationships and systematically progresses to more complex ones. Sequences of letter-sound instruction usually start with consonants and short vowels and reading and spelling consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words. Instruction in long vowels (those spelled with an ending e), consonant blends, diphthongs, and other letter combinations follows and progresses from high-frequency to less common letter-sound relationships. By the end of second grade, students know all useful spelling patterns and the sounds they represent and can accurately decode words that contain them, including two-syllable words. To develop automaticity with decoding (that is, to decode nearly effortlessly and with little conscious attention), learners need practice in decoding a variety of words containing the letter-sound and spelling-sound patterns they are learning. The amount of practice needed varies by child.

Students also need to learn to rapidly recognize high-frequency words with irregular or uncommon spelling-sound patterns—words for which decoding is less useful. Multiple exposures, in isolation and in context, are typically required. Moreover, learners need to expand their vocabularies so that decoding and sight word recognition result in meaning making. Learning to spell words containing the spelling-sound patterns being introduced reinforces students' understanding of the alphabetic principle.

Gaining independence with English orthography can be difficult. English is not a *transparent* orthography, like Spanish, in which there is a one-to-one match between letters and sounds. Rather, English is an *opaque* or *deep* orthography and uses 26 letters to represent more than 40 sounds. Some letters represent more than one sound, such as the sounds represented by the letter *a* in *ape*, *apple*, and *again*. Some sounds are represented by two letters, such as *th* and *sh*, and some sounds are represented in more than one way, such as the long a (ā) sound in *fate*, *bait*, *way*, *hey*, *straight*, *freight*. As a result, learning about the relationship between letters and sounds is complex.

The complexity of English can be confusing to many students. Therefore, instruction should begin with simple patterns and build to more complex ones. This systematic approach uses words in beginning reading instruction that are more regular and thus more similar to transparent languages. Ultimately, all of these practices support children in becoming independent with the code.

## Print Concepts

Print concepts are the organization and basic features of written English. Children learn the directionality of written English; that spoken words are represented by specific sequences of letters; that written words are separated by spaces, upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet; and distinguishing features of sentences (RF.K–1.1a–d). Some of the print concepts standards are related to phonics and word recognition standards (e.g., RF.K–1.3a whereby children learn letter-sound and spelling-sound correspondences) and language standards (e.g., L.K–1.1a whereby children learn to print letters). See the grade-level sections in this chapter for further discussion.

## Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness is the awareness of and ability to manipulate the sound units in spoken language. It includes attending to syllables, onsets and rimes, or phonemes, the smallest unit of sound in a spoken language. Figure 3.8 provides information about these units.

It is essential that children develop phonological awareness early in the elementary school years, with the goal of attaining phonemic awareness, the most difficult and important level, by the end of grade one, if not well before (RF.1.2). The reason phonemic awareness development is crucial is that English is predominantly an alphabetic orthography, one in which written symbols represent phonemes. Children are best positioned to understand the logic of and gain independence with the English written system when they are aware that spoken language consists of phonemes. Phonemic awareness is crucial for developing an understanding of the alphabetic principle, which is that individual sounds in spoken words can be represented by letters or groups of letters in print. The relationship between phonemic awareness and success in reading acquisition is well documented (NICHD 2000).

***Figure 3.8. Phonological Units of Speech***

| Phonological Unit | Definition | Example |
|---|---|---|
| **Syllable*** | A unit of speech consisting of one uninterrupted vowel sound, which may or may not be flanked by one or more consonants, uttered with a single impulse of the voice | The spoken word *man* has one syllable: /man/<br>*going* has two syllables: /go/-/ing/<br>*computer* has three syllables: /com/-/pu/-/ter/<br>*information* has four syllables: /in/-/for/-/ma/-/tion/ |
| **Onset** | The part of a spoken syllable (consonant or blend) that precedes the vowel<br>Some syllables do not have an onset. | /bl/ in the spoken word *black*<br>/st/ in *stop*<br>/r/ in *run*<br>There is no onset in the syllable *on.* |
| **Rime** | The part of a spoken syllable that includes the vowel and any consonants that follow<br>All syllables have a rime because all syllables have a vowel sound. | /og/ in the spoken word *dog*<br>/on/ in *on*<br>/and/ in *sand* |
| **Phoneme** | The smallest unit of sound in speech<br>English consists of about 43 phonemes.** | /p/ /ă/ and /n/ in the spoken word *pan*<br>/th/ /r/ and /ē/ in *three*<br>/ŭ/ and /p/ in *up* |

*The six syllable types in written English are described in chapter 4.

**The number of phonemes in English identified by linguists varies depending upon the phonetic description used (Moats 2000).

Figure 3.9 provides the 43 commonly identified English phonemes. Other languages have more or fewer phonemes.

***Figure 3.9. English Phonemes***

| Symbol | As heard in . . . | Symbol | As heard in . . . |
|---|---|---|---|
| /ā/ | **a**ngel, r**ai**n | /g/ | **g**ift, do**g** |
| /ă/ | c**a**t, **a**pple | /h/ | **h**appy, **h**at |
| /ē/ | **ea**t, s**ee**d | /j/ | **j**ump, bri**dg**e |
| /ĕ/ | **e**cho, r**e**d | /l/ | **l**ip, fa**ll** |
| /ī/ | **i**sland, l**igh**t | /m/ | **m**other, ho**m**e |
| /ĭ/ | **i**n, s**i**t | /n/ | **n**ose, o**n** |
| /ō/ | **oa**tmeal, b**o**ne | /p/ | **p**encil, **p**o**p** |
| /ŏ/ | **o**ctopus, m**o**m | /r/ | **r**ain, ca**r**e |
| /ŭ/ | **u**p, h**u**m | /s/ | **s**oup, fa**c**e |
| /o͞o/ | **oo**dles, m**oo**n | /t/ | **t**ime, ca**t** |
| /o͝o/ | p**u**t, b**oo**k | /v/ | **v**ine, o**f** |
| /ə/ | **a**bove, sof**a** | /wh/ | **wh**at, **wh**y |
| /oi/, /oy/ | **oi**l, b**oy** | /w/ | **w**et, **w**ind |
| /ou/, /ow/ | **ou**t, c**ow** | /y/ | **y**es, be**y**ond |
| /aw/, /ô/ | **aw**ful, c**au**ght | /z/ | **z**oo, becau**s**e |
| är | c**ar,** f**ar** | /th/ | **th**ing, heal**th** |
| ôr | f**our, or** | /th/ | **th**is, bro**th**er |
| ûr | h**er,** b**ir**d**,** t**ur**n | /sh/ | **sh**out, ma**ch**ine |
| /b/ | **b**a**b**y, cri**b** | /zh/ | plea**s**ure, vi**s**ion |
| /k/ | **c**up, sti**ck** | /ch/ | **ch**ildren, scra**tch** |
| /d/ | **d**og, en**d** | /ng/ | ri**ng,** fi**ng**er |
| /f/ | **p**hone, gol**f** | | |

**Source**

Yopp, Hallie K., and Ruth H. Yopp. 2011. *Purposeful Play for Early Childhood Phonological Awareness*, 13. Huntington Beach, CA: Shell Education. Reprinted with permission.

Phonological awareness develops along a multidimensional continuum (Phillips, Clancy-Menchetti, and Lonigan 2008), which should be considered when designing a sequence of instruction. Generally, children learn to attend to and manipulate larger units before smaller units. Although less a phonological than a meaningful unit of speech, the concept of word is learned (as demonstrated when children count the number of words in a spoken sentence, for example). The general progression of phonological skills, from least to most difficult, is as follows (NGA/CCSSO 2010a, Appendix A):

*Phonological awareness develops along a multidimensional continuum, which should be considered when designing a sequence of instruction.*

- Rhyme recognition
- Repetition and creation of alliteration
- Syllable counting or identification
- Onset and rime manipulation
- Phoneme manipulation

In addition, sound units can be manipulated a number of ways. The general progression, from least to most difficult, is as follows:

- Sound unit identity
- Sound unit isolation
- Sound unit blending
- Sound unit segmentation
- Sound unit addition
- Sound unit substitution
- Sound unit deletion

The most important among these are phoneme blending and segmentation.

Finally, the type of sounds determines the ease or difficulty with which they can be identified and manipulated. For example, continuous sounds (e.g., /m/ and /s/) are generally easier to segment and blend than stops (e.g., /p/ and /t/) because the former can be exaggerated (e.g., /mmmmm/) without the addition of a sound (e.g., /puuhh/).

Instruction should be sequenced in accordance with these progressions; however, teachers recognize that children do not necessarily develop phonological skills in this order. They may be able to isolate the initial phoneme in their names, for example, before they are able to engage in other typically easier skills. Teachers provide direct instruction in phonological awareness as well as a language rich environment that includes frequent explicit play with sounds through songs, games, and books. They are responsive to children's spontaneous manipulations of sounds. They monitor children's progress closely, especially through formative assessment, and provide additional support and carefully tailored instruction to individuals as needed. Some children benefit from explicit attention given to the place and manner of articulation of phonemes; that is, they learn about where and how sounds are made in the mouth (Castiglioni-Spalten and Ehri 2003).

*Teachers provide direct instruction in phonological awareness as well as a language rich environment that includes frequent explicit play with sounds through songs, games, and books.*

## Phonics and Word Recognition

During transitional kindergarten through grade one, children make great strides in their ability to access print independently. They acquire sight words, that is, printed words that they can identify immediately on sight. During this grade span, sight words include words that are important in their lives and environment (e.g., their own names, names of significant others, classroom labels) and common high-frequency words. These words have high utility; they are seen often in a variety of texts and contexts. Some of the words are irregularly spelled (e.g., *they, said, was*), and some are regularly spelled but the children have not yet learned the relevant letter-sound or spelling-sound correspondences. In other words, *he* may be learned as a whole before children learn the letter-sound correspondences for /h/ and /ē/.

Children become familiar with the purposes of English symbols and they learn how the alphabetic code works, that is that sounds in words are represented by letters or combinations of letters (the alphabetic principle). They build skill in using that knowledge to accurately decode words they do not recognize by sight, and they begin to develop automaticity (the ability to recognize a word effortlessly and rapidly) with print. Instruction is systematic and explicit, and new learning is applied to words in isolation and in text (RF.K–1.3). The goal is for children to be able to rapidly recognize sight words and rapidly employ phonics skills to identify words they do not know by sight. Ongoing formative assessment and interim assessments of children's developing skills are crucial in determining the targets of instruction for each child and tailoring instruction to meet their needs and advance their skills. (See chapter 8 in this *ELA/ELD Framework* for a discussion of assessment.)

*The acquisition of phonics and word recognition skills and the development of phonemic awareness are significant foci of the early years as development of these skills provides children with access to written language.*

Relatedly, children also *encode* words (that is, put into print words they hear or are thinking about) as they record their ideas in written form. They are encouraged to use their phonemic awareness along with their growing knowledge of letter-sound and spelling-sound correspondences to do so, and many words are spelled phonetically during this grade span. By the end of grade one, conventional spellings are used for words with common spelling patterns (L.K–1.2d; see also the discussion of spelling in chapter 4 of this *ELA/ELD Framework*). Decoding and encoding are mutually supportive processes; instruction co-occurs and is complementary. Linking spelling and decoding instruction deepens children's knowledge of the written system (Brady 2012).

The acquisition of phonics and word recognition skills and the development of phonemic awareness are significant foci of the early years as development of these skills provides children with access to written language. Children who learn the alphabetic system and can employ decoding skills rather effortlessly reap notable benefits: They can devote their mental energy to comprehension and therefore experience the joy and satisfaction of independent engagement with text. They can access a wide variety of texts; wide reading contributes to further skill development, vocabulary enrichment, and content acquisition (Brady 2012). Research indicates that children have better future prospects as readers if they develop understandings about and facility with the alphabetic code by the end of second grade (Moats 2012), which makes progress in the transitional kindergarten through grade one span crucial.

Figure 3.10 provides definitions of key phonics and word recognition terminology. Included are terms related to morphology, linguistic units that contribute to the meaning of a word. These are included because knowledge of morphology contributes to children's ability to recognize a word.

***Figure 3.10. Phonics and Word Recognition Terminology, Including Morphology***

| Term | Definition | Example |
|---|---|---|
| **Consonant** | A phoneme that is articulated with partial or complete closure of the vocal track | /b/ in *boy*<br>/t/ in *at*<br>/r/ and /n/ in *run* |
| **Short Vowel** | An open phoneme (that is, one for which there is no obstruction by the tongue, lips, or teeth of air flow)<br>Short vowels are lax in that there is little tension in the vocal cords | /ă/ in *cat*<br>/ĕ/ in *jet*<br>/ĭ/ in *kick*<br>/ŏ/ in *stop*<br>/ŭ/ in *cup*<br>/o͡o/ in *book* |
| **Long Vowel** | An open phoneme<br>Long vowels are tense in that they are spoken with more tension in the tongue muscles | /ā/ in *cake*<br>/ē/ in *feet*<br>/ī/ in *night**<br>/ō/ in *boat*<br>/ū/ in *use*<br>/o͞o/ in *school* |
| **Diphthong** | A vowel sound that involves the shifting of mouth position when spoken | /oi/ in *boil; oy* in *toy*<br>/ou/ in *out; ow* in *cow* |
| **Consonant Blend** | Two or three adjacent consonants in a syllable, each of which is heard | /tw/ in *twin*<br>/sk/ in *mask*<br>/str/ in *street* |
| **Consonant Digraph** | Two or more consonants that together represent a single sound | *sh* in *ship*<br>*ch* in *chin* and *tch* in *watch*<br>*th* in *this* (voiced /th/) and *thin* (unvoiced /th/) |
| **Grapheme** | The letter or combination of letters that represent a single sound (phoneme)<br>(See letter-sound correspondence and spelling-sound correspondence) | *f* in *leaf*<br>*oa* in *boat*<br>*igh* in *night*<br>*ough* in *through* |
| **Letter-Sound Correspondence** | A single letter and its corresponding sound | *m* represents */m/*<br>*k* represents */k/* |
| **Spelling-Sound Correspondence** | Letter combinations and their corresponding sound | *igh* represents /ī/<br>*dge* represents */j/* |
| **Morpheme** | The smallest meaningful part of a word | *cat*<br>*cat-s*<br>*un-happy* |
| **Affix** | A morpheme attached to the beginning or end of a root | See prefixes, suffixes, and inflectional endings |

| Term | Definition | Example |
|---|---|---|
| **Prefix** | An affix attached to the beginning of a root word | *re* in *redo*<br>*un* in *unkind*<br>*pre* in *preschool* |
| **Suffix** | An affix attached to the end of a root word<br>(See inflectional ending and derivation) | *ing* in *discussing*<br>*less* in *useless*<br>*ful* in *helpful* |
| **Inflectional Ending** | A type of suffix that does not change a word's part of speech but does change its:<br>• tense<br>• number<br>• comparison<br>• person | *ed* in *jumped; ing* in *flying*<br>*s* in *dogs; es* in *wishes*<br>*er* in *faster; est* in *hardest*<br>*s* in *plays* |
| **Derivation** | A type of suffix that changes the root word's part of speech or grammatical role | *ly* in *swiftly*<br>*tion* in *projection* |
| **Decodable Words** | Words that are wholly decodable on the basis of the letter-sound and spelling-sound correspondences already taught | Assuming the relevant letter-sound and spelling-sound correspondences have been taught:<br>*dog*<br>*run*<br>*ship* |
| **Sight Words** | (1) Words that are taught as whole units because they are irregularly spelled or because the spelling-sound correspondences have not yet been taught<br>(2) Regularly spelled words that have been decoded enough times that they are recognized on sight, that is with little conscious effort | *they*<br>*there*<br>*could*<br><br>Assuming the relevant letter-sound and spelling-sound correspondences have been taught and practiced enough times for automatic recognition:<br>*fish*<br>*jump*<br>*catch* |
| **Irregularly Spelled High-Frequency Words** | High-frequency words that are not decodable in that the letter-sound or spelling-sound correspondences are uncommon or do not conform to phonics rules | *said*<br>*of*<br>*was*<br>*come* |

*The long /ī/ sound is classified by some as a diphthong.

*During the grade span, phonics and word recognition instruction focuses on knowledge of letter-sound and spelling-sound correspondences and, during grade one, use of that knowledge to decode regular one- and two-syllable words (that is, those that follow basic patterns).*

During the grade span, phonics and word recognition instruction focuses on knowledge of letter-sound and spelling-sound correspondences and, during grade one, use of that knowledge to decode regular one- and two-syllable words (that is, those that follow basic patterns). General guidelines for teaching the correspondences and early decoding follow; however, it is important to note that children and their prior experiences with print at home, in their communities, and in other educational settings vary. This means the generalizations presented here may have more or less applicability to individual children. These generalizations may be most helpful in providing instruction to children who are experiencing difficulty learning letter-sound correspondences and basic decoding.

- Capitalize on children's knowledge of letter names. Letter-sound correspondences are generally more difficult to learn in cases where the letter name does not contain the relevant phoneme (letter sound). For example, the letter name for *h* is not pronounced with the sound /h/. Likewise, the pronunciation of the letter name for *w* provides no clue to the corresponding sound, /w/. Easier to learn are letter-sound correspondences for letters in which the name of the letter contains the sound. Furthermore, there is evidence that letters for which the letter sound is heard in the initial position of the corresponding letter names are easier to learn than those for which the letter sound is heard in the final position. For example, the letter name for *b* is pronounced /**b**ē/, *z* is /**z**ē/, and *k* is /**k**ā/. The sounds are heard in the initial position of the letter name. In contrast, the letter name for *m* is pronounced /ĕ**m**/ and *f* is pronounced /ĕ**f**/. The sounds are heard in the final position of the letter name. The former—sounds in the initial position of the letter name—are generally easier to learn than the latter (Treiman, Pennington, Shriberg, and Boada 2008).
- Avoid distorting sounds. For example, the phoneme /m/ is pronounced /mmm/, not /*muh*/.
- Be very clear when introducing letter-sound correspondences that are easily confused visually (e.g., b, p, d, q) or auditorily (e.g., /p/, /b/, /v/ and /ĕ/, /ĭ/). Draw explicit attention to the similarities and differences.
- Teach high-utility letter sounds early in the instructional sequence (e.g., /m/, /s/, /ă/, /t/). These are ones that can be used to form many beginning one-syllable words.
- Include a few short vowels early in the sequence so that students can use letter-sound knowledge to form and decode words.
- Introduce several continuous sounds early (e.g., /l/, /r/, /s/) because they can be elongated easily and so facilitate blending. Stop sounds (e.g., /p/, /t/, /k/), more difficult in the initial position, may be used in the final position of words.

*Be very clear when introducing letter-sound correspondences that are easily confused visually (e.g., b, p, d, q) or auditorily (e.g., /p/, /b/, /v/ and /ĕ/, /ĭ/). Draw explicit attention to the similarities and differences.*

- Introduce simple word reading as soon as children have learned a small number of letter-sound correspondences. Generally, begin with one-syllable words (containing letter sounds that have been taught) that have a continuous sound in the initial position, such as VC (vowel-consonant) words, (e.g., *am* and *on*) and some CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant) words, (e.g., *rat* and *fun*) because continuous sounds can be elongated, making them easier to blend with subsequent sounds. (Note: All vowel sounds are continuous.)

- Target words that represent vocabulary and concepts with which the children are familiar.
- Teach blending explicitly. Blending will be supported if continuous sounds are elongated and no sounds are distorted with the addition of /uh/ (as in /tuh/). (See figure 3.34.)

Children should have ample opportunities to practice decoding and encoding words that reflect the letter-sound and spelling-sound correspondences they are learning. They practice reading words and building words with tiles or other manipulatives. They read the words in *decodable texts*. Decodable texts are books and other reading materials that consist of words learned by sight (such as irregularly spelled high-frequency words) and, importantly and most prominently, words that consist of regular letter-sound and spelling-sound correspondences, especially those the children have already learned. Specifically, decodable texts are reading materials designed to prompt beginning readers to apply their increasing knowledge of phonics and practice *full alphabetic decoding* (that is, use of all letter-sound and spelling-sound correspondences in a word [Ehri 2005]) to identify words. In decodable texts, 75–80 percent of words consist solely of previously taught letter-sound and spelling-sound correspondences and the remaining 20–25 percent of the words are previously taught high-frequency irregularly spelled words and story or content words.

*The value of decodable texts is time-limited but significant for beginning readers. These materials provide children the opportunity to apply and practice what they are learning about the alphabetic code, which enhances their reading acquisition.*

The value of decodable texts is time-limited but significant for beginning readers. These materials provide children the opportunity to apply and practice what they are learning about the alphabetic code, which enhances their reading acquisition (Cheatham and Allor 2012). Adams (2009) notes that children's *use* of acquired skills (not simply their learning of the skills) to decode new words is crucial and that decodable text prompts that use. The amount of time devoted to decodable text depends on how quickly children grasp the code and develop automaticity. Some children need considerable practice with decodable text. Others need less practice with decodable text. Instruction, therefore, is differentiated. Children are provided instruction and texts that reflect and extend their skills. Formative assessment and interim assessments inform these decisions.

Importantly, decoding involves matching the product of attempts at sounding and blending a word with words that already exist in children's phonological and semantic memories (Cunningham, J. and others, 1999; Cunningham, P. 1975-76). In other words, as children learn to decode, they are taught to match possible pronunciations of a printed word with their lexicon to determine the likely pronunciation. For example, the "ow" spelling can represent more than one sound:

- /ō/ as in *shown*, *blown*, and *grown*
- /ow/ as in *clown*, *brown*, and *down*

*Importantly, decoding involves matching the product of attempts at sounding and blending a word with words that already exist in children's phonological and semantic memories.*

When beginning readers attempt to decode the word *frown*, they might reasonably sound and blend /f/-/r/-/ō/-/n/. Not recognizing the resulting word, they might try another reasonable possibility, /f/-/r/-/ow/-/n/. When children know reading is a meaning making act, they expect to match the product of their efforts with a word in their memories. In other words, they expect to generate a word that is meaningful. Thus, initial decoding instruction should target words in children's vocabularies (which are continually expanding). Children also learn to use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition (RF.1–5.4c).

*Teachers coordinate spelling, phonemic awareness, decoding, word recognition instruction (and to a certain extent, vocabulary, especially as children move through the grades) because these skills are interdependent and mutually supportive. They make accuracy in decoding a high priority, and they ensure that students have ample opportunities to practice newly acquired skills in authentic contexts.*

Instruction in phonics and word recognition closely complements and coincides with instruction related to other standards, strands, and domains of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy. These include concepts about print, phonological awareness, and fluency. In addition, learning to spell (L.K–1.2), as discussed previously, contributes to progress in decoding as children encode language; that is, as they work to put their thoughts into printed language. And, instruction in phonics and word recognition supports, and is supported by, children's acquisition of vocabulary (RL/RI.K–1.4, L.K–1.5, Standards 4–5). Teachers coordinate spelling, phonemic awareness, decoding, word recognition instruction (and to a certain extent, vocabulary, especially as children move through the grades) because these skills are interdependent and mutually supportive. They make accuracy in decoding a high priority, and they ensure that students have ample opportunities to practice newly acquired skills in authentic contexts.

It is important to note that letter-sound and spelling-sound correspondences are not accessible to all students. Spoken and signed languages are less likely to share formal properties, such as phonological structure, than two spoken languages (Stokoe, Croneberg, and Casterline 1965; Brentari 2007). Students who are deaf and hard of hearing need to understand the metalinguistic structure of American Sign Language, and then apply this understanding to the structure of English. For example, students who are deaf who use a visual language learn that fingerspelling is a critical link in word learning (Haptonstall-Nykaza and Schick 2007). Because there is not a direct relationship between American Sign Language and English text, teachers employ strategies that have been shown to be effective in making this connection.

Students who are deaf and do not have auditory access to spoken language face challenges when asked to orally pronounce words because they cannot hear themselves or spoken language models in their environment. Rather than focus on the pronunciation of words, teachers monitor the comprehension of words for students who are deaf through American Sign Language as they are reading.

## Fluency

Fluency is the ability to read with accuracy, appropriate rate (which requires automaticity), and prosody (that is, expression, which includes rhythm, phrasing, and intonation). Accuracy is given the highest priority in the grade span. Fluency develops when children have multiple opportunities to practice a skill. Decodable texts, discussed in the previous section, provide the opportunity for beginning readers, and wide reading, discussed earlier, provides the opportunity as children gain independence with the code.

*Although fluency is important when children read aloud written text (including their own) for an audience, such as their peers or family members,* the primary importance of fluency is that it supports comprehension.

Although fluency is important when children read aloud written text (including their own) for an audience, such as their peers or family members, *the primary importance of fluency is that it supports comprehension*. Children who are fluent, automatic decoders have the mental energy to attend to meaning making. Children work toward fluency with grade-level text in

the context of purposeful and meaningful reading activities, and because they read for meaning, they are guided by the teacher to use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition (RF.1.4c). Time is provided for independent reading in school, and children and their families are encouraged to read at home.

### Foundational Skills for English Learners

English learners can and should develop foundational reading skills at the same pace as their non-EL peers, provided that additional considerations for their particular learning needs are taken into account. Issues related to transfer, fluency, and meaning making are especially important.

*English learners can and should develop foundational reading skills at the same pace as their non-EL peers, provided that additional considerations for their particular learning needs are taken into account.*

Many skills are transferable between languages. Teachers or other qualified educators carefully assess, when possible, which skills students already possess in their primary language. For example, teachers determine the extent to which their EL students have already developed phonological awareness in their primary language. Since phonological awareness transfers across languages, teachers build on the primary language phonological awareness skills their students already have. They save valuable time by not reteaching what children already know. Instruction in foundational skills in English is differentiated based on similarities and differences between ELs' native language phonology and writing systems and English. For example, children who already know letter sounds or names in a language that uses the Latin alphabet (e.g., Spanish) transfer this knowledge more readily than students who are able to decode in a language with a non-Latin alphabet (e.g., Arabic, Korean, Russian), a nonalphabetic writing system (e.g., Chinese), or visual languages (e.g., American Sign Language). However, even when EL children bring phonological awareness or knowledge of the alphabet from their home/primary language, they need targeted instruction in sounds that are different in the new language and decoding English graphemes that are nonexistent in their native language. (See Yopp and Stapleton 2008 for a discussion of transfer of phonemic awareness.)

*Teachers actively and frequently model fluent reading of narrative and informational texts. Although such modeling is good for all students, it is especially important for EL children for whom teachers may be the only models of English reading.*

In the area of of fluency, teachers are aware that pronunciation differences do not necessarily reflect inaccuracies in decoding. Sometimes, pronunciation differences are due to influences of the child's primary language, home dialect of English, or regional accent. Teachers listen to their students carefully as they speak and read to determine when to provide judicious feedback on pronunciation, and they accept children's approximate pronunciations as they practice orally blending or reading words containing sounds that are new to them.

Teachers actively and frequently model fluent reading of narrative and informational texts. Although such modeling is good for all students, it is especially important for EL children for whom teachers may be the only models of English reading. As they a read aloud to students or read a chant or poem as students read with them, teachers draw EL children's attention to the cadences and intonation of their voices or signs (for EL children who are deaf or hard of hearing and who use ASL) and encourage the children to imitate them. In addition, teachers ask children to practice reading with expression while reading independently, pausing and allowing their voices or signs as appropriate to the text.

*Great care is taken to ensure that EL children who are learning to read in English understand the importance of making meaning when practicing decoding skills and building automaticity.*

Great care is taken to ensure that EL children who are learning to read in English understand the importance of making meaning when practicing decoding skills and building automaticity. Some EL children may not know the meaning of the words they decode. Teachers help children understand that the goal of reading is to make meaning, not simply to decode words. For example, teachers anticipate which words or phrases children may not know in the texts and briefly explain what the words mean before students read. Teachers cannot teach all the new words students encounter as they practice decoding, but providing students with the meaning of some words aids comprehension and also signals to students that meaning is important. In addition, teachers build students' autonomy in monitoring their own comprehension while reading by continuously reminding them that, even when they are practicing fluent decoding, the text should make sense. Children learn to slow down and stop periodically to think about what they just read and determine what they understand.

In general, the development of foundational literacy skills in English is addressed during ELA instruction, and teachers take into account the factors outlined previously when designing instruction. During designated ELD instruction, foundational literacy practices, strategies, and skills that children are learning are reinforced. Children enrolled in alternative bilingual programs in which they develop foundational literacy skills in a language other than English may be provided some instruction in English foundational skills during designated ELD. For the most part, designated ELD instructional time is devoted to developing the academic vocabulary, grammatical understandings, and discourse practices children need for comprehending and conveying understanding of ELA and other disciplinary content. Figure 3.11 provides general guidance for supporting ELs' acquisition of foundational skills.

*In general, the development of foundational literacy skills in English is addressed during ELA instruction, and teachers take into account the factors outlined previously when designing instruction. During designated ELD instruction, foundational literacy practices, strategies, and skills that children are learning are reinforced.*

***Figure 3.11. Foundational Literacy Skills for ELs in the Transitional Kindergarten through Grade One Span***

| Student Language and Literacy Characteristics | | Considerations for Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction | CA CCSS for ELA/ Literacy Reading Standards: Foundational Skills |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Oral Skills** | No or little spoken English proficiency | Students will need instruction in recognizing and distinguishing the sounds of English as compared or contrasted with sounds in their native language (e.g., vowels, consonants, consonant blends, syllable structures). | **Phonological Awareness**<br>2. Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).<br>RF.K–1.2 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Oral Skills cont.** | Spoken English proficiency | Students will need instruction in applying their knowledge of the English sound system to foundational literacy learning. | Review of **Phonological Awareness** skills as needed. |
| **Print Skills** | No or little native language literacy | Students will need instruction in print concepts. | **Print Concepts**<br>1. Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.<br>RF.K–1.1<br>**Phonics and Word Recognition**<br>3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.<br>RF.K–1.3<br>**Fluency**<br>4. Read emergent-reader texts with purpose and understanding.<br>RF.K–1.4 |
| | Some foundational literacy proficiency in a language not using the Latin alphabet (e.g., Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Russian) | Students will be familiar with print concepts, and will need instruction in learning the Latin alphabet for English, as compared or contrasted with their native language writing system (e.g., direction of print, symbols representing whole words, syllables or phonemes). | |
| | Some foundational literacy proficiency in a language using the Latin alphabet (e.g., Spanish) | Students will need instruction in applying their knowledge of print concepts, phonics and word recognition to the English writing system, as compared or contrasted with their native language alphabet (e.g., letters that are the same or different, or represent the same or different sounds) and native language vocabulary (e.g., cognates) and sentence structure (e.g., subject-verb-object vs. subject-object-verb word order). | |

## Supporting Students Strategically

Supporting students strategically begins with knowing the children. Educators should converse with families to learn about children's experiences with language and literacy; their attitudes, interests, and expectations; and their prior schooling. Families are the source of valuable information, and respectful, collaborative relationships between homes and schools greatly benefit students and those who teach them.

*Supporting students strategically begins with knowing the children. Educators should converse with families to learn about children's experiences with language and literacy; their attitudes, interests, and expectations; and their prior schooling.*

Educators also learn about the children in their classrooms through skillful assessment of their strengths and needs. Early in the school year, they employ universal screening to gain an initial view of children's skills. Daily, they engage in formative assessment. (See chapter 8 in this *ELA/ELD Framework*.) Periodically, they use interim or benchmark assessments to determine children's progress. Teachers use what they learn to tailor instruction that systematically builds on children's existing skills and knowledge.

Teachers in the transitional kindergarten through grade one span recognize the extraordinary importance of the early years in launching children along the path toward achieving the goals of ELA/literacy and ELD instruction. Thus, they carefully plan and execute effective lessons for the range of learners and capitalize on the system of supports available at their site and in the district to ensure all children's advancement toward attaining the standards. Teacher librarians, administrators, and specialists share in the responsibility with the general education teacher to offer the best education possible to all children. Professional learning, co-planning, and co-teaching occur regularly. (See chapter 11 in this *ELA/ELD Framework*.)

*And, because the achievement of foundational skills lays the groundwork for independence with reading and writing, teachers give considerable attention to their students' development of print concepts, phonological awareness (especially phonemic awareness), phonics and word recognition, and fluency during these years.*

Teachers attend closely to children's progress in meaning making, effective expression (including language conventions, such as printing letters and spelling simple words phonetically), and the acquisition of content knowledge. They know that adults have a major role in children's language development. And, because the achievement of foundational skills lays the groundwork for independence with reading and writing, teachers give considerable attention to their students' development of print concepts, phonological awareness (especially phonemic awareness), phonics and word recognition, and fluency during these years. Importantly, they recognize that in spite of a well-organized curriculum and excellent instruction, some children experience difficulty acquiring foundational skills. These children receive additional, more intensive, and highly targeted instruction. (See chapter 9 in this *ELA/ELD Framework*.) Teachers organize the school day to meet with children in small groups to ensure all children receive the instruction they need to advance their skills.

Research with children experiencing difficulties or those with learning disabilities suggests the following for foundational skills:

- Integrating explicit references to print during adult/child read aloud interactions advances young children's knowledge of the forms and functions of print. This is especially important for children entering school with relatively limited print knowledge (Justice and Piasta 2011).
- In terms of phonemic awareness, short, well-planned lessons focused on blending and segmenting phonemes, along with a few letter-sound correspondences, delivered frequently during the week to small groups have positive effects for most children. However, some children need more intensive support (O'Connor 2011).
- Linking instruction in phonemic awareness and letter-sound correspondences is especially important for children experiencing difficulty with the alphabetic principle (O'Connor 2011).

- Having children focus on how phonemes are produced enhances phonemic awareness (Castiglioni-Spalten and Ehri 2003). Children may view pictures of mouth movements, talk about what happens when they produce a sound, and watch the teacher's mouth or their own mouths using mirrors as they produce sounds. Accurate pronunciation is important.
- Decoding instruction should be explicit, systematic, and intensive; it targets some words the children are unlikely to know by sight to ensure children are applying decoding skills rather than simply recalling a word. Learning skills out of context (such as with word lists) is important, but children should have many opportunities to apply their skills in context (that is, while reading passages or books). Practicing with texts that contain a high proportion of words children can decode successfully along with teacher feedback that encourages application of decoding skills is important (Spear-Swerling 2011).

*Decoding instruction should be explicit, systematic, and intensive; it targets some words the children are unlikely to know by sight to ensure children are applying decoding skills rather than simply recalling a word.*

- Word building activities, in which children manipulate letter cards or tiles to build words, are effective in developing the decoding skills of children experiencing difficulty with decoding (Spear-Swerling 2011).

In terms of other aspects of literacy development, research indicates the following:

- Engaging young children in enactive representation of what they have read increases the likelihood they will remember what they have read, even after some time has passed. Research demonstrates that when young children manipulate toys and watch or imagine toys being manipulated (acting out a text), children's comprehension of stories generally increases (Connor, and others 2014).
- Children "at risk for language disabilities" improve with extensive opportunities to hear and use complex oral language (Connor, and others 2014, x).
- Effective interventions for oral language development in young children include reading aloud (especially rereadings, explanations of word meanings, and interactions around the text), explicit vocabulary instruction, language-rich and responsive interactions, and complex dramatic play (Roberts 2011).

To reiterate, the first years of schooling are a profoundly important time on the pathway to literacy, and the quality of the curriculum and instruction offered to children in the transitional kindergarten through grade one span has long lasting implications. The 2014 report from the Institute of Education Sciences (Connor, and others) notes that actions taken in kindergarten and first grade can prevent future reading difficulties for many students.

*. . . actions taken in kindergarten and first grade can prevent future reading difficulties for many students.*

## English Language Development in the Grade Span

The content and instructional practices described in this chapter are important for all children, but they are critical for EL children if they are to develop English language proficiency and fully participate in intellectually rich curricula across the disciplines. Instruction is provided by highly-skilled teachers who understand not only the core instructional practices in transitional kindergarten through grade one, but also how to identify and address the particular language and academic learning strengths and needs of their EL students. To support the simultaneous development of English, content knowledge, and the ability to express content knowledge effectively, teachers consider how EL children learn

English as an additional language, how to meet these needs throughout the day during ELA and other content areas (through integrated ELD), and how to address these needs strategically during a time specifically designated for this purpose (through designated ELD).

The CA ELD Standards serve as a guide for teachers to design integrated ELD and designated ELD. They highlight and amplify the language in the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy critical for children in transitional kindergarten through grade one to develop to maintain a steady academic and linguistic trajectory. They identify goals and expectations for how EL children at various levels of English language proficiency interact with content and use English in meaningful ways while developing English as an additional language.

*. . . teachers consider how EL children learn English as an additional language, how to meet these needs throughout the day during ELA and other content areas (through integrated ELD), and how to address these needs strategically during a time specifically designated for this purpose (through designated ELD).*

## Integrated and Designated English Language Development

*Integrated ELD* refers to ELD throughout the day and across the disciplines for all EL children. In integrated ELD, the CA ELD Standards are used in ELA and in all other subjects in tandem with the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and other content standards to support ELs' linguistic and academic progress. Throughout the school day, EL children in transitional kindergarten through grade one engage in activities in which they listen to, read, interpret, discuss, and create a variety of literary and informational text types. They build confidence and proficiency in demonstrating their content knowledge through oral presentations, writing and creating, collaborative conversations, and using multimedia. In addition, when teachers support children's development of *language awareness*, or knowledge of how English works in different situations, EL children gain an understanding of how language functions as a complex, dynamic, and social resource for making meaning. Through intellectually rich activities that occur across the disciplines and throughout the day, EL children develop proficiency in understanding and using increasingly advanced levels of English.

In transitional kindergarten through grade one, ELs' language and literacy skills and content knowledge are enhanced through engaging and playful ways of using English. These include teacher read alouds of complex texts, shared book reading, singing songs and chanting poems and rhymes, and drama (including Readers Theater) during which children act out characters. Shared book reading experiences (also known as dialogic reading or interactive shared book reading) are designed to simulate the parent-child at-home reading experience in which children interact with an experienced reader around a text. The experienced reader reads aloud to children using texts large enough for everyone to see (e.g., big books, poems on chart paper) so that children can follow along visually and simultaneously hear a fluent reading of the text. Children are encouraged to participate in the reading of the text by asking and answering questions, reading along chorally, retelling the text, or offering alternate endings.

Integrated ELD *refers to ELD throughout the day and across the disciplines for all EL children. In integrated ELD, the CA ELD Standards are used in ELA and in all other subjects in tandem with the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and other content standards to support ELs' linguistic and academic progress.*

Teacher read alouds of complex literary and informational texts that include rich discussions about the content of the texts are critical for EL children. Interactive read alouds are also an effective way to develop young children's general academic and domain specific vocabulary, especially when

texts are read aloud repeatedly. For example, when a general academic word is encountered (e.g., when words like *extraordinary*, *magnificent,* or *spectacular* are used instead of *good*), teachers explicitly draw their students' attention to the word, provide a quick explanation of the word, distinguish it from the more everyday word (*good*), and discuss the contribution of the more sophisticated word to the meaning of the story. In addition, teachers encourage children to use the words and emphasize that learning lots of "fancy" or "big kid" words gives children more flexibility in expressing their ideas, thereby developing students' awareness of language as well as their abilities to use academic language. Some of the general academic words from the text are taught more intensively so that students begin to use the words confidently in their speaking and writing. Discussing what is happening in books and devoting explicit attention to vocabulary is important for all children, but it is critical for EL children because school may be the only place where this occurs in English. While the principal content objectives during a teacher read aloud in ELA are driven by the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy, these examples illustrate how the CA ELD Standards are used in tandem with content standards.

*Discussing what is happening in books and devoting explicit attention to vocabulary is important for all children, but it is critical for EL children because school may be the only place where this occurs in English.*

*Designated ELD* is a protected time during the regular school day during which teachers use the CA ELD Standards as the focal standards in ways that build *into and from content instruction* so that ELs develop critical English language skills, knowledge, and abilities needed for learning content in English. Designated ELD is not separate and isolated from ELA, science, social studies, mathematics, and other disciplines. It is a protected opportunity during the regular school day designed to support ELs in developing the discourse practices, grammatical structures, and vocabulary necessary for successful participation in school tasks across content areas. A logical scope and sequence for English language development is aligned with the texts used and tasks implemented in ELA and other content instruction.

Designated ELD is an opportunity to *amplify* the language ELs need to develop in order to be successful in school; it is also an opportunity to augment instruction to meet the particular language learning needs of ELs at different English language proficiency levels. The main instructional emphasis in designated ELD in transitional kindergarten through grade one is oral language development, including collaborative conversations and vocabulary. Designated ELD instruction also involves some level of reading and writing, including reinforcement of foundational skills in English, since designated ELD builds into and from content instruction.

*The main instructional emphasis in designated ELD in transitional kindergarten through grade one is oral language development, including collaborative conversations and vocabulary.*

Examples of designated ELD that builds into and from content instruction are provided in selected snapshots in the grade-level sections of this chapter. Lengthier vignettes for ELA/literacy and designated ELD instruction also are provided in the grade-level sections. (For an extended discussion of integrated and designated English language development, see chapter 2 in this *ELA/ELD Framework*.)

# Transitional Kindergarten

*Transitional kindergarten programs capitalize on young children's active, social, and inquisitive natures. Rich models of literacy are provided as children engage daily in teacher-led and child-initiated projects and play activities.*

Transitional kindergarten provides young learners a literacy and language rich curriculum and environment that undergird future learning. Transitional kindergarten programs capitalize on young children's active, social, and inquisitive natures. Rich models of literacy are provided as children engage daily in teacher-led and child-initiated projects and play activities. In transitional kindergarten classrooms, a modified kindergarten literacy and language curriculum is implemented in developmentally appropriate contexts that builds on the California preschool learning foundations (http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/preschoollf.pdf) in language and literacy and, as appropriate, English language development. The additional year allows more time for social and emotional development along with more time to develop language and literacy skills, knowledge, and dispositions that contribute to success in the subsequent year of kindergarten, including curiosity about the world and how a variety of texts may contribute to satisfying that curiosity. (See the Social and Emotional Foundations of Transitional Kindergarten at [Invalid link removed Jan 25, 2017]

The chief differences between transitional kindergarten and kindergarten programs are the pacing, expectations, and amount of learning situated in play. Transitional kindergarteners move more slowly through the curricula, making progress toward achievement of the kindergarten CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy without the expectation of mastery, and they have more opportunities to engage in literacy and language activities in playful contexts. (Importantly, throughout the grade span children learn a great deal through play and should be provided ample opportunities to engage in activities similar to those recommended for transitional kindergarteners.)

The Kindergarten Readiness Act of 2010 (Senate Bill 1381, Chapter 705, Statutes of 2010) requires that districts provide children in transitional kindergarten instruction with a modified curriculum that is age and developmentally appropriate, but it does not specify what that curriculum should be. This *ELA/ELD Framework* offers guidance, drawing on both the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1* (http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/psframeworkkvol1.pdf, California Department of Education 2008).

*The additional year allows more time for social and emotional development along with more time to develop language and literacy skills, knowledge, and dispositions that contribute to success in the subsequent year of kindergarten, including curiosity about the world and how a variety of texts may contribute to satisfying that curiosity.*

Importantly, transitional kindergartens provide curriculum and instruction that promote young children's progress toward the Kindergarten CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy in a developmentally appropriate manner. Figure 3.12 offers guidelines for ensuring developmentally appropriate practice in literacy and language. See also the Transitional Kindergarten Implementation Guide and Videos (http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/em/, CDE 2013b), the Professional Development Modules to Support the Implementation of Transitional Kindergarten (http://www.tkcalifornia.org/learn-with-us/professional-development.html, TK California), and the Transitional Kindergarten in California Modules (http://teachingcommons.cdl.edu/tk/index.html) developed by the California State University (2013).

***Figure 3.12. Literacy and Language Environments and Practices for Young Children***

Programs provide the following:

**Caring and knowledgeable educators** who

- are physically, emotionally, cognitively, and verbally present
- respectfully partner with families and communities
- understand, respond to, and prepare appropriately for differences in ability, backgrounds (including language variety), and interests
- are intentional in the experiences they offer children while also being responsive to child-initiated inquiry
- provide individualized attention and engage in adult-child interactions
- have high expectations and clear, appropriate learning goals for all children

**The full range of experiences that foster literacy development**, including

- well-conceived, well-delivered, and comprehensive instruction and experiences in each of the components of early literacy situated within a nurturing environment that fosters the development of the child in all domains
- a rich and coherent curriculum in the content areas situated within a nurturing environment that fosters the development of the child in all domains
- an integrated curriculum in which learning experiences are organized around big ideas and themes so that content area and literacy experiences support and build on one another.

**Environments that support literacy learning** by being

- physically and psychologically safe environments
- environments that encourage and foster imaginative play
- language-rich environments
- print-rich (or tactilely rich) environments
- writing-rich environments
- cognitively stimulating environments

**Access to numerous high-quality books and myriad other print, visual, and auditory media**

- of all genres and that represent diverse populations and human perspectives
- that reflect children's interests and backgrounds and also expand their interests and build their background knowledge
- that include books and other media in the primary language(s) of the children
- in well-stocked libraries and throughout the setting
- that children can explore on their own in comfortable and quiet locations
- that are read aloud to individuals, small groups, and the whole group
- that are read repeatedly and daily

**Source**

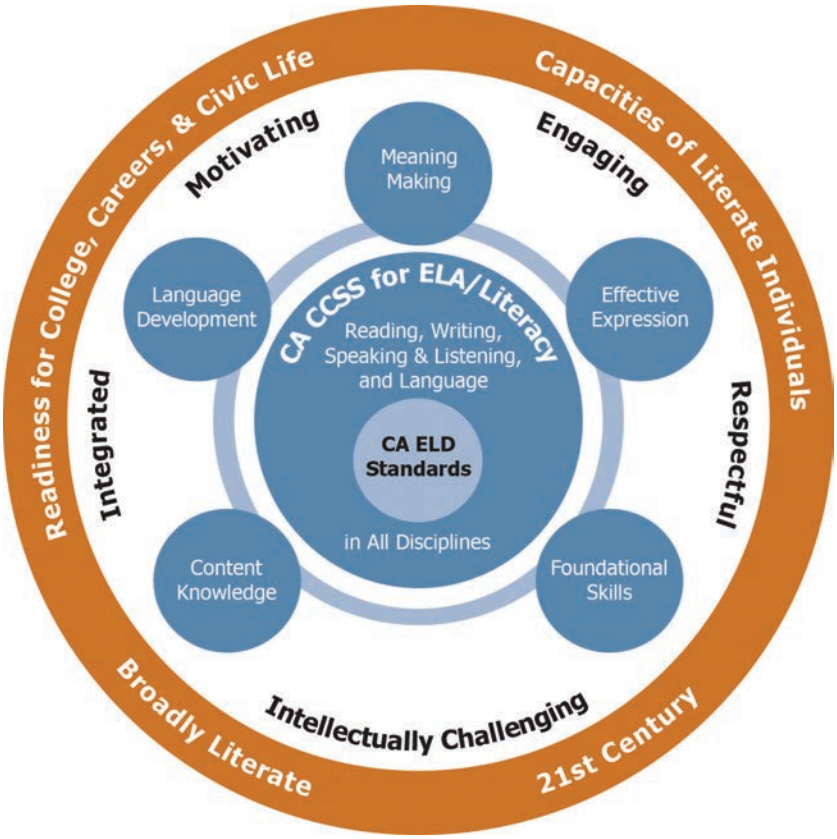
Reprinted from

Center for the Advancement of Reading. 2010. *The Early Years: Promoting a Promising Start in Literacy Development*, 15. Long Beach, CA: California State University.

## Key Themes of ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction in Transitional Kindergarten

ELA/literacy and ELD instruction focus on the key instructional themes of **Meaning Making, Language Development, Effective Expression, Content Knowledge,** and **Foundational Skills,** as discussed in the introduction and chapter 2 of this *ELA/ELD Framework***.** Each of these themes is displayed in figure 3.13 and discussed briefly here; the kindergarten section of this chapter provides additional guidance relevant to transitional kindergarten.

***Figure 3.13. Circles of Implementation of ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction***




### *Meaning Making*

In transitional kindergarten (and throughout the grades), meaning making is the heart of all instruction. Children's learning is purposeful. Children engage with a range of texts (largely through read alouds), participate in learning experiences in all the content areas, and interact with one another in meaningful ways. They have access to a comfortable and child-friendly classroom library and space to explore books independently and with peers. They are read aloud to daily from books they may later pick up and recite from memory (such as predictable books) and from texts that stretch their language and build their knowledge of literature, genres, and content. They see printed materials used in purposeful ways throughout

the day and in a variety of the settings, such as in centers, during instruction, and on walls. Discussions about texts and other learning experiences focus on understanding the content or author's message and on making connections with the children's lives and their learning. Teachers guide children to make inferences and to think critically as they engage with texts and topics. They model reasoning, especially through thinking aloud as they read. They demonstrate enjoyment and satisfaction in learning from books.

*Discussions about texts and other learning experiences focus on understanding the content or author's message and on making connections with the children's lives and their learning.*

Transitional kindergarteners make progress toward achievement of the kindergarten CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy related to meaning making, building from several of the California Preschool Learning Foundations, particularly the following foundations in Comprehension and Analysis of Age-Appropriate Text (California Department of Education 2008).

In preschool, at around age 60 months, children:

4.1 Demonstrate knowledge of details in a familiar story, including characters, events, and ordering of events through answering questions (particularly summarizing, predicting, and inferences), retelling, reenacting, or creating artwork.

4.2 Use information from informational text in a variety of ways, including describing, relating, categorizing, or comparing and contrasting.

See the kindergarten section of this chapter for more information.

## *Language Development*

Language development is the cornerstone of transitional kindergarten programs, and children engage in many verbal exchanges throughout each day. They discuss a broad range of texts and topics with diverse partners, including adults. They share their thoughts and experiences and are encouraged to ask questions of one another. Teachers demonstrate a genuine interest in their ideas and prompt them to share their knowledge, feelings, and opinions. They guide children in using language to reflect on, clarify, and share the experiences they have across the curricula.

Teachers support children's language development by building from the California Preschool Learning Foundations (http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/psfoundations.asp) in Listening and Speaking (See figure 3.14) and supporting children's progress toward achievement of the kindergarten CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy (See the kindergarten section of this chapter).

***Figure 3.14. California Preschool Learning Foundations Related to Language Development***

**At around 60 months of age, children:**

| **Language Use and Conventions** | |
|---|---|
| **Foundation** | **Examples** |
| 1.4 Use language to construct extended narratives that are real or fictional. | The child tells a brief story that unfolds over time: "I went to the park with my mommy, and we played in the sandbox. Then we had a picnic. After that, we went to the store." |
| **Vocabulary** | |
| **Foundation** | **Examples** |
| 2.1 Understand and use an increasing variety and specificity of accepted words for objects, actions, and attributes encountered in both real and symbolic contexts. | *Nouns/Objects*: The child hands a friend the *fire truck,* the *dump truck*, and the *semitruck* when the friend says, "I want to play with the *fire truck*, *dump truck*, and *semi*," during play.<br>*Verbs/Actions*: The child says to a parent volunteer, "I have a story. Can you *type* it on the computer for me?"<br>*Attributes*: During a cooking project, the child gives the teacher the plastic fork when the teacher says, "Hand me the *plastic* one." |
| 2.2 Understand and use accepted words for categories of objects encountered in everyday life. | After reading a book about reptiles, the child points to pictures of a snake, a lizard, and a turtle when the teacher asks the children to find the pictures of *reptiles*. |
| 2.3 Understand and use both simple and complex words that describe the relations between objects. | While playing in the block center, DeAndre tells Susan, "Put the red block *in front of* the tower." |
| **Grammar** | |
| **Foundation** | **Examples** |
| 3.1 Understand and use increasingly complex and longer sentences, including sentences that combine two to three phrases or three to four concepts to communicate ideas. | The child produces a two-part sentence through coordination, using *and* and *but* (e.g., "I'm pushing the wagon, *and* he is pulling it" and "It's naptime, *but* I'm not tired." |
| **Source**<br>California Department of Education. 2008. *California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 1.* Sacramento: California Department of Education. | |

The transitional kindergarten environment is language rich; speaking, listening, and learning about language are significant parts of each day. Children have multiple opportunities to express themselves verbally, informally and in more structured ways, about intellectually-stimulating subjects. Teachers serve as excellent language models, participate in one-on-one conversations with children that include multiple exchanges on the same subject, use and engage children in decontextualized (beyond the here and now) language, and provide opportunities for pretend language, such as in dramatic play areas.

Vocabulary development receives special attention. The number and diversity of the words young children know is related to later school success (Sénéchal, Ouelette, and Rodney 2006). Transitional kindergarten teachers are aware of the crucial role they play in expanding children's vocabulary. They ensure that they are rich models, provide stimulating curricula that introduce children to new concepts (with accompanying words), read aloud from books that use more sophisticated language than that used by the children, and provide child-friendly definitions of unknown words. Words are taught in meaningful contexts, and children have many opportunities to use them as they engage in discussions and learning activities.

*They [teachers] ensure that they are rich models, provide stimulating curricula that introduce children to new concepts (with accompanying words), read aloud from books that use more sophisticated language than that used by the children, and provide child-friendly definitions of unknown words.*

Meaningful uses of English include engaging in collaborative oral discussions with a peer or a small group of peers about texts or content topics, reciting poems or singing songs, or making grade-appropriate oral presentations (e.g., sharing a favorite book during circle time). Not all students come to school knowing how to engage in these interactive processes with other students. However, research in classrooms with ELs has demonstrated that teachers can successfully *apprentice* their students into engaging in more school-based or academic ways of interacting with one another, using specific content language, acquiring the language of academic discourse, and developing content knowledge (Gibbons 2009; Walquí and van Lier 2010).

Language development is fostered when teachers establish routines and expectations for equitable and accountable conversations; carefully construct questions that promote extended discussions about academic content (e.g., questions that require students to describe or explain something for which they have sufficient background knowledge); ignite children's curiosity and spark their imaginations; and, as appropriate, provide linguistic support (e.g., a sentence frame, such as "At school, I'm determined to ___ because ____."). With strategic scaffolding, EL children can learn to adopt particular ways of using English that approach the more *literate* ways of communicating that are highly valued in school (Dutro and Kinsella 2010; Gibbons 2009; Merino and Scarcella 2005; Schleppegrell 2010).

*. . . research in classrooms with ELs has demonstrated that teachers can successfully* apprentice *their students into engaging in more school-based or academic ways of interacting with one another, using specific content language, acquiring the language of academic discourse, and developing content knowledge.*

Kaiser, Roberts, and McLeod (2011, 167) recommend several practices for supporting the language development of young children who appear to have language delays. They are also useful with typically developing children. They include the following:

- Modifications in teacher interactional style (e.g., more responsive to child communication)
- Use of specific instructional strategies in a group context (e.g., language modeling, prompting child responses, using expansions and other contingent feedback strategies)
- Arrangement of the environment to support child engagement and learning from the curriculum

Some children with disabilities may need additional encouragement or cues to participate.

## *Effective Expression*

A third major theme of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards is effective expression. The standards call for children to learn to convey their ideas, opinions, and knowledge about texts and topics in all subject matter. This section provides guidance on writing, discussing, presenting, and using language conventions in transitional kindergarten.

### Writing

Children see print used purposefully, such as when menus, routines, and the day's news are posted and discussed. They observe adults record their thoughts as children dictate them. They find magazines, books, posters, brochures, coupons, and catalogs throughout the environment, such as in block, dramatic play, art, and science centers. They have available throughout the room a variety of writing instruments and surfaces on which to write and draw, including stationery, envelopes, postcards, message pads, note pads, and poster paper. Children are prompted to use written language for their own purposes. They are encouraged to scribble, draw, and make letter like marks on paper and other appropriate surfaces. They have access to computers and letter tiles. They are given numerous opportunities to express themselves in writing, and teachers guide them to employ the print concepts, phonological awareness skills, and phonics and word/print recognition skills they are learning. Writing activities occur daily and are systematically and strategically planned.

Teachers build from the following California Preschool Learning Foundations in Writing (California Department of Education 2008). In preschool, at around age 60 months, children:

1.1 Adjust grasp and body position for increased control in drawing and writing.

1.2 Write letters or letter-like shapes to represent words or ideas.

1.3 Write first name nearly correctly.

Transitional kindergarteners make considerable progress toward the kindergarten writing CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy. They learn to draw, dictate and use emerging knowledge of the alphabetic code to compose opinion pieces, informative/explanatory texts, and narrations (W.K.1–3).

### Discussing

In transitional kindergarten, teachers support children's skill in discussion by building from the following California Preschool Learning Foundations in Listening and Speaking (California Department of Education 2008). In preschool, at around age 60 months, children:

1.1 Use language to communicate with others in both familiar and unfamiliar social situations for a variety of basic and advanced purposes, including reasoning, predicting, problem solving, and seeking new information.

1.2 Speak clearly enough to be understood by both familiar and unfamiliar adults and children.

1.3 Use accepted language and style during communication with both familiar and unfamiliar adults and children.

Using the preschool foundations as a springboard, teachers guide transitional kindergarteners to make progress toward achievement of the kindergarten CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy in the strand of Speaking and Listening, which include following agreed-upon rules for discussion (e.g., listening to others and taking turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion) and continuing

a conversation through multiple exchanges (SL.K.1a, b), asking and answering questions and requesting clarification (SL.K.2) as well as providing clarification (SL.K.3). Teachers use some of the following approaches, among others and as appropriate, to support children's progress in discussion:

- Encouraging children to address one another, modeling and teaching students to make eye contact with single and multiple listeners as they share their thoughts
- Providing wait time in teacher-facilitated group discussions before calling on a child, thus giving everyone think time, which is especially important for ELs and for children who are, at this point, less verbal than their peers
- Making use of a prop (such as a foam ball or stuffed toy), which is passed from one child to another, to signal who has the floor
- Strategically asking questions that prompt children to build on or respond to one another's comments, such as "Can someone add to what Nga just said?" "What questions do you have for Jean?" and "What else do you know about what Frank just said?", thus guiding children to listen to one another and to stay on topic
- Encouraging children to address one another in a group discussion
- Avoiding responding to every child's comment during a group discussion, thereby allowing children to continue the conversation and converse with one another (in other words, teachers become one member of the group rather than the dominant member; group conversations are held, rather than a series of one-on-one dialogs with the teacher)
- Helping the most enthusiastic contributors give others the opportunity to speak

*Teachers involve children in determining expectations for discussions, model effective discussion behaviors and comments, and provide many opportunities for children to discuss texts and topics with one another across the curricula.*

In addition to posing questions, such as those discussed in the overview of the span in this chapter, teachers may provide sentence starters to prompt small group or partner discussions. For example, teachers may pause during a read aloud and ask children to think about and then turn to a neighbor and complete one or more of the following sentences:

I think _____.

The character is _____.

What is really interesting about what our teacher just read is _____.

Something I learned about my world is _____.

This made me think of _____.

I wonder _____.

The author _____.

It takes time for young children to learn to effectively engage in discussions. Teachers involve children in determining expectations for discussions, model effective discussion behaviors and comments, and provide many opportunities for children to discuss texts and topics with one another across the curricula.

## Presenting

In transitional kindergarten, children make progress toward the kindergarten standards of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy related to presenting. Specifically, they begin to describe familiar people, places, things, and events, and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail (SL.K.4), add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail (SL.K.5), and speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly (SL.K.6).

*Presenting requires more formal language use and awareness of audience than discussions. Among other ways, children in transitional kindergarten present during "show and tell."*

Presenting requires more formal language use and awareness of audience than discussions. Among other ways, children in transitional kindergarten present during "show and tell." They show a small or large group of peers:

- A favorite book
- An interesting toy
- A project they are working on (such as a painting or a clay figure)
- A photograph
- Items from home that carry special meaning
- Other items of their choice

Children are encouraged to prepare what they wish to tell their peers about their object and sometimes scaffolds are provided, such as prompts ("Tell us about a character in the book." "Tell us about a favorite page or illustration in the book.") and sentence frames ("This photograph shows _____." "This object is a _____. It is special to me because _____.").

Children also present to family members, either virtually, such as recording and posting a group poem recitation on the class Web page, or face-to-face, such as when parents are invited to attend a performance.

Teachers provide instruction in speaking clearly, making eye contact with the audience, and responding to questions.

## Using Language Conventions

*They [teachers] plan game-like activities that guide children's correct usage, and they recognize the value of recasting children's comments.*

Children in transitional kindergarten make progress toward the language conventions outlined in the Kindergarten CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy. (See the kindergarten section of this chapter for a discussion of the kindergarten grammar and usage expectations for writing and speaking and the capitalization, punctuation, and spelling expectations for writing.) Transitional kindergarteners are provided instruction as well as meaningful contexts in which to apply their learning. Teachers build from the California Preschool Learning Foundations (California Department of Education 2008) in grammar. In preschool, at around age 60 months, children:

3.1 Understand and typically use age-appropriate grammar, including accepted word forms, such as subject-verb agreement, progressive tense, regular and irregular past tense, regular and irregular plurals, pronouns, and possessives.

Teachers attend to children's usage and ensure that children hear accurate models of usage. They plan game-like activities that guide children's correct usage, and they recognize the value of recasting children's comments. They know that language conventions develop over time and that children may overgeneralize new understandings (e.g., saying *runned* when using past tense).

## *Content Knowledge*

The content areas are given systematic attention in transitional kindergarten. Teachers examine the California Preschool Learning Foundations in mathematics, social sciences, science, health, and the visual and performing arts and use the foundations along with the kindergarten content standards as guideposts for instruction. Much is learned through play and hands-on experiences, but these are intentionally designed with clear objectives in mind. Content knowledge is built in a cohesive, not haphazard, fashion.

Wide reading experiences contribute to the development of content knowledge. At transitional kindergarten children examine picture books and participate in teacher read alouds. Teachers ensure that about half of the books they read aloud and make available are informational books, which have been scarce in the lives of young children (Duke 2000, Yopp, R. H. and Yopp 2006). Books are selected wisely so that knowledge is built and domain-specific words are heard and viewed multiple times, thus increasing the chance that they become a part of children's vocabularies. Figure 3.15 provides guidance for ensuring young children's exposure to informational text.

***Figure 3.15. Ensuring Young Children's Access to Informational Text***

- **Have an inviting and well-stocked classroom library that includes informational text, and ensure that it is accessible to children.** The library area should have visual appeal and comfortable furniture (a rug and bean bags, for example), and children should be provided with easy access to books and other text materials such as magazines and pamphlets. Consider placing books so that covers face out (as opposed to spine out) in order to capture children's attention and interest. Teachers keep informed about informational books they might want to include in their classroom libraries by visiting public libraries and book stores and searching the Internet. The National Science Teachers Association, for example, publishes a list of Outstanding Science Trade Books for children each year. This list can be found at http://www.nsta.org/publications/ostb/.
- **Place informational books in centers.** Children's books about forces and motion might be placed in a science center. Books about fish might be displayed by a class aquarium. Books about lines, shapes, and colors might be placed in an art center. Having books available where the children are engaged in activities invites children to pick them up and look through them and often inspires children to ask the teacher to read them aloud.
- **Make informational texts a regular part of your read aloud routine.** Children are curious and are eager to learn about their natural and social worlds. Reading aloud from books about plants and animals or national and state symbols, for example, answers children's questions about the world and inspire more questions. After reading, leave the books accessible so children can explore them on their own if they choose. Select books related to children's interests as well as those related to current topics of study.

- **Include informational text in all areas of the curricula.** When children are exploring music, use books about musical instruments to convey information. When children are investigating weather, share books about rain, snow, and wind. Invite students to observe and talk about words and images in books.
- **Display informational text on classroom walls.** Teachers of young children are well aware of the importance of creating a print-rich environment for their students. Include in that environment informational text such as posters with diagrams and labels and pictures with captions.
- **Provide children with opportunities to be writers of informational text.** Let them write or dictate what they know and have learned or experienced. Share their writing with the class by reading it aloud or having the children read it aloud and posting it on classroom walls.
- **Monitor student access and exposure to informational text.** Observe children, and notice their interests and the books they handle. Use your observations to make decisions about additional books for the classroom and to gently spark interest in the variety of materials you make available. Keep a record of the materials you share with students, and be sure to balance informational text with other text types such as stories and poetry.
- **Teach with and about informational texts.** The CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy acknowledge the importance of including informational text in early childhood classrooms and require kindergarten teachers to address standards related to reading informational text. Transitional Kindergarten teachers play an important role in laying the groundwork for children to achieve the reading standards for informational text by offering developmentally appropriate experiences with these books.
- **Raise family awareness of the importance of sharing a variety of text types.** Some teachers share lists of books with family members for reading aloud at home to their young children. Others send home small backpacks containing books and ask that children share them with their families over the weekend. Be sure that informational texts are included on the lists and in the backpacks. At formal and informal meetings, talk to parents and other important adults about the value of reading aloud and sharing a variety of text types. Provide information about books in a school or classroom newsletter. Solicit parents' and families' input on favorite informational texts and topics.

**Source**

Reprinted with slight modifications from

Yopp, Ruth H. 2007. "Informational Text in the Preschool Classroom." *The California Reader* 41 (1): 46-52.
Permission granted by the California Reading Association.

## *Foundational Skills*

Children in transitional kindergarten make progress toward achievement of the kindergarten CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy foundational skills in reading. Instruction takes many forms and includes direct instruction, modeling, and meaningful exploration. Children participate in whole-class, small group, and individual lessons. The foundational skills are taught in a purposeful context that ensures children are eager to learn. Alphabet letters, for example, are not taught merely for their own sake. Children witness the symbols' importance in many classroom routines: books read aloud, their dictated thoughts recorded in print, information accessed in center materials, and a range of other activities. Children recognize that the alphabetic code is important and has a valuable role to play in their lives. At the same time, teachers do not assume that children learn the letters and their corresponding sounds simply through exposure. They provide systematic and thoughtful instruction and make explicit links with the print children see and use in the room and in their lives.

Figure 3.16 provides the California Preschool Learning Foundations for Language and Literacy that are related to the kindergarten reading foundations of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy. The preschool foundations serve as a guide to transitional kindergarten teachers as they consider precursors to the kindergarten standards. The alignment between the preschool foundations and the kindergarten standards is displayed in multiple tables in *The Alignment of the California Preschool Learning Foundations with Key Early Education Resources* http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/psalignment.pdf (California Department of Education 2012).

*. . . teachers do not assume that children learn the letters and their corresponding sounds simply through exposure. They provide systematic and thoughtful instruction and make explicit links with the print children see and use in the room and in their lives.*

See the overview of the span in this chapter for guidance on addressing foundational literacy skills instruction for ELs in the early years. See also the English-Language Development foundations and discussions in the *California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 1*, and the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1* for guidance.

***Figure 3.16. California Preschool Learning Foundations Related to Reading***

**At around 60 months of age, children:**

| **Concepts about Print** | |
|---|---|
| **Foundation** | **Examples** |
| 1.1 Display appropriate book-handling behaviors and knowledge of print conventions. | The child orients a book correctly for reading (i.e., right-side up with the front cover facing the child). |
| 1.2 Understand that print is something that is read and has specific meaning. | The child asks the teacher, "What does this say?"when pointing to text in a book. |
| **Phonological Awareness** | |
| **Foundation** | **Examples** |
| 2.1 Orally blend and delete words and syllables without the support of pictures or objects. | *Blend words*: The child plays the "What's That Word?" game while on a swing. With each push of the swing, the teacher says one part of a compound word (e.g., sun, shine) and then asks the child, "What's that word?" The child responds, "Sunshine."<br>*Blend syllables*: The child chants, "sister" after singing along to, "What word do you get when you say 'sis' and 'ter' together?<br>*Delete words*: The child responds, "*table*" when asked, "What word do you get when you say '*tablecloth*' without '*cloth*'?"<br>*Delete syllables*: The child responds, "*door*" when asked, "What word do you get when you say '*doorknob*' without '*knob*'?" |
| 2.2 Orally blend the onsets, rimes, and phonemes of words and orally delete the onsets of words, with the support of pictures or objects. | *Blend onsets and rimes*: While engaged in a game, the child selects the picture of a bed from among three or four pictures (or says, "*bed*") when asked to put together the letter sounds *b-ed*.<br>*Blend phonemes*: While playing a "bingo game" during small group time, the child chooses and marks pictures corresponding to the words for which the teacher sounds out the individual phonemes (e.g., h-a-t, m-o-p, c-u-p).<br>*Delete onsets*: The child selects the picture of *ants* from among three or four pictures (or says, "*ants*") when asked to say "*pants*" without the "p" letter sound. |

| Alphabetics and Word/ Print Recognition | |
|---|---|
| **Foundation** | **Examples** |
| 3.1 Recognize own name or other common words in print. | The child recognizes his or her name on a sign-in sheet, helper chart, artwork, or name tag (e.g., name tag, label for the cubby, or place at the table). |
| 3.2 Match more than half of uppercase letter names and more than half of lowercase letter names to their printed form. | When shown an upper- or lowercase letter, the child can say its name. |
| 3.3 Begin to recognize that letters have sounds. | The child says the correct letter sound while pointing to the letter in a book. |
| **Source**<br>California Department of Education. 2008. *California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 1.* Sacramento: California Department of Education. | |

## Print Concepts

As noted in the overview of the span of this chapter, children learn print concepts through teacher modeling of book handling and ample exposure to and engagement with a variety of print materials, particularly through shared reading and writing. They make progress in learning upper- and lowercase letters through explicit instruction that is applied to rich and relevant contexts. Teachers model daily how print works, and children interact meaningfully and purposefully with print in a range of contexts. (Note: Alphabet knowledge is identified as a "Print Concept" in the reading foundational skills of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy, but it is not listed in the "Concepts about Print" substrand of the California Preschool Learning Foundations. Rather, in the latter it is listed in the "Alphabetics and Word/Print Recognition" substrand.)

## Phonological Awareness

Transitional kindergarteners build phonological awareness through both direct instruction and frequent play with the sounds of language. Children learn that spoken words consist of smaller units (syllables, onsets and rimes, and phonemes), and they manipulate and reflect on those units as they sing, recite poems, engage with books, and play language games. Examples include the following (Yopp, H.K. and Yopp 2009):

- Children sing "Old MacDonald" and, with teacher prompting, add a phoneme to the initial position of E-I-E-I-O, singing BE-BI-BE-BI-BO or HE-HI-HE-HI-HO.
- Children learn and recite Hickory Dickory Dock. The teacher later changes "Dock" to "Dare" and the children contribute a corresponding rhyme, chanting "Hickory Dickory Dare/The mouse ran up the . . . stair!" or "bear!"

*Children learn that spoken words consist of smaller units (syllables, onsets and rimes, and phonemes), and they manipulate and reflect on those units as they sing, recite poems, engage with books, and play language games.*

- The teacher reads aloud *The Hungry Thing* by Jan Slepian and Ann Seidler (1967) and children determine the actual food that rhymes with a nonsense word given by the Hungry Thing. For example, when the Hungry Thing requests *fancakes*, children exclaim *pancakes*! (See figure 3.17 for several books that play with sounds.)
- Children play I Spy, in which an adult spies something in the room and gives a clue by segmenting the name of the object into its onset and rime: "I spy with my little eye a /r/-/ug/." Children call out, "rug!"
- Children go on a word hunt. The teacher provides a clue to a word by sharing its segmented onset and rime. The children blend the units together to determine the word: /mmmmm/-/op/ is *mop.*
- Children play guessing games with the teacher. The teacher has an image or object in a bag and provides a sound clue (such as the segmented word, /l/-/ē/-/f/ for a leaf). The children blend the sounds orally to guess the object.

Teachers model the activities (thinking aloud and talking about the manipulations) and closely observe children's cognitive, social, and emotional responses to activities. As with all instruction, they consider their reasons for selecting particular activities; the supports, accommodations, or modifications that might be necessary for individuals; the evidence of understanding they will look for; and, based on the progression of learning and their observations of the children, the next steps.

***Figure 3.17. Read Aloud Books that Play with Language***

| English Books | Spanish Books for Alternative Programs* |
|---|---|
| Bynum, Janie. 1999. *Altoona Baboona*. San Diego: Harcourt.<br>Waber, Bernard. 1997. *Bearsie Bear and the Surprise Sleepover Party*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.<br>Martin, Bill Jr. 1970. *The Happy Hippopotami*. San Diego: Voyager.<br>Dewdney, Anna. 2005. *Llama Llama Red Pajama*. New York: Viking.<br>Pomerantz, Charlotte. 1974. *The Piggy in the Puddle*. New York: Simon & Schuster.<br>Seuss. 1974. *There's a Wocket in My Pocket!* New York: Random House. | Ada, Alma F., and Isabel Campoy. 2003. ¡*Pio Peep! Rimas Tradicionales en Español*, Edición Especial. New York: Harpor Collins.<br>Delgado, Henry G. 2002. *Destrabalen*güe*rías para Trabalen*güe*ros*. Bogotá, Colbumia: Intermedio.<br>Griego, Margot C., and others. 1981. *Tortillitas Para Mama and Other Nursery Rhymes*: *Spanish and English*. New York: Henry Holt.<br>Robleda, Margarita. 2003. *Números Tragaldabas*. Mexico: Ediciones Destino. |

*Teachers who do not teach in alternative bilingual programs may provide guidance on high-quality read aloud texts in Spanish to parents who primarily speak Spanish so that they can engage their children with these texts.

## Phonics and Word Recognition

In terms of the phonics and word recognition standards of the kindergarten CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy, children make progress toward learning letter-sound correspondences for consonants and vowels (RF.K.3a–b). They also begin to learn some high-frequency words by sight (RF.K.3c) and begin to distinguish between similarly spelled words (RF.K.3d). These skills build from the preschool foundations. (See figure 3.16.) They are taught directly, but not without relevance in the children's worlds. In other words, teachers make connections between explicit instruction in a letter sound and

the appearance of those letters and their corresponding sounds in shared readings and in children's dictated, shared, and independent writing. See the discussion of phonics and word recognition in the overview of the span and the kindergarten section of this chapter.

### Fluency

In transitional kindergarten, children make progress toward rapid recognition of important sight words (such as their names) and letters of the alphabet. They hear books read aloud fluently by adults daily, and they participate in chanting along with the adult. They mimic prosody and appropriate rate as they engage in "reading" favorite familiar texts.

## An Integrated and Interdisciplinary Approach

The strands of English language arts and literacy (Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language) are integrated among themselves as well as with content learning and, for EL children, with English language development. Guests entering the classroom might have difficulty determining whether they are witnessing science, language, or writing instruction, for example, because in fact all three likely occur at the same time. Snapshots 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 provide brief glimpses at integrated instruction in transitional kindergarten classrooms.

**Snapshot 3.1. *Tingo Tango Mango Tree***
**Integrated ELA and Mathematics in Transitional Kindergarten**

Ms. Watson reads *Tingo Tango Mango Tree* by Marcia Vaughan to her transitional kindergarteners seated in front of her at the carpet area. After a lively discussion of the story, she asks the children what they notice about the animals' names. She repeats them and encourages the children to join her in saying the animals' names aloud. The iguana is named Sombala Bombala Rombala Roh. The flamingo is Kokio Lokio Mokio Koh. The parrot is Willaby Dillaby Dallaby Doh. The turtle is Nanaba Panaba Tanaba Goh. The bat is Bitteo Biteo. They repeat the names several times and comment that most of the names are longer than any they have ever heard! Together, with Ms. Watson's support, the children clap the syllables in each character's name. They determine that all the names except the bat's are composed of ten syllables! Bitteo Biteo contains six syllables. Ms. Watson suggests the children clap the syllables in their own names. Modeling her name first, she claps twice noting that Wat-son has two syllables. The children turn to a neighbor to share and confirm the number of syllables in their own names.

Ms. Watson asks each individual to clap his or her name for the group, and corrective feedback is gently, but clearly, provided. The children next organize themselves into groups in different areas of the room. Those with one-syllable names stand in one area, those with two syllables stand in another area, and so on. With Ms. Watson's guidance, the children form a *human histogram*, defining the term. With a common starting point, they line up with all children having one syllable in one line, those with two-syllable names in another, and so on. They converse with their peers about their observations of the lines. Which line has the most children? Which has the fewest? What does the length of each line mean?

Following the activity, the children return to their tables and write their names on sticky notes. These will be used to construct a paper histogram. The children affix the notes to a group chart, creating columns above the appropriate number on the horizontal axis. For example, Jean places her sticky note in the column above the number "1," signifying that her

## Snapshot 3.1. *Tingo Tango Mango Tree*
## Integrated ELA and Mathematics in Transitional Kindergarten (cont.)

name consists of one syllable. Michi places her sticky note in the column above the number "2," Makayla places her sticky note in the column above the number "3," and Jeremiah places his sticky note in the column above the number "4." The children talk with one another about their observations of the developing histogram, exclaiming over the data. Ms. Watson listens to the children as they converse informally, and she purposefully prompts them to use specific terms to describe the mathematical ideas (such as *more than*, *fewer than*, *the same number as*). As needed, she models using mathematical language for her EL students and then asks them to say the words with her.

Ms. Watson then gathers all the children together at the carpet area and solicits comments about any conclusions they are drawing. The children's comments are written on the chart alongside the histogram. For example, one child observes that "There are more people with two-syllable names than any other number of syllables." Another child observes that "There are the same number of children with one-and four-syllable names." A few children suggest that the story character's names be included on the graph, and they all chant the unusual names together, giggling as Ms. Watson creates sticky notes for them. Together they decide the horizontal axis needs to be extended to have a place for 10-syllable names, and they affix each character's sticky note where it belongs. Strategically, and by popular demand, the teacher rereads the book several times over the next several days and engages the children in syllable clapping. The book and chart remain accessible for a couple of weeks, so students can continue to look at and converse about them informally.

**Resource**

Vaughan, Marcia. 1995. *Tingo, Tango, Mango Tree*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Silver, Burdett Press.

**CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy:** RL.K.2b; RF.K.2b; W.K.2; SL.K.1, 6; L.K.6

**CA ELD Standards:** ELD.PI.K.1, 2, 3, 5; ELD.PII.K.5

**Related CA CCSS for Mathematics:**

K.CC.5 Count to answer "how many?" questions . . .

K.CC.6 Identify whether the number of objects in one group is greater than, less than, or equal to the number of objects in another group . . .

K.MD.2 Directly compare two objects with a measurable attribute in common to see which object has "more of"/"less of" the attribute, and describe the difference.

K.MD.3 Classify objects into given categories; count the numbers of objects in each category and sort the categories by count.

**Related California Preschool Learning Foundations (60 months):**

Reading 2.1 Orally blend and delete words and syllables without the support of pictures or objects.

Number Sense 1.4 Count up to ten objects, using one-to-one correspondence . . .

Number Sense 2.1 Compare, by counting or matching, two groups of up to five objects and communicate, "more," "same as," or "fewer" (or "less").

Algebra and Functions 1.1 Sort and classify objects by one or more attributes, into two or more groups . . .

**Source**

Snapshot based on

Yopp, Hallie K., and Ruth H. Yopp. 2000. "Supporting Phonemic Awareness Development in the Classroom." *The Reading Teacher* 54 (2): 130–143.

## Snapshot 3.2. *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*
## Integrated ELA and ELD in Transitional Kindergarten

Transitional kindergarteners listen to, enjoy, and discuss the book, *Goldilocks and the Three Bears,* several times over the course of a week. They chant along when there are repetitive phrases, ask and answer questions about the story, and talk about the illustrations. Their teacher, Mrs. Haddad, guides children's identification of key story details by using its narrative structure and recording the characters, settings, and events of the plot on a large chart. With support, children use 12" x 18" construction paper to construct individual books. Drawing or using cut paper, each child designs a cover page, a page with a home in the forest, a third page with three bowls, a fourth with three chairs, and a fifth page with three beds. Paper cutouts of Goldilocks and the bears are given to the children to use as props. The children move the props through the pages of their books as they read, using the cutouts as scaffolds as they retell the story to one another.

Mrs. Haddad thoughtfully selected the book for the retelling activity because there are objects, such as bowls, chairs, and beds that can serve as memory triggers for story events and structures and phrases used repeatedly throughout the story: "This porridge is too hot! This porridge is too cold! This porridge is just right." Before they use their books to retell the story, and while the other children are engaged in collaborative tasks at literacy stations, Mrs. Haddad spends extra time with her EL children who are at the Emerging level of English language proficiency. Using a book she has constructed, which is similar to the one the children each made, she collaboratively retells the story with the children. She also prompts the children to use transition terms, such as *then* and *next,* and draws their attention to past tense verbs (e.g., Baby Bear *said*). She intentionally models enthusiasm and intonation, and she invites the children to do the same. This way, she is helping to build the language and confidence EL children will need to participate in the retelling of the story with other children.

The children have multiple opportunities to retell the story using their books with different partners. Mrs. Haddad offers to video record those who wish to be recorded so that the story may be viewed on a class computer during independent choice time. Eventually, the books are taken home so that children may tell the story to their families.

**Resource**

Cauley, Lorinda B. 1981. *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. New York: Putnam.

**CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy:** RL.K.1–3; W.K.3; SL.K.1–2; L.K.6

**CA ELD Standards**: ELD.PI.K.12a; ELD.PII.K.1, 2, 3b

**Related California Preschool Learning Foundations (60 months):**

Listening and Speaking 1.4 Use language to construct extended narratives that are real or fictional.

Reading 4.1 Demonstrate knowledge of details in a familiar story, including characters, events, and ordering of events through answering questions (particularly summarizing, predicting, and inferences), retelling, reenacting, or creating artwork.

**Source**

Snapshot based on

Yopp, Hallie K., and Ruth H. Yopp. 2014. *Literature-Based Reading Activities: Engaging Students with Literary and Informational Text*. 6th ed. Boston: Pearson. Reprinted by permission of Pearson Education, Inc., New York, NY.

## Snapshot 3.3. Animal Informational Alphabet Books Integrated ELA, Science, and Visual Arts in Transitional Kindergarten

It is spring and most of the transitional kindergarteners know many of the letters of the alphabet; some know them all. Mrs. Heaton has been sharing a variety of informational animal alphabet books with the students in recent weeks, including Jerry Pallotta's *The Ocean Alphabet Book*, *The Sea Mammal Alphabet Book*, and *The Butterfly Alphabet Book,* to reinforce their letter knowledge as well as expose them to informational text and life science concepts. The children are enraptured by the interesting information they are learning about animals and they enthusiastically ask and answer questions about the content. Mrs. Heaton leaves the books at a classroom center so the children can explore and enjoy them on their own.

One morning, the children enter the classroom to find butcher paper stretched all the way across one wall of the room. Spanning the length of the paper are the letters of the alphabet. Mrs. Heaton tells the children they are going to create a mural using many of the animals they have been reading about and add any other animals they would like to learn about. Throughout the week, the children use the books and other materials, including printed and digital images, to paint one or more animals of their choice. They ask Mrs. Heaton to read and reread sections of the alphabet books to help them remember interesting information and they dictate sentences about their animals to Mrs. Heaton, who prints the name of the animal and the student's corresponding sentence on a large index card. As they dictate their sentences, Mrs. Heaton takes the opportunity to broaden the children's language repertoires by prompting them to provide more details about their animals (such as, it swims *in the ocean*) and to use precise vocabulary to describe them (such as, it uses its *enormous* mouth to get lots of *plankton*). She is mindful of how important this is for all children, but especially for her EL children.

With support from Mrs. Heaton or a family volunteer, the children cut out their painted animals and identify where to position them on the alphabet mural. Daniel, for example, who drew a jellyish, finds the letter "J" on the mural and requests that his teacher tape his painting and sentence under it. While the mural is under construction, and for several weeks thereafter, the students enjoy viewing the animals and listening to the teacher and other adults read the information they dictated onto the index cards.

**Resources**

Pallotta, Jerry. 1989. *The Ocean Alphabet Book.* Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge.
Pallotta, Jerry. 1995. *The Butterfly Alphabet Book.* Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge.
Pallotta, Jerry. 2012. *The Sea Mammal Alphabet Book.* Watertown, MA: Bald Eagle Books.

**CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy:** RI.K.1; RF.K.1; RF.K.3a, b; W.K.2; L.K.6
**CA ELD Standards:** ELD.PI.K.2, 10, 12b; ELD.PII.K.4, 5
**Related CA Next Generation Science Standards:**
K-LS1-1 Use observations to describe patterns of what plants and animals (including humans) need to survive.
K-ESS2-1 Construct an argument supported by evidence for how plants and animals (including humans) can change the environment to meet their needs.
K-ESS3-1 Use a model to represent the relationship between the needs of different plants or animals (including humans) and the places they live.
**Related Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards:**
Visual Arts K.2.5 Use lines in drawings and paintings to express feelings.

**Snapshot 3.3. Animal Informational Alphabet Books**
**Integrated ELA, Science, and Visual Arts in Transitional Kindergarten (cont.)**

**Related California Preschool Learning Foundations (60 months):**

Reading 3.2 Match more than half of uppercase letter names and more than half of lowercase letter names to their printed form.

Reading 3.3 Begin to recognize that letters have sounds.

Scientific Inquiry 2.1 Record information more regularly and in greater detail in various ways, with adult assistance, including pictures, words (dictated to adults) . . .

Life Sciences 1.1 Identify characteristics of a greater variety of animals and plants . . .

## English Language Development in Transitional Kindergarten

From their first days in transitional kindergarten, EL children learn English, learn content knowledge through English, and learn about how English works. English language development occurs throughout the day and across the disciplines (integrated ELD) and also during a time specifically designated for developing English based on EL student's language learning needs (designated ELD). Approaches to integrated and designated ELD vary depending on the program of instruction (e.g., mainstream English, alternative bilingual programs). The CA ELD Standards serve as a guide for teachers to meet the English language development needs of their EL students in both integrated and designated ELD. The CA ELD Standards are used in tandem with California's Preschool Learning Foundations (including the Foundations in English Language Development) and the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy for Kindergarten, as well as other related content standards.

*From their first days in transitional kindergarten, EL children learn English, learn content knowledge through English, and learn about how English works.*

While integrated ELD occurs throughout the school day, designated ELD is a time during the regular school day when teachers work with EL children grouped by similar English language proficiency levels and focus on critical language the students need to be successful in school tasks. Emphasis is placed on supporting even the youngest learners to develop more sophisticated, or *academic* use of English (e.g., using the verb *trampled* rather than *walked on*). Conversational, or *everyday*, English is also a focus for development, particularly for ELs at the Emerging levels of proficiency who need this type of English to communicate in everyday school tasks and engage meaningfully with their peers. Designated ELD time is an opportunity to focus on and delve deeper into the linguistic resources of English that EL children need in order to engage with content, make meaning from it, and create oral and written texts in ways that meet the expectations of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy, the California Preschool Learning Foundations, and other content standards. Accordingly, the CA ELD Standards, along with the English-Language Development Foundations of the California Preschool Learning Foundations, are the primary standards used during this designated time. However, the content focus is derived from other areas of the curricula.

*While integrated ELD occurs throughout the school day, designated ELD is a time during the regular school day when teachers work with EL children grouped by similar English language proficiency levels and focus on critical language the students need to be successful in school tasks.*

The main instructional emphasis in designated ELD is oral language development, including collaborative discussions, retellings of events and stories, language awareness, and a strong emphasis on general academic and domain-specific vocabulary knowledge. However, other understandings about literary and informational texts enter into designated ELD instruction, as well. During designated ELD children *discuss ideas and information* from ELA and other content areas using the language (e.g., vocabulary, grammatical structures) of those content areas and also *discuss the new language* they are learning to use. For example, a teacher leads her students in a discussion about a word used to describe a character (e.g., She *stomped* out of the room.) and how the word creates a nuance in understanding that is different from other words (e.g., *skipped*). This leads to a discussion of the effect that different words have on readers and listeners and how speakers and writers can make choices about the language to achieve different effects.

*Because young children's listening comprehension generally outpaces their ability to read independently, teacher read alouds are of critical importance.*

Snapshots of designated ELD instruction linked to particular content areas are provided in the kindergarten and grade one sections of this chapter. Two vignettes—one for ELA instruction (with integrated ELD) and a second for designated ELD that builds into and from the first vignette—are provided in the next section. For an extended discussion of how the CA ELD Standards are used throughout the day in tandem with the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and other content standards and as the principal standards during designated ELD, see the overview of the span in this chapter. See also chapter 2 in this *ELA/ELD Framework*.

## ELA/Literacy and ELD in Action in Transitional Kindergarten

The research-based implications for ELA/literacy and ELD instruction are outlined in the overview of the span of this chapter and in chapters 1 and 2. In the following section, detailed examples illustrate how the principles and practices discussed in the preceding sections look in California classrooms. The vignettes provided here are not intended to present the only approaches to teaching and learning. Rather, they are intended to provide two concrete illustrations of how teachers enact the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards in integrated and strategic ways to support deep learning for all students.

Both the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards emphasize the importance of oral language development and frequent exposure to rich texts in the early years of schooling. Because young children's listening comprehension generally outpaces their ability to read independently, teacher read alouds are of critical importance. (See the discussion on reading aloud earlier in this chapter. See also the discussion and figure 2.3 in chapter 2.) When teachers read aloud sophisticated literary and informational texts, they expose children to rich language (including general academic and domain-specific vocabulary and complex grammatical structures), new ideas, and content knowledge that children may not be able to access through independent reading. Rich read-aloud experiences using complex texts in English are especially critical for EL children, who may not have these experiences at home. In bilingual programs, teacher read alouds in both languages of instruction are essential for biliteracy development. Equally important as listening to teacher read alouds and other opportunities to hear rich language models, young children

*Rich read-aloud experiences using complex texts in English are especially critical for EL children, who may not have these experiences at home. In bilingual programs, teacher read alouds in both languages of instruction are essential for biliteracy development.*

need many opportunities to discuss the texts teachers read aloud. Strong oral language development is fostered through meaningful listening and speaking opportunities and instruction (or signed language for students who are deaf or hard of hearing).

When planning lessons, teachers consider the principles and practices discussed in this chapter and throughout this *ELA/ELD Framework*. Lesson planning incorporates the cultural, linguistic, and background experiences students bring to the classroom; the assessed and observed needs of students; and year-end and unit goals. The framing questions in figure 3.18 provide a tool for planning.

***Figure 3.18. Framing Questions for Lesson Planning***

| Framing Questions for All Students | Add for English Learners |
|---|---|
| • What are the big ideas and culminating performance tasks of the larger unit of study, and how does this lesson build toward them?<br>• What are the learning targets for this lesson, and what should students be able to do at the end of the lesson?<br>• Which clusters of CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy does this lesson address?<br>• What background knowledge, skills, and experiences do my students have related to this lesson?<br>• How complex are the texts and tasks?<br>• How will students make meaning, express themselves effectively, develop language, and learn content? How will they apply or learn foundational skills?<br>• What types of scaffolding, accommodations, or modifications will individual students need for effectively engaging in the lesson tasks?<br>• How will my students and I monitor learning during and after the lesson, and how will that inform instruction? | • What are the English language proficiency levels of my students?<br>• Which CA ELD Standards amplify the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy at students' English language proficiency levels?<br>• What language might be new for students and/or present challenges?<br>• How will students interact in meaningful ways and learn about how English works in collaborative, interpretive, and/or productive modes? |

## *ELA/Literacy and ELD Vignettes*

The following vignettes illustrate how teachers might implement selected CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards using the framing questions provided in figure 3.18. Vignette 3.1 presents a portion of an ELA/literacy instructional unit and a closer look at a lesson. The vignette is an example of appropriate instruction for all California classrooms, and additional attention is provided for using the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and CA ELD Standards in tandem for EL children. Vignette 3.2 presents a designated ELD lesson that builds into and from the ELA/literacy lesson in order to support EL children in their steady development of both conversational and academic English.

### ELA/ Literacy Vignette

In vignette 3.1, the teacher uses a graphic organizer to support children in retelling a story that they have heard multiple times. The graphic organizer uses terms for talking about language (or *metalanguage*). The terms—*orientation, complication,* and *resolution*—help children organize the story grammar (e.g., characters, setting, plot) into meaningful stages of the story in sequence. The terms also provide a meaningful way of discussing the organization of the text and the types of language features used in different parts of stories.

**Vignette 3.1. Retelling and Rewriting *The Three Little Pigs***
**Integrated ELA/ Literacy and ELD Instruction in Transitional Kindergarten**

**Background**

Ms. Campbell teaches in a two-way immersion school where the children learn in both Spanish and English. Half of her class of 24 transitional kindergarteners is composed of native English speakers, and half is composed of EL children dominant in Spanish at the Emerging and Expanding levels of English language proficiency. The school's goals include promoting biliteracy and an appreciation for cultural diversity. Ms. Campbell engages her students in many rich language activities every day, half of the time in English, and half of the time in Spanish. She reads aloud to her students daily in both languages. She collaboratively plans lessons with her transitional kindergarten (TK) and kindergarten (K) colleagues, and the team routinely exchanges lesson plans.

**Lesson Context**

Over the past two weeks, Ms. Campbell has read aloud several versions of the story, *The Three Little Pigs*, both in English and in Spanish. The big ideas of the unit are that people tell stories to entertain and communicate life lessons. At the end of the unit, children will be able to retell stories using key details and vocabulary, applying their understandings of how stories are organized. They will also be able to discuss some of the lessons the stories convey.

Ms. Campbell's interactive read alouds have included much discussion about the characters and plot, the vocabulary used, and similarities and differences between the different versions of the story. Last week, the class made a story map containing important details: the setting, characters, problem, and sequence of events. Yesterday, Ms. Campbell guided her students to retell the story with a partner using three aids: pictures from the texts glued onto cards, simple props of the characters, and the story map. Today, Ms. Campbell will guide her students to retell the story again and then collaboratively rewrite it. The learning target and cluster of CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and CA ELD Standards Ms. Campbell is focusing on are the following:

**Vignette 3.1. Retelling and Rewriting *The Three Little Pigs***
**Integrated ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction in Transitional Kindergarten (cont.)**

**Learning Target:** The children will retell and rewrite the story using colorful words and key details to convey the series of events in the sequence in which they occurred.

***CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy:*** *RL.K.2 – With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including key details; SL.K.2 – Confirm understanding of a text read aloud . . . ; W.K.3 – Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred . . . ; L.K.*6 *– Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts.*
***CA ELD Standards (Expanding):*** *ELD.PI.K.12a – Retell texts and recount experiences using complete sentences and key words; ELD.PII.K.1 – Apply understanding of how different text types are organized to express ideas (e.g., how a story is organized sequentially with predictable stages . . . ; ELD.PII.K.2 – Apply understanding of how ideas, events, or reasons are linked throughout a text using a growing number of connecting words or phrases (e.g.,* next, after a long time*) . . .*

**Lesson Excerpts**

Ms. Campbell calls her students to the carpet and reminds them that they have been reading lots of different versions of *The Three Little Pigs.* She recalls that yesterday, they spent a lot of time retelling the story to one another and explains that today, they are going to use all of that great oral retelling to rewrite the story together. Using her computer tablet and a projector, Ms. Campbell projects five pictures depicting important events from the story. She asks her students to take turns with a partner retelling the story, using the pictures. She listens to the children as they share, noting the language they use, their ability to sequence events, and any misunderstandings.

Ms. Campbell: Children, I really enjoyed listening to your retellings of the story. Today, when I write down what you say, we need to make sure we get all those great details, including the setting, the characters, the problem, and the important events into our reconstructed story. Let's remind ourselves what we included in our story map.

Ms. Campbell points to the story map the class generated together (see vignette 3.2 for the story map) and guides them in reading it. She then sets the purpose for engaging in the next task.

Ms. Campbell: When we rewrite, or reconstruct, the story together, we also need to remember that one of the main purposes for telling stories is to entertain other people. So we have to make sure that the language we use is really colorful and interesting. For example, we can't just say that the pig built a house and the wolf blew it down. That would be kind of boring, wouldn't it? (The children enthusiastically agree.) Instead, we need to use descriptive, or colorful, words and interesting dialogue. We could say something like, "The wolf (taking a deep breath and inviting students to join her by motioning with her hand) huffed and he puffed and he blew the house down."

Tania: He destroy the house!

Ms. Campbell: That's right! He *destroyed* the house. He absolutely demolished it. Can you say more about that?

**Vignette 3.1. Retelling and Rewriting *The Three Little Pigs***
**Integrated ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction in Transitional Kindergarten (cont.)**

Tania: He destroy the house and he say "I huff and I puff and I blow you house down!" And the house, it crash on the floor!

Ms. Campbell: Wow! That is a great way to retell the story! When we retell and rewrite the story, let's make sure we remember to use lots of that colorful language and dialogue.

Ms. Campbell uses her computer tablet to project the "Story Rewriting Template" the class will use. The template uses the same terms as the story map and organizes the story grammar and sequence into three stages: *orientation*, *complication*, and *resolution*. Rather than using the terms *beginning, middle,* and *end* (which all text types have), Ms. Campbell finds that using the terms *orientation*, *complication*, and *resolution* helps students discuss story organization because the terms are related to what is happening at each stage of the narrative. She uses the template to guide students as they jointly reconstruct the story aloud. In the Story Rewriting Template below, the template Ms. Campbell uses with students is on the left while her notes to herself about the function of each stage are on the right.

| **Story Rewriting Template** | |
|---|---|
| Template to use with students | Ms. Campbell's lesson plan notes for herself |
| *Story Title* | *The Three Little Pigs* |
| *Orientation* | *Orients* readers to the story – Introduces the characters and setting, foreshadows the problem |
| *Complication* | *Complicates* the story – Introduces the problem and shows how things get *complicated*<br>Lots of events and dialogue here |
| *Resolution* | *Resolves* the problem in the story and wraps everything up |
| *(Optional) Story Theme(s)* | Articulates the life lesson(s) of the story |

Ms. Campbell: When I look at our notes in the story map, it says that at the beginning of the story, Mama pig says goodbye. The three little pigs go to build their houses. Should I just write that?

Children: No!

Ms. Campbell: What should I write then. Ysenia, what do you think?

Ysenia: We should start like, "Once upon a time."

Ms. Campbell: Oh, that's a great way to start a story. What does everyone think about beginning the story like that?

Children: (Nodding.) Yeah! Once upon a time!

Ms. Campbell: Okay then. (Writing.) Once upon a time . . . Then what? Turn to your partner and see if you can come up with our first sentence.

**Vignette 3.1. Retelling and Rewriting *The Three Little Pigs***
**Integrated ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction in Transitional Kindergarten (cont.)**

Ms. Campbell continues to guide the children to jointly reconstruct, the orientation stage of the story, using the details in the story map and the colorful language that characterizes engaging storybooks. At the complication stage, she prompts the children to use language to signal to readers that something is shifting in the story.

Ms. Campbell: Okay, so now that we have the *orientation* stage written, we need to get into the *complication* stage. Remember, that's where the problem comes in and where things get complicated. What was the problem in this story? Martín, what do you think?

Martín: The wolf wants to eat the pigs, but they don't want to get eaten.

Ms. Campbell: Yes, but things got a little complicated because the houses the pigs built weren't so sturdy, were they? Were the pigs surprised when the wolf comes? How can we use descriptive words to communicate what happened?

Jordan: We could write the pigs built their houses. And then a wolf came.

Ms. Campbell: Oh, you used "and then!" That's a great idea, Jordan. When you said that, it made me think something was changing in the story, that there was a problem coming. Is there a word we could use to let readers know that something is changing and that things are getting complicated?

Several Children: Suddenly!

Ms. Campbell: Yes, we learned that word "suddenly" when we were reading *The Three Little Pigs* stories last week, didn't we? That really tells us something is changing and that it happens unexpectedly. So, how about if we write, "*Suddenly*, a wolf came along." How does that sound?

Children: (Nodding.)

Ariel: And he was very hungry.

Rashidi: Very, very hungry.

Juanita: ¡Era muy feroz!

Ms. Campbell: Yes, he was ferocious! Let's all say that word together—ferocious. Oh, that adds a lot of colorful detail. These words are giving us important details about the wolf. How about if I write, "Suddenly, a ferocious wolf came along, and he was very, very hungry." How's that? That really lets me know things are going to get complicated, doesn't it?

As they jointly reconstruct the story, Ms. Campbell and the children choose colorful language from the stories they have been reading. They also use dialogue and general academic vocabulary.

Ms. Campbell: And what does the wolf do when he knocks on the first little pig's door? What does he say?

Children: "Little pig, little pig, let me in!" (The other children agree.)

Ms. Campbell: (Writing.) And how does the wolf say it? Does he whisper it, like this? (Whispering.)

Children: No!

**Vignette 3.1. Retelling and Rewriting *The Three Little Pigs***
**Integrated ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction in Transitional Kindergarten (cont.)**

Sara: He roars!

Ms. Campbell: Does everyone like that? (The children nod and say "yes," and Ms. Campbell adds it to the story.) And then what does the little pig say?

Children: "Not by the hair of my chinny chin chin!"

Ms. Campbell: And how does he say that, Miguel?

Miguel: He scare.

Ms. Campbell: Yes, he's scared, isn't he. So does he shout it, like this (shouting)? Does he whimper, like this (whimpering)?

Miguel: I think he whimper.

Ms. Campbell: I think so, too!

When the children and Ms. Campbell are finished reconstructing the story, they read the story together chorally. As they do, Ms. Campbell models enthusiastic reading and prosody, and she encourages the children to do the same. The next day, Ms. Campbell will guide the children to rewrite the story in Spanish. Then, she will use the text from the reconstructed story in English and Spanish to make a bilingual big book illustrated with photographs she has taken of the children acting out the story in the dramatic play center. The big book will remain in the classroom library corner for the students to read and re-read to themselves, to one another, and to visitors.

### Teacher Reflection and Next Steps

Ms. Campbell brings her observation notes and the reconstructed stories to the next regularly scheduled collaborative planning meeting she has with her TK and K colleagues. She describes guiding her students to use new language and recognize story structure as well as language features, and she shares how some students have begun using some of the new language in their oral retellings and in the stories they dictate to other adults who work in the classroom. One colleague asks Ms. Campbell if he can make use of her lesson plan for *The Three Little Pigs* and observe the next time she engages her students in a story reconstruction activity.

**Sources**

Lesson adapted from

Derewianka, Beverly, and Pauline Jones. 2012. *Teaching Language in Context*. South Melbourne, Victoria: Oxford University Press.

Gibbons, Pauline. 2002. *Scaffolding Language, Scaffolding Learning*. Portsmouth, NH: Heineman.

**Additional Information**

Web sites

- Reading Rockets has ideas for reading aloud (http://www.readingrockets.org/reading-topics/reading-aloud).
- D.E.A.R. (drop everything and read) with families short video (https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/dear-reading?fd=1) on https://www.teachingchannel.org/.

**Recommended reading**

Collins, Molly F. 2012. "Sagacious, Sophisticated, and Sedulous: The Importance of Discussing 50-cent Words with Preschoolers." *Young Children.* NAEYC. (http://www.naeyc.org/yc/files/yc/file/201211/YCCollins.pdf)

Shedd, Meagan K., and Nell K. Duke. 2008. "The Power of Planning: Developing Effective Read Alouds." *Beyond the Journal: Young Children on the Web.* NAEYC. (http://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200811/BTJReadingAloud.pdf)

## Designated ELD Vignette

Vignette 3.1 illustrates good teaching for all students, with particular attention to the learning needs of ELs and other learners who have specialized learning needs. In addition to good first teaching with integrated ELD, EL children benefit from intentional and purposeful designated ELD instruction that builds into and from ELA and other content instruction. Vignette 3.2 provides an example of designated ELD that builds into and from the ELA/literacy instruction described in vignette 3.1.

### Vignette 3.2. Retelling *The Three Little Pigs* Using Past Tense Verbs and Expanded Sentences Designated ELD Instruction in Transitional Kindergarten

**Background**

At the beginning of the year, six of Ms. Campbell's EL students were at the early Emerging level of English language proficiency. By this point in the year, they are able to express themselves using short sentences and learned phrases when they interact with peers in English. The other six EL children came into her classroom at the early Expanding level and are now able to interact using English about a variety of topics and in more extended exchanges. Ms. Campbell and her TK and K colleagues plan their designated ELD lessons at the same time that they plan their ELA and other content area lessons. As they plan, they focus on anticipating students' language development needs for these content areas, and they make adjustments, based on recent observations of their students during lessons.

**Lesson Context**

Ms. Campbell works with her twelve EL children in two small groups of six in order to provide designated ELD instruction tailored to their specific language learning needs. While she works with these groups, the other children in the class engage in collaborative tasks at learning centers, some of them supervised by parent volunteers. In ELA instruction, Ms. Campbell has just guided her students to rewrite, or jointly reconstruct, the story of *The Three Little Pigs* (see vignette 3.1). As she observed students during their oral retellings of the story in English, she noticed that ELs at the Emerging level of English language proficiency were not consistently using past tense verbs or expanding their sentences with much detail. She would like the children to feel more confident orally retelling stories in general and using past tense verb forms and particular language resources to expand and enrich their sentences, so she plans to focus on these two areas in her designated ELD lessons this week. Ms. Campbell's learning targets and the cluster of CA ELD Standards she will highlight in today's lesson are the following:

**Learning Target:** The children will retell the story in order using past tense verbs and expanded and enriched sentences.

***CA ELD Standards Addressed (Emerging):*** *ELD.PI.K.12a – Retell texts and recount experiences using complete sentences and key words; ELD.PII.K.3b – Use simple verb tenses appropriate for the text type and discipline to convey time . . . ; ELD.PII.K.4 – Expand noun phrases in simple ways (e.g., adding a familiar adjective to describe a noun) . . . ; ELD.PII.K.5 – Expand sentences with frequently used prepositional phrases (e.g.,* in the house, on the boat*) to provide details (e.g., time, manner, place, cause) . . .*

## Vignette 3.2. Retelling *The Three Little Pigs* Using Past Tense Verbs and Expanded Sentences
## Designated ELD Instruction in Transitional Kindergarten (cont.)

**Lesson Excerpts**

Ms. Campbell invites the six EL children at the Emerging level of English language proficiency over to the teaching table. She tells them that today, they are going to retell the story of *The Three Little Pigs* again, but that this time, they are going to focus on adding a lot of details to their retellings and making sure listeners know that the events in the story took place in the past. She points to the story map that the class generated the previous week.

| ***The Three Little Pigs*** | | |
|---|---|---|
| ***Characters***<br>Three little pigs<br>Big bad wolf<br>Mama pig | ***Setting***<br>The countryside<br>Next to the forest | ***Problem***<br>The wolf wants to eat the pigs, and the pigs don't want to be eaten |

*Events*
Once upon a time → → → → The end

| Orientation | Complication | | | Resolution |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mama pig says goodbye. The three little pigs go to build their houses. | The first little pig builds a house of straw. The wolf blows it down. | The second little pig builds a house of sticks. The wolf blows it down. | The third little pig builds a house of bricks. The wolf can't blow it down. | The third little pig tricks the wolf, and the three pigs live together in the brick house. |

Ms. Campbell places the same five pictures the students have already used for orally retelling the story in ELA (see vignette 3.1) on the table in front of them. She hands each of the six children a popsicle stick puppet (three pigs and three wolves). She explains that when there is dialogue, they will each have a chance to act out how the character is saying the dialogue using the puppets.

Ms. Campbell: Children, let's retell the story together. The first time, I'm going to say what's happening, and then you're going to repeat what I say. I want you to notice how when we tell stories, we use words, or verbs, that tell us that the story already happened in the past. So, we don't say, there *are* three little pigs. We say, there *were* three little pigs because it happened in the past.

María: Once upon a time.

Ms. Campbell: Yes, "once upon a time." That means it happened a long time ago. And we don't say, the wolf *blows* the house down because that would mean it's happening right now. It happened a long time ago, so we say, the wolf *blew* the house down. Say that with me – *blew*. (Students repeat the word.) I want you to listen for the words, or verbs, that let us know the story happened a long time ago. I'll retell what's happening in each picture, and then you repeat after me. (Pointing to the first picture.) Once upon a time, there were three little pigs.

## Vignette 3.2. Retelling *The Three Little Pigs* Using Past Tense Verbs and Expanded Sentences
## Designated ELD Instruction in Transitional Kindergarten (cont.)

The children repeat what Ms. Campbell says as they retell the story using the pictures. In her retelling, she intentionally models enthusiastic rhythm and intonation (prosody). She also models the use of expanded sentences (using descriptive adjectives and prepositional phrases) that contain details about the characters and events.

Ms. Campbell: The *frightened little* pig ran *into his house*.

Two of the Children: The frighten little pig run to his house.

Ms. Campbell: Let's all say that together. Listen carefully first. The *frightened little* pig ran *into his house*.

Children: (all six together) The *frightened little* pig ran *into his house*.

After the children have retold the story with Ms. Campbell, she asks them to work in partners to retell the story (one partner has a wolf puppet; the other has a pig puppet). As the children retell the story, Ms. Campbell listens carefully and provides "just-in-time" scaffolding.

María: The pig saw the wolf and he scared and he ran away.

Ms. Campbell: Yes, that's right. And how can we let people who are listening know a little more about the pig and the wolf? Are they little, are they big, are they nice, are they scary?

María: The little pig saw the big, scary wolf and he scared. He ran away to his house.

Rafael: The wolf huff and he puff and he blew the house down.

Ms. Campbell: That's wonderful that you said *blew*, Rafael! That lets us know the story happened in the past. But remember we have to show with all the action words that the story happened in the past, or a long time ago, so we have to say the wolf huff*ed* and he puff*ed* and he *blew* the house down. Say it with me.

Ms. Campbell stresses the –ed suffix in the words "huffed" and "puffed" to make sure Rafael hears the past tense endings, and she has him say the sentence with her to make sure he has guided practice. She doesn't correct everything the children say, as she knows this might make them feel overly self-conscious and detract from their focus on meaning making. Instead, she is strategic with corrective feedback, focusing primarily on past tense verbs and expanded sentences.

As the children retell the story, Ms. Campbell uses a rubric based on the CA ELD Standards, to guide her observations of their oral retellings. The rubric provides her with information about individual students' progress in particular areas of English language development, and this information in turn helps her strategically plan subsequent instruction.

**Vignette 3.2. Retelling *The Three Little Pigs* Using Past Tense Verbs and Expanded Sentences**
**Designated ELD Instruction in Transitional Kindergarten (cont.)**

**Teacher Reflection and Next Steps**

Based on information from the rubric, Ms. Campbell makes a note to continue to work on past tense verb forms and expanded sentences with these six children during designated ELD for the rest of the week. She also makes a note to listen to the children carefully over the next couple of weeks as they retell stories during ELA instruction and at literacy stations to see if they use past tense verbs and expand their sentences independently.

Ms. Campbell sends all children home with a packet that contains the five pictures from the story, the popsicle stick puppets of the wolf and pig, and the text of *The Three Little Pigs* in English and Spanish with suggestions for parents about reading aloud and facilitating oral retellings at home in both languages. For the six EL children in today's lesson, she adds additional instructions for parents in Spanish asking them to support their children to use past tense verbs and expanded sentences in their oral retellings in English.

**Sources**

Lesson adapted from

Derewianka, Beverly, and Pauline Jones. 2012. *Teaching Language in Context*. South Melbourne, Victoria: Oxford University Press.

Gibbons, Pauline. 2002. *Scaffolding Language, Scaffolding Learning*. Portsmouth, NH: Heineman.

**Additional Information**

Web sites

- Colorín Colorado has resources for ELs (http://www.colorincolorado.org/educators/ell_resources/prek/) in preschool and TK (http://www.colorincolorado.org).
- NAEYC has many "Messages in a Backpack" (http://www.naeyc.org/tyc/backpack) in both English and Spanish about how families can support their children's language and literacy development (http://www.naeyc.org).

**Recommended reading**

Berkowitz, Doriet. 2011. "Oral Storytelling: Building Community through Dialogue, Engagement, and Problem Solving." *Young Children*. March: 36-40. (http://www.naeyc.org/tyc/files/tyc/file/V5I2/Oral%20Storytelling.pdf)

## Conclusion

The information and ideas in this grade-level section are provided to guide teachers of transitional kindergarten children in their instructional planning. Recognizing California's richly diverse student population is critical for instructional and program planning and delivery. Teachers are responsible for educating a variety of learners, including **advanced learners**, **students with disabilities**, **ELs at different English language proficiency levels**, **standard English learners**, and other **culturally and linguistically diverse learners**, as well as **students experiencing difficulties** with one or more of the themes of ELA/literacy and ELD instruction (Meaning Making, Effective Expression, Language Development, Content Knowledge, and Foundational Skills).

It is beyond the scope of a curriculum framework to provide guidance on meeting the learning needs of every child because each child comes to teachers with unique dispositions, skills, histories, and circumstances. Teachers need to know their students well through appropriate assessment practices and collaborations with families in order to design effective instruction. They need to adapt and refine instruction as appropriate for individual learners. Information about meeting the needs of

diverse learners, scaffolding, and modifying or adapting instruction is provided in chapters 2 and 9 of this *ELA/ELD Framework*.

Some children have had extensive experiences with language and literacy (in English or another language) prior to entering transitional kindergarten. They should not simply repeat those experiences in transitional kindergarten; instead they should be challenged to engage with texts and other materials that interest and stretch them; extend their skills with printed language in meaningful contexts; and communicate and collaborate with peers and others (within and beyond the classroom) on interesting projects, investigations, and learning experiences in all areas of the curricula.

Some children have had fewer experiences with language and literacy prior to entering transitional kindergarten. They, too, are provided appropriately challenging instruction in an environment that facilitates their progress toward the kindergarten standards and that contributes to their understandings of the relevance and power of language and literacy in the curricula and their lives.

With careful planning, articulation, and collaboration (see figure 3.19), transitional kindergarten can meet its promise of preparing children for success in the school years ahead with a unique curriculum and developmentally appropriate instruction that builds on children's natural curiosity about themselves, their peers, and their world and that actively engages them in learning.

Transitional kindergarten children are just beginning their journey in school. As young children, they bring the joys and enthusiasms of new travelers to the enterprise of schooling. Experiences in transitional kindergarten boost children's confidence about the possibilities that await them in future years.

***Figure 3.19. Collaboration***

**Collaboration: A Necessity**

Frequent and meaningful collaboration with colleagues and parents/families is critical for ensuring that all students meet the expectations of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards. Teachers are at their best when they frequently collaborate with their teaching colleagues to plan instruction, analyze students' work, discuss students' progress, integrate new learning into their practice, and refine lessons or identify interventions when students experience difficulties. Students are at their best when teachers enlist the collaboration of parents and families—and the students themselves—as partners in their education. Schools are at their best when educators are supported by administrators and other support staff to implement the type of instruction called for in this *ELA/ELD Framework*. School districts are at their best when teachers across the district have an expanded professional learning community they can rely upon as thoughtful partners and for tangible instructional resources. More information about these types of collaboration can be found in chapter 11 and throughout this *ELA/ELD Framework*.

# Kindergarten

Kindergarten is a highly anticipated year by many children and their families. It is a time of hope and expectation, much of it centered on gaining independence with written language. The kindergarten ELA/literacy program is designed to facilitate children's acquisition of the skills, knowledge, and dispositions that set them on the path to become lifelong readers and writers and effective communicators in the global 21st century. The CA ELD Standards provide additional guidance to teachers for supporting EL students as they learn the range of subject matter and develop proficiency in English.

*In kindergarten, children learn the purposes of print through engagement with a wide variety of texts across content areas and in their own attempts to express their ideas and knowledge in writing.*

In kindergarten, children learn the purposes of print through engagement with a wide variety of texts across content areas and in their own attempts to express their ideas and knowledge in writing. They recognize that reading is a meaning-making act and are provided instruction in comprehension that promotes literal and higher-level thinking about texts and topics. They make great advances in the acquisition of vocabulary and in the understanding and use of varied and increasingly complex sentence structures, and they use their developing language to share ideas about texts and topics under study. Instruction includes a significant focus on how print works, and kindergarten children make considerable progress in understanding the logic of the alphabetic code. At the same time, children have rich exposure to excellent literature that stirs their imaginations and ignites their curiosity about their worlds. ELA/literacy and ELD instruction are part of a much broader kindergarten program that provides rich, engaging, hands-on learning experiences that build content knowledge in science, social studies, mathematics, health, the arts, and more.

This grade-level section provides an overview of the key themes of ELA/literacy and ELD instruction and then focuses on ELD instruction. Snapshots and longer vignettes bring several of the concepts to life.

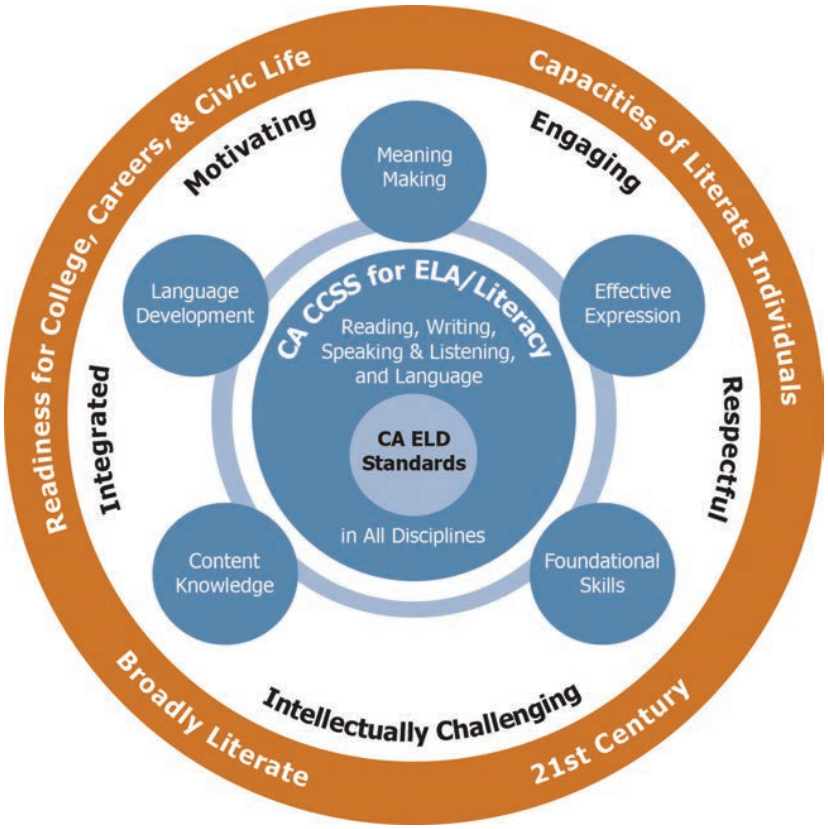
## Key Themes of ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction in Kindergarten

Kindergarten ELA/literacy and ELD instruction should be age-appropriate, carefully sequenced, thoughtfully planned, and focused on clear objectives and needs. Furthermore, instruction should occur in an environment that is responsive to the social, emotional, physical, linguistic, and cognitive needs of young children as it conveys the thrill of becoming literate. This section includes discussions of the key themes of ELA/Literacy and ELD instruction as they apply to kindergarten: **Meaning Making**, **Language Development**, **Effective Expression, Content Knowledge, and Foundational Skills**. (See figure 3.20.) These themes are situated in a motivating, engaging, respectful, and intellectually challenging context, and they are integrated across the curricula. Children's achievement of the grade-level standards reflected in these themes are a preliminary—and essential—step toward their ultimate realization of the overarching goals of ELA/literacy and ELD instruction: Students develop the readiness for college, careers, and civic life; attain the capacities of literate individuals; and acquire the skills for living and learning in the complex, information and technologically rich, and global world of the 21st century. Moreover, the ELA/literacy instruction called for in this

*Kindergarten ELA/literacy and ELD instruction should be age-appropriate, carefully sequenced, thoughtfully planned, and focused on clear objectives and needs.*

*ELA/ELD Framework* in every grade level contributes to students' progress in becoming broadly literate as they engage deeply as readers and viewers of a wide range of high-quality texts and media (See the introduction and chapter 2 to this *ELA/ELD Framework* for a discussion of these goals, which are displayed in the outer ring of figure 3.20.)

***Figure 3.20. Circles of Implementation of ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction***




## *Meaning Making*

As discussed throughout this framework, meaning making is central in each of the strands of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and in all aspects of the CA ELD Standards. In this section, the focus is on meaning making with text.

### Meaning Making with Text

Enjoying text, appreciating its role in daily life, and learning from it are goals of reading instruction. Thus, meaning making—or comprehension (see figure 2.6 in chapter 2)—is crucial and is a dominant focus of the ELA/literacy program. In the kindergarten year, comprehension instruction occurs primarily during times when the teacher is reading aloud to the entire group, small groups, or individuals. While reading aloud, teachers regularly engage in *thinking aloud*, initially with simple texts and eventually with more challenging texts. In doing so, teachers model the strategies they employ to make sense of print. For example, knowing that predicting is an effective comprehension strategy, teachers occasionally pause as they read aloud to comment on what they anticipate will happen next. Importantly, they provide their reasons for their

predictions, referring explicitly to language or illustrations in the text and making obvious the links between their predictions and the text. Knowing that visualizing contributes to comprehension, they comment on what they see in their *mind's eye* at certain points in the text. Knowing that monitoring comprehension is important, they reread some sentences or slightly longer sections of text that are especially dense or that include unusual words, and they explain to children that stopping to reread a difficult passage may help with understanding. Questioning, retelling and summarizing, and drawing inferences, too, are key comprehension strategies that should be modeled (Shanahan, and others 2010; see descriptions in figure 4.4 in chapter 4 of this *ELA/ELD Framework*).

*While reading aloud, teachers regularly engage in* thinking aloud, *initially with simple texts and eventually with more challenging texts. In doing so, teachers model the strategies they employ to make sense of print.*

In addition to observing their teachers' use of strategies, children are taught to use the strategies themselves. As teachers read aloud, they prompt children to share with the group their questions, inferences, predictions, and so forth. Teachers support children as they provide the reasons for their thinking. They ask text-dependent questions that take children into the text and that foster inference-making and critical thinking. (See the overview of the span in this chapter for a discussion of text-dependent questions.)

Teacher guidance is vital. For example, to build a sense of story structure with narrative text, kindergarten teachers begin with simple stories, those that have only a few characters, a single setting, and a straightforward plot. During a second or third reading of the story, teachers guide children in thinking closely about the structure. They may create a story map, prompting and supporting children to contribute their thoughts to a chart, such as the one in figure 3.21 developed for *Uncle Peter's Amazing Chinese Wedding*.

***Figure 3.21. Story Map for* Uncle Peter's Amazing Chinese Wedding *by Lenore Look***

| | |
|---|---|
| **Characters** | A young girl, her Uncle Peter, his fiancée Stella, and family members |
| **Setting** | Uncle Peter's home and Stella's home on their wedding day |
| **Problem** | Peter is getting married and his niece worries that she will no longer be his special girl. |
| **Action** | The girl participates in the wedding activities, deliberately ruins the wedding tea, tells her mother her fears, and the wedding occurs. |
| **Resolution** | Stella tells the young girl she is happy to have a new niece. Uncle Peter calls her his special girl. |
| **Theme** | There is no limit on people's love. |

When teachers engage children with interesting stories and entertaining poetry, and when they pique children's curiosity and model enthusiasm for and attention to ideas and craft, they are helping children understand the purpose of printed materials: to communicate ideas. Children learn that books and other printed media are interesting, entertaining, and instructive.

Just as they have many experiences engaging with literary texts (such as stories and poems), kindergarten children should have many opportunities to actively engage in group reading activities focused on a range of informational text. They learn to draw on prior knowledge relevant to the information and events in texts and to use the illustrations and context to make predictions about text.

*Just as they have many experiences engaging with literary texts (such as stories and poems), kindergarten children should have many opportunities to actively engage in group reading activities focused on a range of informational text.*

The reading standards for informational text are similar to those for reading literature. They, however, focus on the genre that predominates later schooling and life: informational text. The standards call for kindergarten children, with prompting and support, to ask and answer questions about essential elements of the text; identify the main topic of a text and retell key details of the text; and describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text (RI.K.1–3). With prompting and support, children ask and answer questions about unknown words, identify the front and back covers and the title of a book, name the author and illustrator and define their roles in presenting ideas or information in a text, and describe the relationship between illustrations and the text (RI.K.4–7). They identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic, such as illustrations, descriptions, or procedures (RI.K–9). With assistance, children also identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text (RI.K.8). This task is an important precursor to constructing evidence-based arguments, which comes into play strongly later in elementary school.

Kindergarteners who are ELs benefit from and participate in all of the instructional activities described in this chapter. Some EL children may not have had experiences actively engaging in group reading activities in which they exchange information and share ideas and opinions with a partner. This lack of experience may prevent them from participating in discussions, which limits their oral language development. Teachers ensure equity of participation in discussion activities by providing structured routines and frequent opportunities for students to interact with texts and peers. For example, during a read aloud, when teachers pose a comprehension question, instead of calling on raised hands they ask all students to think about the question for a few seconds and then discuss their thinking with a partner. This think-pair-share routine can be loosely structured (turn and talk) or highly structured (by using designated partners, identified roles, sentence frames) depending on the purpose. If teachers want students to use a specific word, they provide an open sentence frame that contains the word (e.g., Bees are *extraordinary* because___.).

To support EL students in asking questions, teachers also model how to ask initial questions (*Why are bees extraordinary?)* and follow up questions (*Can you say more? Can you explain how/why?*) and encourages students to ask these same types of questions to extend their conversations, rather than merely saying one sentence.

When students are first learning a routine like think-pair-share, teachers typically begin with a single sentence and model responses. Over time, teachers encourage children to have more extended conversations about the content. Children ask, as well as answer, multiple questions to exchange ideas.

*Teachers ensure equity of participation in discussion activities by providing structured routines and frequent opportunities for students to interact with texts and peers.*

Teachers encourage parents and other caregivers of EL children to read aloud often (in the primary language and, to the extent possible, in English) and ask in the primary language the same types of questions asked during school read alouds. In addition to fostering biliteracy, the development of comprehension skills in the primary language enhances comprehension in English because these types of skills transfer across languages.

## *Language Development*

As the foundation of literacy and all learning (and social competence), language development is crucial, particularly academic language. Children's language expands considerably as they engage with texts and learn to discuss and communicate their ideas and questions about texts, experiences, and concepts. Language development is a high priority in kindergarten.

In kindergarten, teachers do the following to support language development, including the acquisition of academic language:

- Use sophisticated, but not excessively challenging, language in meaningful interactions with children. For example, when greeting children in the morning, they say, "It's a spectacular morning, isn't it?" When providing direction on how to fold a piece of paper, they say, "Make a vertical fold," instead of "Fold it hot dog style."
- Read aloud daily from a broad range of literary and informational texts, including those that are related to content area curricula and those that reflect children's interests. Some texts are selected because they promote thinking and reflection and model rich language, and some are selected because, after several readings, they can be retold by children when holding the book or using props as memory aids. Some texts, such as poems or pattern books, are selected because they allow children to practice the rhythm, tempo, and pauses of English as they read along with their teacher.
- Discuss language, including the interesting words, sentence constructions, and more extended discourse structures in read aloud texts, thus building language awareness.
- Provide ample time for children to interact in both teacher-directed and child-centered contexts about texts, investigations, discoveries, and other learning experiences throughout the day.
- Provide independent time in intellectually stimulating centers of children's choice that encourage language exchanges, such as hands-on science and art exploration centers.
- Facilitate children's collaboration in joint projects, such as organizing a center together for future use by peers or working together to draw a map of the classroom.
- Engage children in guided and self-directed sociodramatic play, providing simple props, offering occasional prompts to extend their language, and modeling the use of puppets to retell or create stories.
- Engage children in interesting learning experiences that evoke questions and expressions of wonder.
- Engage in multiple exchanges with individual children daily, using decontextualized language (that is, language focused on issues beyond the here and now).
- Engage children in conversations about text, asking high-level, text-dependent questions that elicit rather than limit language. See figure 3.22.

*Children's language expands considerably as they engage with texts and learn to discuss and communicate their ideas and questions about texts, experiences, and concepts. Language development is a high priority in kindergarten.*

***Figure 3.22. Questions for* The Little Red Hen *by Vera Southgate***

| Questions that Limit Language | Questions that Elicit Language |
|---|---|
| • What color is the hen?<br>• Will the others help her?<br>• What did they say?<br>• Is she happy with the others?<br>• How many animals are on this page?<br>• What is this animal?<br>• Did they get to have bread at the end of the story?<br>• Do you like the story? | • What is the little red hen planning?<br>• What just happened?<br>• What do you suppose the little red hen is thinking? What makes you think so?<br>• What does the author do to make us aware that that little red hen is unhappy?<br>• How does the author help us understand what a mill is?<br>• What does the hen do once her bread is ready to eat? Why?<br>• What do you think the author is telling us? |

The focus on oral language development in English is important for all children, but it is critical for ELs and children who have not been exposed elsewhere to the kind of language found in written texts (Dickinson and Smith 1994). During kindergarten, EL children make tremendous growth in their English language development when teachers pay attention to how language works and build children's language awareness. Children who are aware of the various types of language resources available to them (e.g., when to use *prance* versus *strut* or how to add details to a sentence with a prepositional phrase, such as *at my house*) and how these resources are used to achieve specific purposes for particular audiences are able to make more informed choices when speaking and writing. Oral language development in the primary language should also be promoted and fostered, whether in an alternative bilingual program, an extracurricular heritage language program, or in the home with close collaboration and support provided by teachers.

## Vocabulary Instruction

Teachers ensure vocabulary instruction is a key component of the kindergarten program. They implement each of the four aspects of vocabulary instruction described in chapter 2: They provide extensive experiences with language, establish word conscious environments, teach targeted vocabulary, and provide instruction in word-learning strategies.

Extensive experiences with language are described in the previous section in the context of overall language development. Children have numerous opportunities to converse with peers and adults while they engage in stimulating learning experiences, participate in structured discussions, and listen to and discuss books read aloud.

Word conscious environments are those in which children and adults notice and discuss words. Children may create word walls, word jars, or word journals in which they record words that are important, fascinating, or that otherwise capture their attention. They talk about words in different contexts, and notice relationships among words and similarities among words in different languages. They think about author's choices and their own choices. Their awareness of words is heightened.

*Word conscious environments are those in which children and adults notice and discuss words. Children may create word walls, word jars, or word journals in which they record words that are important, fascinating, or that otherwise capture their attention.*

Educators selectively identify individual words to teach directly. They draw words from texts or subject matter and provide child-friendly definitions. Children act out words, render drawings that capture word meanings, generate charts of multiple meaning words (L.K.4) or antonyms (L.K.5b), or develop semantic maps of related words. Target words are used repeatedly, and children discover and learn about their applicability in numerous contexts.

Another component of a multi-faceted vocabulary program is teaching word learning strategies, such as using word parts to determine the meaning of words. For example, kindergarteners learn about the meaning of the prefix *un-* (L.K.4b). This understanding helps them determine the meaning of other words with the same prefix. Teachers deliberately model the use of words with *un-* (e.g., *unable, unwilling, unhappy*) in the classroom context to reinforce meaning. They also select books that include words with the prefix, such as *Something from Nothing* by Phoebe Gilman (1992) in which an *unsightly* blanket is described, and they discuss the meaning of the word. They write several words with the prefix on a chart, soliciting contributions from children, and discuss their meanings. They help children understand that the prefix adds meaning; in this case it means *not*. They later draw attention, as appropriate in the moment, to words with the prefix when they are used in texts and discussions, and they prompt children's use of words containing the prefix. Instruction occurs in contexts in which meaningful communication is the focus, but instruction also includes additional explorations of words.

## *Effective Expression*

Adults experience more success in college, careers, and civic participation when they can express their opinions and knowledge clearly and coherently. Kindergarten programs contribute to the stair-step development of effective expression by ensuring that students are provided excellent instruction in writing, discussing, and presenting, as well as in using language conventions.

### Writing

Children's emerging writing abilities are exciting to observe. These abilities develop within a writing-rich environment with instruction that carefully guides and supports children as they learn to write. Children learn to write as their teachers share excellent examples of writing, model writing themselves, provide numerous opportunities for children to respond in writing to texts and learning experiences across content areas, and provide explicit instruction.

A great deal of writing in kindergarten occurs when children—as an entire class, in small groups, or as individuals—dictate their ideas to an adult who records them. Children also express themselves in writing independently, beginning with marks and scribbles that soon become strings of letters. Eventually, as they learn about the sound structure of language (that is, they become phonemically aware) and about the symbols that represent sounds (that is, the letters of the alphabet), children begin to use that knowledge in their writing. Words are phonetically spelled at this stage of learning. This is an important milestone representing children's growing understanding of the alphabetic principle—crucial for independence in both writing and reading. Children who are deaf and hard of hearing whose primary language is American Sign Language (ASL) follow a different path. Skills in ASL, fingerspelling, reading, and writing are interwoven, and the merging of these skills enables the development of the alphabetic principle for students who are deaf (Visual Language and Visual Learning Science of Learning Center 2010).

In kindergarten, teachers do the following to support children's writing development:

- Read aloud daily from a broad range of literary and informational texts, highlighting their varied purposes (e.g., tell a story, share an opinion, inform or explain); structures or organizations (e.g., narrative, description, cause and effect); and features (e.g., tables of contents). Ample familiarity with different types and purposes of text facilitates children's ability to write their own texts of varied types for varied purposes. Some texts serve as *mentor texts*, that is, excellent models of a targeted type or structure of writing.
- Provide a well-stocked writing area where children can find a variety of writing instruments (e.g., pencils, pens, colored pencils, chalk), surfaces on which to write (e.g., postcards, paper, charts, sticky labels), envelopes, clipboards, and a computer. Include examples of a variety of texts (e.g., letters, posters, lists, books, magazines, and signs).
- Provide writing materials in all areas of the classroom and outdoors, as appropriate: in the puppet area, science center, painting center, and other areas.

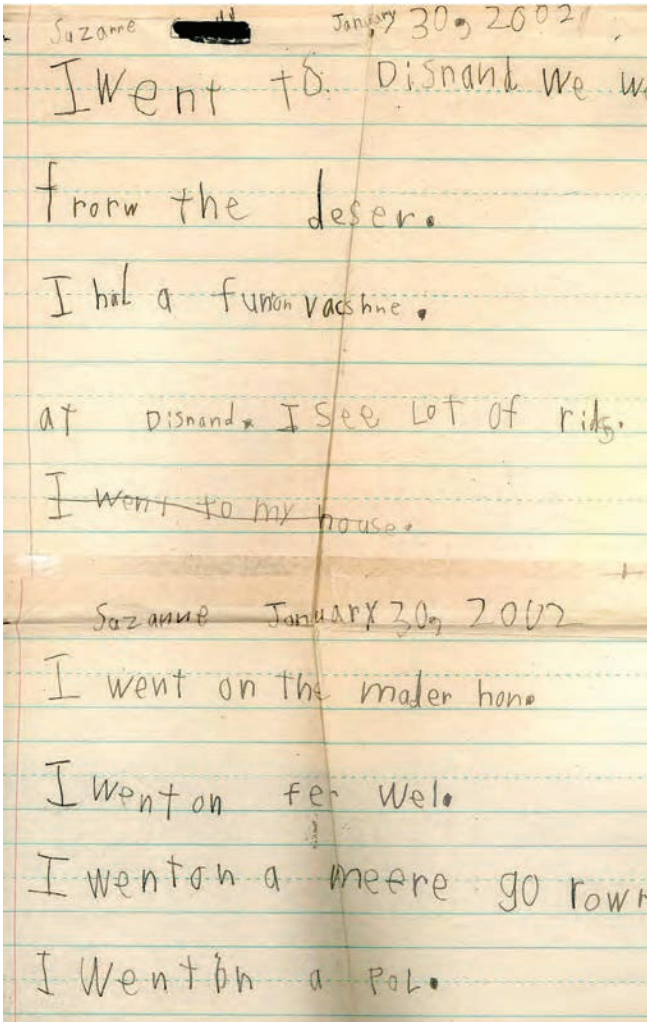
*Model writing daily. Write for real purposes, such as to make a request of the front office staff, share information with families, record the schedule for the day, make a list of items to take home, and appeal to a community member for assistance with a research project.*

- Model writing daily. Write for real purposes, such as to make a request of the front office staff, share information with families, record the schedule for the day, make a list of items to take home, and appeal to a community member for assistance with a research project.
- Engage children in constructing and reconstructing text, guiding children to collaboratively tell or retell a story or other type of text while writing it for them (e.g., on chart paper or using a document camera).
- Provide opportunities for children to write in response to texts, particularly after sharing their ideas orally.
- Include writing as part of learning in content areas. For example, children draw their observations of a leaf and then dictate language to describe it. They share their comments about the value of classroom rules during a social studies lesson.
- Teach children explicitly how to write letters, words, and connected text.

The goal of writing instruction in kindergarten is to support young children's abilities to express their thoughts in increasingly skilled ways, as well as to support their awareness of the purposes for writing and of different text types. Although copying letters and words may be part of direct instruction (e.g., for forming letters or encoding), it is not the primary focus of writing instruction. (However, it is important to note that building fluency with printing and, later, with handwriting, facilitates children's ease with translating their thoughts into written language.) Importantly, children begin expressing themselves through writing from the first day in kindergarten. The CA ELD Standards highlight skills that support ELs' progress in writing.

An example of a kindergartener's narrative is displayed in figure 3.23 along with an annotation. Clearly, this child has learned how stories work (note the opening, detailed events, and closing) and knows and can use the symbols and basic conventions of the English writing system (i.e., letters of the alphabet, capitalization, and punctuation). Examples of informative/explanatory and argument (opinion) writing are available in Appendix C of the CCSS for ELA/Literacy (http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_C.pdf, NGA/CCSSO 2010b).

***Figure 3.23. Kindergarten Writing Sample***




**Annotation**

The writer of this piece

- establishes a situation by naming a place.
  - *Disnand* (Disneyland)
- recounts several loosely linked events and the order in which they occurred.
  - *I had a fun on vacshne* (vacation). . . . *I see lot* (lots) *of rids* (rides). *I went on the mader hon* (Matterhorn). . . . *I went my house.*
- provides a reaction to what happened.
  - *I had a fun on vacshne* (vacation).
- offers a sense of closure.
  - *I went my house.*
- demonstrates command of some of the conventions of standard written English.
  - This piece illustrates consistent control of beginning-of-sentence capitalization and end-of-sentence punctuation. The writer also uses capital letters appropriately in the title of the piece.

**Source**

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers. 2010b. *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects. Appendix C*, 9–10. National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, Washington DC.

Teachers carefully examine students' writing to determine achievement of selected objectives, reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching, and inform subsequent instruction. They involve students in reviewing their work. Teachers of EL children also use the CA ELD Standards to guide their analysis of student writing and to inform the type of feedback they provide to students.

### Discussing

By the end of kindergarten, children are expected to follow agreed-upon rules for engaging in discussions. That is, they listen to others and take turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion (SL.K.1a). In addition, they are able continue a conversation through multiple exchanges (SL.K.1b). And, they ask and answer questions to seek and provide information and clarification (SL.K.2-3). They learn to speak audibly and express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly (SL.K.6). Kindergarten teachers are aware of the work done in preschools and transitional kindergartens toward achievement of these expectations, and they build on previous practices. (See Volume 1 of the *California Preschool Learning Foundations*, Volume 1 of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework* and the transitional kindergarten section of this chapter.)

*During the kindergarten year, children engage daily in multiple discussions. Discussions occur in pairs, small groups, and with the entire class. Some discussions are adult-led. Others are conducted by the children, with teacher guidance and monitoring.*

During the kindergarten year, children engage daily in multiple discussions. Discussions occur in pairs, small groups, and with the entire class. Some discussions are adult-led. Others are conducted by the children, with teacher guidance and monitoring. Teachers use a variety of structures and make sure that all children have ample opportunities to contribute, not just the most outspoken children. Furthermore, they ensure that children engage in discussions with diverse partners. That is, children do not always turn to the same one or two neighbors to respond to a prompt or share their thinking. They interact in partners or small groups with all children in the classroom on numerous occasions and in numerous contexts. Children also may have opportunities to engage in discussions with distant others through the use of technology.

Effective discussions do not just happen. They require a skillful teacher who teaches children *how* to engage in discussions with peers and others. For example, teachers:

- Teach and demonstrate discussion behaviors that indicate respect for others, such as listening closely, not interrupting, responding to comments, encouraging others to contribute, and acknowledging and appreciating all participants' thinking on the topic
- Explain effective contributions to discussions, such as comments that are related to the topic and build on others' remarks and questions that serve to clarify or that request elaboration (i.e., staying on topic)
- Engage the children in reflection on the discussion process, such as asking them to consider what was helpful in keeping a discussion on target and what might have made the discussion run more smoothly
- Provide gentle guidance during discussions, as appropriate

*Effective discussions do not just happen. They require a skillful teacher who teaches children how to engage in discussions with peers and others.*

Discussions occur across the curricula. Students discuss books of all genres that are read aloud, and they discuss learning experiences in math, social studies, science, and the arts.

As noted in the overview of the span of this chapter and the transitional kindergarten section, teachers prepare questions that elicit higher-order thinking, and at times they provide sentence starters as prompts for discussions. They also provide images, including photographs and illustrations, that children discuss in small groups or pairs. For example, after the children have engaged in the "A Day in My Life" unit of the California Education and the Environment Initiative Curriculum (http://www.californiaeei.org/curriculum/correlations/commoncore/) in which they learn about the concept of natural resources, small groups are given images of resources (those that accompany the unit and more, as appropriate) and are prompted to draw on the images to discuss what they learned during the unit. They may respond to prompts such as, "This image shows _____." "This image is important because _____." "This image is related to the topic of *resources* in that _____." and "Based on this image, I predict _____ because _____."

*Sentence frames are an ideal way to support young children to use academic vocabulary and increasingly complex sentence structures in meaningful ways as they discuss content and texts.*

Teachers foster academic discourse skills when they establish routines and expectations for equitable and accountable conversations (e.g., think-pair-share); carefully construct questions that promote extended content discussions (e.g., questions that students have sufficient background knowledge to discuss); and provide appropriate linguistic support (e.g., a sentence frame, such as "At school, I'm determined to ___ because ____."). Sentence frames are an ideal way to support young children to use academic vocabulary and increasingly complex sentence structures in meaningful ways as they discuss content and texts. With strategic scaffolding, all children learn to use English in ways that approach the more "literate" ways of communicating that are highly valued in school (Dutro and Kinsella 2010, Gibbons 2009, Merino and Scarcella 2005, Schleppegrell 2010).

### Presenting

Kindergarteners have regular opportunities to present their ideas, opinions, and knowledge to their peers. They describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail (SL.K.4). They add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail (SL.K.5). They speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly (SL.K.6). Young children, like all children and youth, need a psychologically safe environment in which to present, and they should have choices about topics and, at times, the manner of their presentations. Some presentations are given individually and some are collaborative endeavors. See the transitional kindergarten section of this chapter for a discussion.

*Young children, like all children and youth, need a psychologically safe environment in which to present, and they should have choices about topics and, at times, the manner of their presentations.*

### Using Language Conventions

The use of conventions contributes to effective expression. Language conventions in grammar and usage taught in kindergarten (L.K.1) include the following:

a. Print many upper- and lowercase letters
b. Use frequently occurring nouns and verbs
c. Form regular plural nouns orally by adding */s/* or */es/*
d. Understand and use question words (interrogatives)

e. Use the most frequently occurring prepositions

f. Produce and expand complete sentences in shared language activities

Conventions of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling (L.K.2) include the following:

a. Capitalize the first word in a sentence and the pronoun

b. Recognize and name end punctuation

c. Write a letter or letters for most consonant and short-vowel sounds

d. Spell simple words phonetically, drawing on knowledge of sound-letter relationships

Some conventions are clearly related to language development as children expand their grammatical knowledge and vocabulary. Others are closely related to foundational skills. Spelling, at this time in its developmental progression, is particularly intertwined with the development of foundational skills in reading—knowledge of the alphabet, phonemic awareness, and letter-sound relationships. Decoding and encoding are taught in ways that reflect this reciprocal relationship. (In subsequent grade levels, spelling instruction is more closely connected with instruction in morphology. See the overview of the span in chapter 4 of this *ELA/ELD Framework* for a discussion of the stages of spelling development, including the beginning stages typical of children in transitional kindergarten through grade one.) Conventions are integrated into each strand of the language arts and applied to every subject matter.

## *Content Knowledge*

The kindergarten program includes thoughtful, systematic attention to the content areas, guided by California's subject matter content standards and adopted instructional materials. Teachers provide instruction in the subject matter and involve children in investigations, experiments, and explorations. In addition, to enhance both literacy learning and content learning, teachers provide children with many opportunities for wide reading (largely through teacher read alouds), meaningful interactions with informational texts, and participation in shared research projects. See previous content knowledge sections in this chapter. See also chapter 2 for a discussion of wide and independent reading.

## *Foundational Skills*

In kindergarten, children gain an understanding of print concepts, develop phonological awareness, and acquire initial phonics and word recognition skills (RF.K.1–3). In addition, they develop fluency appropriate for this level (RF.K.4). These foundational skills are vital for independence with written language, and instructional programs include a clear systematic focus on their development.

### Print Concepts

Although many children enter kindergarten with an understanding of print concepts, some do not. The amount of attention devoted to this reading substrand of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy necessarily depends upon the learner's existing knowledge. By the end of kindergarten, all children should acquire an understanding of the organization and basic features of print (RF.K.1), including (a) printed English is read and written from left to right and

from top to bottom and, in the case of books, page by page from front to back, (b) spoken words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters, (c) written words are separated by spaces, and (d) the names and shapes of all upper and lower case letters of the alphabet.

*Because print concepts develop when children interact with print, classrooms are print-rich environments. Print is displayed on boards, in centers, and in class and school libraries.*

Children learn these concepts through frequent and meaningful experiences with printed language. Teachers model directionality by sweeping their hands along the lines of text as they read aloud from big books and as they write for and with children on charts and other surfaces. They point to text as they read aloud and as they engage children in shared writing activities. They draw children's attention to letter sequences and to spaces between words as they print. "Let's leave space between 'Our' and 'Pet' in the title because these are two different words." Children learn about the alphabetic symbols, seeing them used to communicate their ideas in print and learning letter names and shapes through direct instruction. ("This letter is *l*. Look at its shape. Watch how I write it. I make a straight line, starting from the top. Let's do it together in the air.") Teachers use appropriate terminology (e.g., *letter, word, period*) and encourage children's use of these academic terms.

The kindergarten program also exposes children to a range of print forms and functions across genres of text. Children interact with books, magazines, Web pages (perhaps projected onto a large screen), online documents, pamphlets, and more. They are exposed to charts, tables, indexes, glossaries, tables of contents, links, and other features of printed and digital text. Teachers share a wide variety of texts through read alouds and through placement in class libraries and centers, ensuring the exposure that is critical to building children's familiarity with a variety of text types and text features.

Because print concepts develop when children interact with print, classrooms are print-rich environments. Print is displayed on boards, in centers, and in class and school libraries. Writing surfaces (e.g., chart paper, notepads, white boards) and writing tools (e.g., markers, pencils, crayons, and keyboards) are readily available. Print plays a functional role in daily routines, such as when the day's schedule is written and discussed, children's name cards are sorted to indicate which of several small groups they are in, checklists display tasks to be accomplished, areas (e.g., *Library*) are labeled and guidelines (e.g., *Put caps back on markers*.) are posted.

*Some children's understandings of the basic features of print may be well developed upon entry to kindergarten depending upon their prior experiences at home, preschool, or transitional kindergarten. Other children may have less well developed print concepts.*

Some children's understandings of the basic features of print may be well developed upon entry to kindergarten depending upon their prior experiences at home, preschool, or transitional kindergarten. Other children may have less well developed print concepts. Teachers should be skilled at assessment and provide instruction that is appropriate for the child, neither belabored nor given less attention than needed. Teaching the letters of the alphabet to children who entered kindergarten with knowledge of letter names, shapes, and sounds is inappropriate. Likewise, moving too quickly through letters with children who have limited exposure to the symbols is problematic. Both circumstances are likely to cause frustration and disengagement.

## Phonological Awareness

It is critical that sufficient attention is given to developing children's phonological awareness during kindergarten (RF.K.2). The focus is on general phonological sensitivity early in the year as children engage in rhyming activities and manipulate syllables and onsets and rimes. However, phonemic awareness becomes a systematic and important target as the year progresses. (Students who are deaf and hard of hearing who do not have complete access to the letter-sound correspondences in English use an alternate pathway to understanding the alphabetic code in English.)

By the end of kindergarten, children demonstrate the understandings of spoken words, syllables, and phonemes (RF.K.2a–f) displayed in figure 3.24.

***Figure 3.24. Kindergarten Standards in Phonological Awareness with Examples***

| Standard 2 | Examples |
|---|---|
| a. Recognize and produce rhyming words. | *Recognize*: They indicate that *fish* and *dish* rhyme and that *fish* and *plate* do not.<br>*Produce*: They name words that rhyme with a target word, saying *sun* or *bun* when asked for a word that rhymes with *run*. |
| b. Count, pronounce, blend, and segment syllables in spoken words. | *Count*: They indicate that the spoken word *table* has two syllables.<br>*Pronounce*: They say the syllables in the spoken word *carpet*: /car/-/pet/.<br>*Blend*: They blend the individually spoken syllables /tea/-/cher/ to form the spoken word *teacher.*<br>*Segment*: They segment the spoken word *tomato,* pronouncing separately its three syllables: /to/-/ma/-/to/. |
| c. Blend and segment onsets and rimes of single-syllable spoken word. | *Blend*: They say *spin* when asked to blend into a word the separately spoken onset and rime /sp/ and /in/.<br>*Segment*: They say /m/-/an/ when asked to say the first sound in the spoken word *man* and then the rest of the word. |
| d. Isolate and pronounce the initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in three-phoneme (consonant-vowel-consonant) words. | *Initial*: They say /f/ when asked the first phoneme in the orally presented word *food*.<br>*Final*: They say /t/ when asked the final phoneme in the word *hot*.<br>*Medial*: They say /ŏ/ when asked the medial phoneme in the orally presented word *dog*.<br>[Note: Isolating the medial vowel is more difficult than isolating the initial or final phonemes and generally will be addressed after children successfully isolate initial and final phonemes.] |

| Standard 2 | Examples |
|---|---|
| e. Add or substitute individual sounds (phonemes) in simple, one-syllable words to make new words. | *Add*: They say *sand* when asked to add the phoneme /s/ to the beginning of the spoken word *and*. They say *beet* when asked to add the phoneme /t/ to the end of the spoken word *be*.<br>*Substitute*: They say *lit* when asked to change the /s/ in the word *sit* to /l/. They say *hop* when asked to change the /t/ at the end of the spoken word *hot* to /p/.<br>[Note: Children will need to delete sounds before substituting them. Thus, children can say *me* when asked to say *meat* without the final /t/ sound.] |
| f. **Blend two to three phonemes into recognizable words. (CA addition)** | *Blend two phonemes*: They say *zoo* when asked to blend into a word the separately spoken phonemes /z/-/o͞o/.<br>*Blend three phonemes*: They say *cat* when asked to blend into a word the separately spoken phonemes /c/-/ă/-/t/. |

These skills are learned through direct instruction and ample opportunities to reflect on and manipulate the sounds of language in playful contexts. Sometimes children respond with nonsense words while engaging in phonological awareness activities. For example, when asked to name something that rhymes with *plate*, they say *yate*. Such responses are not incorrect, phonologically speaking. *Plate* and *yate* do, indeed, rhyme. Clearly, the child who offers this response understands rhyme. Teachers should respond in the affirmative and then, as appropriate, address whether *yate* is a real word. (In some circles, it is a combination of *yeah* and *great*.)

Suggestions for instruction are presented in the transitional kindergarten section of this chapter. Many of the same activities are appropriate with kindergarteners; the pace, increased intentionality, and expectation of achievement of the standards mark the difference between instruction for transitional kindergarteners and kindergarteners.

### Phonics and Word Recognition

The kindergarten curriculum fosters children's knowledge of and ability to apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words both in isolation and in text (RF.K.3a–d). Children achieve the standards displayed in 3.25 by the end of the year. These standards build from knowledge of print concepts, especially knowledge of letters (i.e., recognizing and naming the letters) (RF.K.1d). (See the transitional kindergarten section of this chapter for guidance on teaching letters.)

***Figure 3.25. Kindergarten Standards in Phonics and Word Recognition with Examples***

| Standard 3 | Example |
|---|---|
| a. Demonstrate basic knowledge of one-to-one letter-sound correspondences by producing the primary or many of the most frequent sounds for each consonant. | When children see the printed letter "s," in isolation (as on a flash card) and in text (as in an emergent level book they are viewing), they indicate that it represents the sound /s/. When they hear the sound /s/, they identify the letter that represents it. |
| b. Associate the long and short sounds with common spellings (graphemes) for the five major vowels. **(Identify which letters represent the five major vowels [Aa, Ee, Ii, Oo, and Uu] and know the long and short sound of each vowel. More complex long vowel graphemes and spellings are targeted in the grade 1 phonics standards.) (CA addition)** | *Vowels:* When children see the printed letter "A" or "a," they indicate that it may represent /ā/ or /ă/ (the long or short vowel sound).* |
| c. Read common high-frequency words by sight (e.g., *the, of, to, you, she, my, is, are, do, does*). | When children see selected high-frequency words in print (both in isolation and in text), they say the words. |
| d. Distinguish between similarly spelled words by identifying the sounds of the letters that differ. | Children know which of the following two printed words is *man* by examining the words and using their knowledge of the letter-sound correspondences: *man fan* |
| * Vowels may, of course, represent sounds other than the long and short sounds, but those are not the focus of this standard in kindergarten. | |

Because children learn to blend spoken phonemes into recognizable words (RF.K.2f), the teacher models using this skill in tandem with children's developing knowledge of letter-sound correspondences to sound and blend simple printed words, such as *mom* and *cat*. Words may be blended in their entirety (e.g., /mmŏŏmm/ is *mom*, elongating sounds as appropriate) or in smaller chunks (e.g., /mmŏŏ/ is /mŏ/, then the initially blended unit is blended with the final sound so /mŏmm/ is *mom*). Importantly, words that children first learn to decode should be ones in their vocabulary. As they begin to grapple with blending the sounds represented by letters, they match their preliminary attempts with words that are in their mental storehouse. This is especially important when children, typically in later grades, encounter printed words that might be pronounced one of several different ways given the complexity of the code and the different stresses on syllables in multisyllabic words. See the overview of the span in this chapter for additional information. As children continue to develop as readers, they begin to encounter words that are not in their oral vocabulary. Reading contributes significantly to their vocabulary development.

Children have many opportunities to apply their growing knowledge of the code in a variety of contexts throughout the kindergarten year. They use what they have learned to engage with beginning-level texts and to record their own thoughts in printed language. It is important that they see many examples of print that match what they are learning. When print is not consistent with what

children have been taught, the discrepancy should be noted and mentioned in a manner appropriate for the learner. Decodable texts, as discussed in the overview of the span in this chapter, are particularly appropriate for practicing emerging phonics skills as they are being learned. Some children need more practice with decodable texts than other children. A consistent approach is especially important for children who are experiencing difficulty with the alphabetic code. In other words, they should be exposed to texts that support their developing skills rather than to a mix of books (i.e., some that are decodable and others that include few decodable words) that may confuse them as they attempt to apply their knowledge. Ongoing assessment is crucial to the extent that it informs instruction.

*Some children need more practice with decodable texts than other children. A consistent approach is especially important for children who are experiencing difficulty with the alphabetic code.*

Phonics and word recognition instruction for ELs is differentiated based on students' prior literacy experiences, their oral proficiency in English, and similarities between the primary language and English. Students are carefully assessed in English and the primary language, when possible, to determine the most appropriate sequence of instruction. Decoding skills that students have developed in their primary language can be transferred to English (August and Shanahan 2006, Bialystok 1997, de Jong 2002, Lindholm-Leary and Genesee 2010) with appropriate instruction in the similarities and differences between the familiar writing system and the English writing system. Instruction can be accelerated by building on what students already know.

Attention to oral language is important, and teachers ensure that children know the meanings of the words they are learning to decode. Pronunciation differences due to influences from the primary language, home dialect of English, or regional accent should not be misunderstood as difficulty with decoding. In addition, although pronunciation is important, overcorrecting it can lead to self-consciousness and inhibit learning. Rather, teachers check students' comprehension of what they read, respectfully model how words are pronounced in standard English, and draw attention to differences between pronunciations of different dialects of English. (For additional information on different dialects of English, see chapter 9 of this *ELA/ELD Framework*.)

*Attention to oral language is important, and teachers ensure that children know the meanings of the words they are learning to decode. Pronunciation differences due to influences from the primary language, home dialect of English, or regional accent should not be misunderstood as difficulty with decoding.*

Teachers of EL children enrolled in an alternative bilingual program (e.g., dual immersion, two-way immersion, developmental bilingual) use the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards in tandem with the CA CCSS-aligned primary language standards to guide instruction both in English and the primary language. The development of foundational skills in two languages is carefully coordinated.

Children who are deaf and do not have auditory access to spoken language face challenges when asked to pronounce words because they cannot hear themselves or spoken language models in their environment. Rather than focusing on the pronunciation of the words, teachers check the student's vocabulary comprehension.

### Fluency

Kindergarteners read emergent-reader texts with purpose and understanding. Emergent-reader texts are defined as those consisting of short sentences composed of learned sight words and CVC words; they may include rebuses (NGA/CCSSO 2010a: Appendix A). Children begin to demonstrate purpose and understanding as they express an interest in printed material, ask and answer questions about text, and discuss the content (RF.K.4, RL/RI.K.1–3).

Young children need excellent models of fluent reading. They should be read aloud to regularly by adults and others who read aloud with accuracy, at a rate appropriate for the text, and with expression that supports understanding. Children also need many opportunities to participate in teacher read alouds or shared reading.

*Young children need excellent models of fluent reading. They should be read aloud to regularly by adults and others who read aloud with accuracy, at a rate appropriate for the text, and with expression that supports understanding.*

Kindergarteners demonstrate fluency with letter recognition and with decodable and high-frequency sight words both in isolation and in connected text. Good teaching and many opportunities to practice are crucial. Development of accuracy during the early years is paramount to the development of fluency.

For additional guidance on considerations for using the CA CCSS foundational reading skills with EL children, see figure 3.11 in the overview of the span of this chapter. For guidance on teaching foundational literacy skills in Spanish, see the Spanish version of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy.

## An Integrated and Interdisciplinary Approach

As discussed in the overview of the span section in this chapter, the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards call for an integration of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Furthermore, these two sets of standards are inextricably linked to every curricular area. Learning subject matter requires that students understand and use the language of the subject to comprehend, clarify, and communicate concepts. The following snapshots illustrate how this integration of ELA with other content areas plays out in kindergarten classrooms.

## Snapshot 3.4. Collecting and Reporting Data on Litter at School Integrated ELA, ELD, Science, and History–Social Science in Kindergarten

The kindergarteners in Mr. Kravitz's classroom listen to several informational and literary texts about the importance of caring for the environment and the impact litter has on local habitats. Mr. Kravitz guides a discussion about this type of pollution, asking—and encouraging the children to ask—questions about the information they are learning from the texts. He prepares them for paired as well as large group conversations about what they are learning by revisiting the texts and images, and drawing attention to some of the vocabulary that may be particularly useful for their discussions. For example, he reviews and writes on a chart some of the general academic (e.g., *discard, accumulate, observe, impact*) and domain-specific (e.g., *habitat, pollute, litter*) vocabulary from the texts that convey important ideas.

Next he has students meet in pairs to talk about what they have learned. Many of them refer to the chart to remind themselves and each other about the concepts and accompanying vocabulary. After sharing in pairs, the children gather in small groups to draw and label illustrations about what they learned and discussed. They work collaboratively, talking about their understandings and making decisions about their illustrations and the words they will use to label them. After each group presents and explains a labeled illustration to the entire class, the illustrations are displayed on a bulletin board. Next the children identify three areas of the school grounds where they can examine litter in their school environment. They identify the location where students are dropped off and picked up, the outdoor lunch area, and the playground. For five days in a row, teams count (and safely collect and discard) individual items during the final half hour of school and record the count in each area on a chart.

At the end of the week, the children determine which area accumulated the most trash by adding the daily counts. Mr. Kravitz leads a discussion about their findings and guides children to think about the consequences of the litter in these locations and possible actions they can take to change the amount of litter accumulating in these places. Some of the children say that the litter makes their school ugly. Others mention the potential danger to their own health and that of the birds and other animals who visit their school. Together, with Mr. Kravitz serving as scribe, they jointly craft a letter to the principal, incorporating some of the special terminology used in their discussions and readings. After carefully revising and editing it as a group with teacher assistance, they invite the principal to the class to share their findings and present their letter to her.

**CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy**: RL.K.1; RF.K.2; W.K.2; SL.K.1, 6; L.K.6
**CA ELD Standards**: ELD.PI.K.1–2, 5, 6, 9–11, 12b; ELD.K.PII.1, 3
**Related CA Next Generation Science Standards**:
*Performance Expectation*
K-ESS3-3 Communicate solutions that will reduce the impact of humans on the land, water, air, and/or other living things in the local environment.
*Science and Engineering Practices*
Planning and Carrying Out Investigations
Analyzing and Interpreting Data
**Related CA History–Social Science Standard**:
Civic participation

## Snapshot 3.5. *David Goes to School*
## Integrated ELA and Civics in Kindergarten

The students in Ms. Miller's class are familiar with young David's antics in David Shannon's picture book, *No, David!* They have chuckled with Ms. Miller over the story and illustrations many times. This week, Ms. Miller reads aloud Shannon's sequel, *David Goes to School,* in which young David breaks one classroom rule after another. With support, the children identify and discuss the main ideas of the narrative conveyed in the text and illustrations at appropriate points.

Ms. Miller asks text-dependent questions to guide the children's comprehension and critical analysis of the story. She returns to the story with them to locate specific language in the text that addresses these questions:

- What are the school rules in this book?
- Who is the author? Do you think the author believes that it is important to have rules at school and in the classrooms? Why?
- What does David think of the rules? Does he think they are important? How do you know?
- What lessons do you think the author wants us to learn about rules that we can apply to our own school?
- Let's compare the rules in our school with the rules in David's school. Which are similar and which are different?

To further develop students' critical thinking, Ms. Miller asks students to reflect on the rules in their own classroom. She refers to the posted list of classroom rules that the children helped develop early in the school year and encourages them to engage in brief, small group conversations to consider whether any rules need to be changed or new ones added. Knowing that some of the children need scaffolding to convey their thoughts, she provides an optional sentence frame ("We should add/change _____ as a rule because _____.") to help them answer the following questions:

- What rules in our classroom would you like to change? Why?
- What rules in our classroom would you like to add? Why?

Ms. Miller considers changing or adding one or more of the classroom rules so that the children recognize that their views have impact.

**Resources**

Shannon, David. 1998. *No, David!* New York: Blue Sky Press.

Shannon, David. 1999. *David Goes to School*. New York: Scholastic.

**CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy:** RL.K.1.1–3; SL.K.1.1–2

**Related CA History–Social Science Standard**:

K.1 Students understand that being a good citizen involves acting in certain ways.

**Civic Themes**:

Building a Foundation for Civic Literacy

Rules and Laws in Our World

## English Language Development in Kindergarten

From their first days in kindergarten, EL children learn English, learn content knowledge through English, and learn about how English works. English language development occurs throughout the day and across the disciplines (integrated ELD) and also during a time specifically designated for developing English based on EL children's language learning needs (designated ELD). Differences in approaches to ELD vary depending on the program of instruction (e.g., mainstream English, alternative bilingual program). The CA ELD Standards serve as a guide for teachers to meet the English language development needs of their EL students, and they are used in tandem with the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy, as well as other related content standards.

While most of young EL children's English language development occurs throughout the school day through integrated ELD, designated ELD is a time during the regular school day when teachers work with EL children grouped by similar English language proficiency levels. Teachers focus on critical language the children need to be successful in school subjects, placing particular emphasis on academic language. Designated ELD time is an opportunity to focus on and delve deeper into the linguistic resources of English that EL children need to engage with content, make meaning from it, and create oral and written texts in ways that meet the expectations of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and other content standards. Accordingly, the CA ELD Standards are the primary standards used during this designated time. However, the content focus is derived from other areas of the curricula.

The main instructional emphases in designated ELD are oral language (including collaborative discussions), language awareness, and a strong emphasis on general academic and domain-specific vocabulary. Other understandings about literary and informational texts enter into designated ELD instruction, as well. During designated ELD children *discuss ideas and information* from ELA and other content areas using the language (e.g., vocabulary, grammatical structures) of those content areas and also *discuss the new language* they are learning to use. For example, a teacher leads students in a discussion about an inference the children made while listening to a story read aloud earlier in the day during ELA. The teacher structures the question in such a way as to promote the use of particular language (e.g., Why do you think Fox became so *sneaky* after he spoke with Goose?) and supports children to use new vocabulary and grammatical structures by asking them to use an open sentence frame to express their ideas (e.g., Fox was *sneaky* because _____. *After he spoke with goose,* Fox became *sneaky* because _____.). During designated ELD, teachers ensure that EL students have the time and opportunity to discuss their ideas using new language that they need to fully engage in ELA and other content areas. For an extended discussion of how the CA ELD Standards are used throughout the day in tandem with the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and other content standards and as the principal standards during designated ELD, see the overview of the span in this chapter. See also chapter 2 of this *ELA/ELD Framework*.

> *During designated ELD, teachers ensure that EL students have the time and opportunity to discuss their ideas using new language that they need to fully engage in ELA and other content areas.*

The following snapshots provide illustrations of designated ELD instruction for EL children in kindergarten. Snapshot 3.6 describes how a kindergarten teacher who teaches in English throughout the day uses designated ELD time to support his EL students at different English language proficiency levels to fully access science content understandings and also develop the English language and literacy abilities needed to interact meaningfully with the science content.

## Snapshot 3.6. Expanding Science Observations, Designated ELD Connected to Science in Kindergarten

Mr. Hunt often provides opportunities for his kindergarteners to explore science concepts using toy models or real objects (e.g., real earthworms and soil, toys with wheels). The children in his class observe the natural world (e.g., in the school garden, at a science literacy station) and record and discuss their observations with one another. He also reads aloud many informational texts, and he shows videos that convey information on the science concepts under study. Each day, he has his students write (or dictate) and draw about what they are learning in their science journals. Some of the language in the science texts, such as domain-specific vocabulary (e.g., *soil, root, stem, germination, sprout*), general academic vocabulary (e.g., *emerge, develop, delicate*), and prepositional phrases (e.g., *in the ground, for three weeks*) is new for his EL children.

Mr. Hunt provides structured opportunities for EL students to use new language they are learning in meaningful ways in both science and designated ELD time. For example, during a science unit on insects, he asks the children to use models of insects as well as refer to notes and labels they have recorded in their science observation logs to *describe or explain* the science concepts they are learning about to classmates. For example, they discuss structure and function of insect anatomy, behavior, habitat). He prompts the children to use domain-specific vocabulary (e.g., *antennae, wings, abdomen*), and he supports their speech and writing with open sentence frames that target particular grammatical structures (e.g., *When the bee lands on the flower, ___*).

Mr. Hunt differentiates instruction depending on the group he is working with. For example, with all of the children during designated ELD, he discusses ways in which they can *select language resources* and *expand and enrich their ideas* to be more precise and detailed when they orally describe the insects they are learning about. For students at the Emerging level of English language proficiency, he structures opportunities for them to use precise, domain-specific words (e.g., *larva*, *thorax*) when they describe their ideas; add a familiar adjective (e.g., *big*, *small*, *green*) to their modify nouns; and use simple prepositional phrases (e.g., *on the leaf*) to add detail to their sentences.

He shows EL students at the Expanding level how to *expand and enrich* their ideas in increasingly complex ways. For example, he shows them how to add the prepositional phrases *with full pollen baskets* and *around the flowers* to the sentence *The bee is flying*. This creates the more detailed sentence, *The bee with full pollen baskets is flying around the flowers.*

He discusses the meaning of these sentences, provides the children with many opportunities to experiment with orally expanding and enriching their ideas in similar ways, and shows them where these types of sentences occur in the texts he is reading to them.

He also works with the children to *connect their ideas* by combining sentences with coordinating conjunctions. He guides children at the Emerging level of language proficiency to construct the following types of compound sentences:

Bees are insects. Bees make honey. → Bees are insects, and they make honey.

When he works with his EL students at the Expanding level of English language proficiency, he guides them to construct the following types of complex sentences:

Bees are insects. Bees make honey. → Bees are insects *that* make honey.

### Snapshot 3.6. Expanding Science Observations, Designated ELD Connected to Science in Kindergarten (cont.)

In ELA and science, Mr. Hunt encourages his EL students to use the language they have been learning in designated ELD for both oral and written tasks. For example, when the students write about the observations they have made in the garden, Mr. Hunt prompts them to expand and enrich their sentences, as well as to connect them.

**CA ELD Standards*:*** ELD.PI.K.6, 12b; ELD.PII.K.4–6
**CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy**: RI.K.1-2; SL.K.2–3; SL.K.5; W.K.2; L.K.4; L.K.6
**Related CA Next Generation Science Standard**:
K-LS1-1 Use observations to describe patterns of what plants and animals (including humans) need to survive.

Snapshot 3.7 provides an example of kindergarten teachers in an alternative dual language program providing designated ELD to their EL students in ways that build into and from the learning experiences that occur throughout the day. The ideas provided below are not exclusive to dual language programs, nor are they intended to represent the only way that alternative dual language programs should approach designated ELD.

### Snapshot 3.7. Learning Two Languages in an Alternative Dual Language Program in Kindergarten

New Horizons Academy is a Two-Way Bilingual Education TK–12 school with the goals of developing students' bilingualism, biliteracy, high academic achievement in both English and Spanish, and cross-cultural understanding. When they enter the TK and kindergarten programs, about one-third of the school's students are Spanish-dominant, about one-third are English-dominant, and about one-third are English-proficient bilingual (Spanish-English) from homes where both languages are spoken. By the time they graduate, all students receive California's Seal of Biliteracy. Recognizing that Spanish-dominant students who develop advanced literacy in Spanish are more successful in both English and Spanish, the school has a strong commitment to fully developing both advanced Spanish and English throughout the high school years.

Social justice and cultural awareness are major emphases at the school. Beginning in the earliest years, students learn about how to care deeply about themselves and others. Not only do they develop language and literacy in their primary language and in English, they also learn about their own and others' cultures and about issues affecting their community and the world. Beginning in the upper elementary grades, students go with their teachers to the local homeless shelter to donate food from the school's urban farming program. In middle and high school, all students form leadership teams that work together to design and implement community-based, social justice projects to benefit the school and local community. Examples of the projects include cleaning the beaches; tending urban gardens; participating in support and alliance groups (e.g., LGBT, Dreamers); building community awareness about local, state, national, and world issues; participating in political campaigns and other types of socially responsive programs. Teachers support these projects across the curricula, and parents and families are integral to these efforts. Each member of the school community (students, parents

## Snapshot 3.7. Learning Two Languages in an Alternative Dual Language Program in Kindergarten (cont.)

and family members, educators) is expected to embrace the guiding principles represented by the school's "Mandala" Commitments:

**New Horizons Academy Mandala Commitments**

Mandala means circle in Sanskrit and represents wholeness in Hindu and Buddhist traditions. It is a model for the organizational structure of life, reminding us of our relation to the world that extends both beyond and within our bodies and minds.

**Community:** We are able and willing to express our ideas, beliefs and feelings; to hear and respect the ideas, feelings, and beliefs of others. We take responsibility for the life of our community.

**Empowerment:** We claim our power to define ourselves and to struggle for liberty.

**Well-Being:** We nurture our minds, bodies, and spirits by practicing healthy habits.

**Creativity:** We express our uniqueness, imagine new possibilities, shape ourselves, and impact the world.

**Love:** We care deeply about ourselves and others and express caring through our actions.

**Inquiry**: We constantly seek understanding by asking questions of ourselves and of the world around us.

**Scholars:** We are critical thinkers engaged in a lifelong pursuit of knowledge.

**Activists:** We envision a just and humane world, strive to make it real, and inspire others to do the same.

**Courage:** We have the strength to recognize and challenge our fears.

(Adapted from Los Angeles Leadership Academy)

In kindergarten, the children's bilingual and biliteracy development involves a variety of rich learning experiences, including opportunities to express their creativity at the dramatic play area in each classroom, which has a puppet theater, a dress-up chest, and a playhouse for acting out scenes from storybooks or everyday life experiences. The writing and art area provides a variety of materials, including different kinds of paper, crayons, markers, pencils, and other things useful for writing and illustrating stories as well as other text types. The listening center provides recordings of stories, poetry, and informational texts in both Spanish and English. These areas allow the children to develop new understandings, learn from one another, and express themselves in meaningful and relevant ways in Spanish, English, and sometimes both.

Daily activities include much singing, conversing, and reading in both languages. While their teachers read sophisticated storybooks in both languages to all students and engage in other types of learning where they use either Spanish or English, designated ELD offers an opportunity for teachers to focus intensively on supporting their young English learners to develop both conversational and academic English. By listening to and discussing sophisticated stories during designated ELD, the teachers are able to guide their EL students to engage in meaningful oral discourse in English, learn about vocabulary and grammatical structures in written English, and develop phonological awareness and concepts of print in their additional language; these elements of oral language development are closely linked to learning to read and write. Most of the EL children in kindergarten are at the Emerging level of English language proficiency. Having the opportunity during a protected time each day to delve deeply into rich storybooks in English and into learning about how English works allows the teachers to intensively focus on meeting their EL students' particular English learning needs.

## Snapshot 3.7. Learning Two Languages in an Alternative Dual Language Program in Kindergarten (cont.)

Most of the designated ELD instruction in kindergarten focuses on engaging students to join in the experience of teacher read alouds of storybooks. Through these interactive read aloud experiences, the children engage in extended conversations in response to text-dependent questions and have repeated exposure to the rich vocabulary in the books. The children discuss and write their opinions and ideas about the stories, and their teachers explicitly teach them some of the general academic vocabulary from the books so that they can use this language in related speaking and writing contexts. During designated ELD time, the teachers reinforce (but do not introduce for the first time) concepts of print, phonological awareness, and phonics in English. The school has made a commitment to include intentional and explicit teaching of transferable and non-transferable skills beginning in kindergarten and has a well-articulated plan for gradually developing EL (and other) students' English language and literacy skills from early childhood through the elementary years and beyond. All students learn to read and write primarily in Spanish first, but they also learn critical literacy skills in English early on so that when they begin to engage with increasingly complex literacy tasks in English, they will have the language and literacy skills necessary to succeed. The teachers use the following principles when they plan lessons for engaging their EL children in rich storybook read alouds during designated ELD time. Each story takes about a week to teach.

### Interacting with Storybooks: Principles for Planning

**Book Choice:** Choose books that lend themselves to extended discussions and that contain many general academic vocabulary words. Frequently use culturally relevant books as well as bilingual books.

**Repetition and Interaction:** Read the story several times during the week, delving into different aspects of the story each day. Ask a few text-dependent questions for literal comprehension (first day) and inferential comprehension (other days). Use open sentence frames, appropriate for the questions and adjusted to the children's language learning needs (not too easy, and not too hard).

**Vocabulary:** Stop at strategic points to explain word meanings, act out (with gestures and facial expressions) the words, or point to an illustration for the word, and have the children repeat the words chorally. Choose a limited set of general academic words (three to five) to teach explicitly after reading the story. (Also explicitly teach everyday English words that the children do not know and that are essential to understanding the story and discussing it.)

**Repetitive Phrases:** Choose two to three repetitive phrases that are essential to understanding the story and are fun to say, and have the children join along in chanting the phrases when the phrases arise.

**Primary Language:** Use the children's primary language, when appropriate, to facilitate story comprehension and vocabulary development.

**English Foundational Skills:** Strategically reinforce English foundational skills (e.g., concepts about print, rhyming words, sounds in English that do not transfer to Spanish and those that do) while reading or jointly constructing texts about the story.

## Snapshot 3.7. Learning Two Languages in an Alternative Dual Language Program in Kindergarten (cont.)

### Interacting with Storybooks: Principles for Planning

**Writing:** Sum up each lesson with quick (5-minute) writing tasks, such as describing a character, writing in response to a text-dependent question, giving an opinion. Engage the students in jointly reconstructing the story once it has been read several times and vocabulary has been taught. Facilitate students' use of new general academic vocabulary (e.g., *scrumptious, encouraged*) and grammatical structures (e.g., *Once upon time* . . . , *After she went to sleep* . . . ) as you retell/rewrite the story together.

**Extending Understandings:** Expand the ideas in the book to other classroom tasks. Provide copies of the book (in both languages, if possible) in the library area, writing and art center, and listening center. Encourage the children to retell the story, dramatize it, and write it (or an altered version of it) themselves once they have heard it several times.

During Writing Workshop, the kindergarten teachers notice that the EL children (and other dual language learners) usually choose to write in Spanish. Sometimes, however, they choose to write in English or to write bilingual stories. The teachers continue to encourage all of the children to develop sophisticated understandings of both Spanish and English and to use the language skills, abilities, and knowledge they develop in designated ELD throughout the day.

**Additional Information**

**Web sites**

- Dual Language of New Mexico maintains an extensive array of resources for dual language programs: http://www.dlenm.org/.
- Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) provides resources for two-way immersion and dual language educators: http://www.cal.org.
- Colorín Colorado has many resources for teachers and parents that support dual language development: http://www.colorincolorado.org/.
- Bilingual Learning (a project of Southern California Public Radio, http://www.scpr.org/) has many examples of dual language education programs (including a map for finding California bilingual programs), as well as research and information: http://projects.scpr.org/bilinguallearning/.
- Some additional examples of California Bilingual Programs are the following:
  - Semillas Community Schools: http://www.dignidad.org/
  - Los Angeles Leadership Academy: http://www.laleadership.org

**Recommended reading**


Gillanders, Cristina, and Dina Castro. 2011. "Storybook Reading for Young English Language Learners." *Young Children*. January: 91-95. (http://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/201101/GillandersOnline0111.pdf).

Howard, Elizabeth R., Julie Sugarman, Donna Christian, Katherine J. Lindholm-Leary, and Rogers, D. 2007. *Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education.* 2nd ed. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics. (http://www.cal.org/twi/guidingprinciples.htm).

Naqvi, Rahat, Anne McKeough, Keoma Thorne, and Christina Pfitscher. 2012. "Dual-Language Books as an Emergent-Literacy Resource: Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning." *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy* 13 (4): 501-528. (http://ecl.sagepub.com/content/13/4/501.refs).


Additional examples of designated ELD linked to different content areas are provided in the transitional kindergarten and grade one sections of this chapter and, with older students, in chapters 4–7.

## ELA/Literacy and ELD in Action in Kindergarten

The research-based implications for ELA/literacy and ELD instruction are outlined in the overview of the span in this chapter and in chapters 1 and 2 of this *ELA/ELD Framework*. In the following section, detailed examples demonstrate implementation of the principles and practices discussed in the preceding sections of this chapter. The examples provided are not intended to present the only approaches to teaching and learning. Rather, they are intended to provide concrete illustrations of how teachers enact the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards in integrated ways that support deep learning for all students.

Both the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards acknowledge the importance of oral language development and frequent exposure to complex texts in the earliest grades. Because young children's listening comprehension generally outpaces their ability to read independently, teacher read alouds are of critical importance. (See the discussion of reading aloud earlier in this chapter. See also the discussion and figure 2.3 in chapter 2.) When teachers read aloud sophisticated literary and informational texts, they expose children to rich language (including vocabulary and complex grammatical structures), new ideas, and content knowledge the children may not be able to access through independent reading. Rich read-aloud experiences using complex texts in English are especially critical for EL children, who may not have these experiences at home. In alternative bilingual programs, teacher read alouds in both languages of instruction are important for biliteracy development.

When planning lessons, teachers consider the principles and practices discussed in this chapter and throughout this *ELA/ELD Framework*. Lesson planning incorporates the cultural, linguistic, and background experiences students bring to the classroom; the assessed needs of students; and year-end and unit goals. The framing questions in figure 3.26 provide a tool for planning.

***Figure 3.26. Framing Questions for Lesson Planning***

| Framing Questions for All Students | Add for English Learners |
|---|---|
| • What are the big ideas and culminating performance tasks of the larger unit of study, and how does this lesson build toward them?<br>• What are the learning targets for this lesson, and what should students be able to do at the end of the lesson?<br>• Which clusters of CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy does this lesson address?<br>• What background knowledge, skills, and experiences do my students have related to this lesson?<br>• How complex are the texts and tasks?<br>• How will students make meaning, express themselves effectively, develop language, and learn content? How will they apply or learn foundational skills?<br>• What types of scaffolding, accommodations, or modifications will individual students need for effectively engaging in the lesson tasks?<br>• How will my students and I monitor learning during and after the lesson, and how will that inform instruction? | • What are the English language proficiency levels of my students?<br>• Which CA ELD Standards amplify the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy at students' English language proficiency levels?<br>• What language might be new for students and/or present challenges?<br>• How will students interact in meaningful ways and learn about how English works in collaborative, interpretive, and/or productive modes? |

## *ELA/Literacy and ELD Vignettes*

The following ELA/literacy and ELD vignettes illustrate how teachers might implement the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards using the framing questions and additional considerations discussed in the preceding sections. The vignettes are valuable resources for teachers to consider as they collaboratively plan lessons, extend their professional learning, and refine their practice. The examples in the vignettes are not intended to be prescriptive, nor are the instructional approaches limited to the identified content areas. Rather, they are provided as tangible ideas that can be used and adapted as needed in flexible ways in a variety of instructional contexts.

### ELA/ Literacy Vignette

In vignette 3.3, the teacher uses a five-day planning template to guide his instruction in building students' abilities to make meaning, develop language, and express themselves effectively.

**Vignette 3.3. Interactive Storybook Read Aloud**
**Integrated ELA/ Literacy and ELD Instruction in Kindergarten**

**Background**

Mr. Nguyen reads aloud to his students daily during ELA instruction. He intentionally selects storybooks that have an engaging and fun plot because such books promote extended discussions. He also ensures that his 30 kindergarteners, half of them ELs, are exposed to books containing rich language, including academic vocabulary. Most of the EL children in Mr. Nguyen's class are at the Expanding level of English language proficiency. However, three are new to the U.S. and are at the early Emerging level. Three of his students have moderate intellectual disabilities, and Mr. Nguyen works closely with the school specialist to ensure he is attending to their socio-emotional and cognitive learning needs.

When he reads complex literary texts aloud, Mr. Nguyen incorporates specific instructional strategies to help his students connect personally with the stories, attend to sophisticated languge, and develop listening comprehension skills. To the extent possible, he also looks up specific words and phrases in his EL students' primary languages so that he can use them to scaffold their comprehension of English texts.

**Lesson Context**

Mr. Nguyen and his colleagues collaboratively plan their read aloud lessons and designated ELD lessons that build into and from the read alouds. They have just designed a five-day sequence for the story *Wolf*, by Becky Bloom and Pascal Biet. The teachers plan to read *Wolf* to their students three times over three consecutive days. Each time they read it aloud, teachers will model successful reading behaviors, drawing attention to vocabulary and prompting students to discuss comprehension questions (at first mostly literal, "right there" text-dependent questions—with answers that can clearly be found easily in the text—and increasingly inferential questions as the week progresses). In the last two days of the lesson sequence, the teachers will guide students to retell the story, first orally and then in writing. The team's planning map for the week is as follows:

## Vignette 3.3. Interactive Storybook Read Aloud Integrated ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction in Kindergarten (cont.)

| Interactive Storybook Reading 5-Day Planning Template | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Book title and author:* | | |
| *The problem (in child-friendly language):* | | |
| *General academic vocabulary in the story:* | | |
| *Selected words to teach more in depth later (~5):* | | |
| **Day 1** | **Day 2** | **Day 3** |
| Places in the story to model making inferences:<br>Vocabulary to explain (E), act out (A) or show in the illustration (S):<br>Places to stop for think-pair-share (write questions and sentence frames, differentiated as needed): | Places in the story to model making inferences:<br>Vocabulary to explain (E), act out (A) or show in the illustration (S):<br>Places to stop for think-pair-share (write questions and sentence frames, differentiated as needed): | Places in the story to model making inferences:<br>Vocabulary to explain (E), act out (A) or show in the illustration (S):<br>Places to stop for think-pair-share (write questions and sentence frames, differentiated as needed): |
| **Days 4–5**<br>Guided (with the teacher) or independent (in pairs or groups):<br>• Oral retelling of the original story<br>• Written retelling of the original story<br>• Alternate version of the original story | | |

At the end of the week, Mr. Nguyen will ask pairs of students to compose and illustrate either a retelling of the original story or an alternate version of it (e.g., with different characters or an alternate ending). The learning target and cluster of CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and CA ELD Standards Mr. Nguyen is focusing on today, the first day of the lesson series, are the following:

| |
|---|
| **Learning Target:** Students will listen to a story and discuss text-dependent questions about it. They will practice being good conversational partners. |
| **CA CCSS for ELA/ Literacy:** *RL.K.1 – With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text; RL.K.7 – With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear (e.g., what moment in a story an illustration depicts); SL.K.1 – Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners, follow agreed-upon rules, and continue a conversation through multiple exchanges; SL.K.2 – Confirm understanding of a text read aloud.* |
| ***CA ELD Standards (Expanding):*** *ELD.PI.K.1 – Contribute to class, group, and partner discussions by listening attentively, following turn-taking rules, and asking and answering questions; ELD.PI.K.3 – Offer opinions in conversations using an expanded set of learned phrases (e.g., I think/don't think X. I agree with X.), as well as open responses, in order to gain and/or hold the floor; ELD.PI.K.5 – Demonstrate active listening to read-alouds and oral presentations by asking and answering questions with oral sentence frames and occasional prompting and support.* |

## Vignette 3.3. Interactive Storybook Read Aloud
## Integrated ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction in Kindergarten (cont.)

**Lesson Excerpt**

On the first day, Mr. Nguyen invites his students to gather on the carpet to listen to the story. He briefly *previews the story problem* since this is often challenging for students to perceive on their own.

Mr. Nguyen: Today, you're going to meet a hungry wolf. At first, he wants to eat some farm animals – a cow, a pig, and a duck. But the farm animals are much more interested in reading their books, so they *ignore* him. That means they don't pay attention to him *at all*. He doesn't like that, and he tries to get them to pay attention to him.

As Mr. Nguyen reads the story, his students are very engaged, in large part because the story is so well written, but also because Mr. Nguyen models enthusiasm by reading with intonation and acting out the voices of the interesting characters when there is dialogue. He frequently invites the children to read along with him some particularly engaging passages. For example, when the pig explains to the wolf that the farm is for educated animals, Mr. Nguyen invites the children to say the dialogue together.

Mr. Nguyen: "'Educated animals . . . Educated animals!' the wolf repeated to himself." Let's all repeat that together, and let's say it like the wolf would.

Mr. Nguyen thinks aloud as he reads, modeling how to make inferences at strategic points in the story and exposing the children to general academic vocabulary that they may want to use when discussing the text later.

Mr. Nguyen: I'm thinking that the reason the animals aren't paying attention to the wolf is because they're so *engrossed*, or interested in their books. Even though he's *leaping* and *howling* at them, they're more *interested* in reading. I think they must love to read and that they're probably reading really good books!

At one or two strategic points in the story, Mr. Nguyen *stops and asks his students to think* about a text-dependent question he poses and then prompts the students to share their ideas with a partner. His students engage frequently in "think-pair-share," turning to their designated partners to discuss ideas in the text.

Mr. Nguyen: "You've got a long way to go." That means, "you have a lot of work to do." Why do you think the duck told the wolf, "You've got a long way to go?"

Mr. Nguyen points to the illustration in the book, which shows the wolf laboriously reading his book out loud, the pig annoyed and glaring at him, and the other animals ignoring him. He has found that this kind of visual support helps students with learning disabilities as well as ELs at the early Emerging level to comprehend and to engage more actively in partner discussions. It also helps all of the children describe the relationships between illustrations and the print in stories. After Mr. Nguyen poses the question, he is quiet for several seconds so his students have time to think.

Mr. Ngyuen: Now that you have an idea, you can use this sentence frame when you share it with your partner. Listen to me first, and then we'll say it together: "Maybe the animals think that ____." Remember to help your partner, add on to what your partner says, or ask a question, if you need to. Don't stop your conversation until I call the class back together.

## Vignette 3.3. Interactive Storybook Read Aloud Integrated ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction in Kindergarten (cont.)

The children take turns sharing their ideas with their partners, and Mr. Nguyen listens carefully. He has intentionally placed his ELs at the early Emerging levels next to friends who speak the same primary language, and he encourages them to communicate in their primary language as needed. He also encourages them to use gestures (e.g., hand motions and nodding) and simple phrases (e.g., I think . . . Can you say that again?) in order to participate actively in their conversations with partners.

Alicia: Maybe the animals think that, think that . . . the wolf . . .

Sam: (Nodding in encouragement and waiting.)

Alicia: Maybe the wolf is . . .

Sam: Maybe the animals think that . . .

Alicia: (Nodding) Maybe the animals think that they don't like him. Your turn.

Sam: I can add on to you because maybe the animals think that he don't read good.

Alicia: Yeah. They read good. They only like to read.

Sam: And the wolf, he don't read good like them.

Mr. Nguyen: (Signaling for students to face him.) I am hearing some great ideas. I heard someone say that maybe the animals think that the wolf doesn't read very well, and that's why they told him he has a long way to go. Here (pointing to the text) it says that the animals just kept on reading. It seems like they weren't even interested in hearing him read. It looks like that's what's happening in the illustration, too. Maybe that's what the pig means when he says "you've got a long way to go." Maybe they think Wolf needs to practice reading a lot more, or that he has to practice reading for a lot *longer* before he can read as well as they do.

Throughout the story, Mr. Nguyen pauses when he comes to general academic vocabulary that his students may not know or may only partially understand. He acts out some of the words (e.g., *peer, budge*), points to illustrations in the text for others (e.g., *emerging*), and briefly explains others (e.g., *educated, ignored, satisfied, impressed*).

Mr. Nguyen: "You have *improved*," remarked the pig. When you improve, that means you get better at doing something.

At the end of the story, Mr. Nguyen asks a final question to stretch his students' analytical thinking.

Mr. Nguyen: Why do you think that the other animals want Wolf to keep reading to them now?

During the next two days, when he reads the story aloud again, Mr. Nguyen continues to model good reading behaviors, focusing on key vocabulary and other rich language (e.g., *his eyes were playing tricks on him*), and providing many opportunities for the children to discuss their comprehension of the text. By the third time Mr. Nguyen reads the book aloud, the children are able to discuss more analytical questions in extended ways. For example, by the third day, the children have a more nuanced understanding of why the animals ignored the wolf and can explain their ideas more precisely (e.g., *because he was acting in an "uneducated" way and couldn't read like them*). They are also able to provide more evidence in their responses to questions like "What do you think the wolf learned by the end of the story? How do you know?" For example, they note that wolf's behavior and appearance changed throughout the story.

## Vignette 3.3. Interactive Storybook Read Aloud Integrated ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction in Kindergarten (cont.)

Throughout the week, Mr. Nguyen keeps notes on what students are saying and doing. So that he can strategically support students with varied needs, his teaching log has sections for notes regarding those who need support with listening comprehension, those with special needs, and ELs. On day four, Mr. Nguyen guides the children in an oral retelling of the story. On day five, he engages them in jointly reconstructing the story as he writes it for all to see using a document camera. He scaffolds their use of sophisticated language, helping them extend and refine their ideas as they reconstruct the story together.

### Teacher Reflection and Next Steps

At the end of the week, Mr. Nguyen reviews his teaching log. He notes that during the initial reading of the story, his ELs at the early Emerging level of English language proficiency struggled to communicate in English during think-pair-share, and that two used their primary language to share ideas for a couple of the questions. However, by the third time he read the story, these students were speaking English more confidently, using short phrases and integrating the sentence frames he had previously provided. He makes a note to ask his colleagues for ideas about supporting these students to participate more actively in English the first time a story is read. At the same time, he is pleased that students listened actively during the first reading and that after hearing the story repeatedly, they were able to communicate their ideas more readily in English. Returning to his notes, Mr. Nguyen also sees that the three children with moderate learning disabilities were very engaged during all three readings of the book, which he attributes in part to the deliberate scaffolding and structure he provided.

Mr. Nguyen sends home an information sheet—in English and in the primary language of the EL children—with some suggestions for how parents might interact with their children while reading aloud to them at home.

**Resource**

Bloom, Becky, and Pascal Biet. 1999. *Wolf*. New York: Orchard Books.

**Sources**

Lesson inspired by

Beck, Isabel. L., and Margaret G. McKeown G. 2007. "Increasing Young Low-Income Children's Oral Vocabulary Repertoires through Rich And Focused Instruction." *Elementary School Journal* 10 (3): 251–271.

McGee, Lea M., and Judith Schickedanz. 2007. "Repeated Interactive Read Alouds in Preschool and Kindergarten." *The Reading Teacher* 60: 742-751.

Ota, Tamaye, and Pamela Spycher. 2011. *Powerful Academic Vocabulary Instruction for Young English Learners*. Presented at the annual conference of the California Association for the Education of Young Children (CAEYC), Sacramento, CA, March 2011.

**Additional Information**

Web sites

- Colorín Colorado has read aloud tips for parents (http://www.colorincolorado.org/guides/readingtips/) in eleven languages (http://www.colorincolorado.org).
- D.E.A.R. (drop everything and read) with families short video (https://www.teachingchannel.org/)

**Recommended reading**

McGee, Lea M., and Judith A. Schickedanz. 2007. Repeated Interactive Read Alouds in Preschool and Kindergarten. *The Reading Teacher,* 60 (8): 742–751. (http://www.readingrockets.org/article/16287).

## Designated ELD Vignette

The example in the ELA/literacy vignette 3.3 illustrates good teaching for all students with a particular focus on the needs of EL children and children with disabilities. In addition to good first teaching, EL children benefit from intentional and purposeful designated ELD instruction, which vignette 3.4 illustrates.

### Vignette 3.4. General Academic Vocabulary Instruction from Storybooks Designated ELD in Kindergarten

**Background**

Mr. Nguyen has just read his students the story *Wolf* by Becky Bloom and Pascal Biet (see vignette 3.3). During the interactive read aloud, he paused when he came to several general academic vocabulary words to point to illustrations showing the meanings of the words or act out or explain their meanings. Despite this embedded vocabulary instruction, Mr. Nguyen has observed that many of his ELs have a hard time understanding or using the words orally. He wants all of his students to be able to understand these types of words when he reads them stories and use the words when they retell stories or compose their own original stories. He explicitly teaches some general academic vocabulary during ELA instruction. However, he also uses part of his designated ELD time to teach additional general academic words explicitly so that his EL students can rapidly build their vocabulary repertoires in ways that are tailored to their specific language learning needs.

**Lesson Context**

Mr. Nguyen and his kindergarten teaching team plan their vocabulary lessons together. They use a structured routine for teaching vocabulary that the children know well and enjoy because it makes learning the new words fun. The lesson incorporates several key elements:

- contextualizing the word in the story;
- providing a child-friendly explanation of its meaning along several examples of the word used meaningfully; and
- ample opportunities for the children to practice using the word with appropriate levels of scaffolding.

The kindergarten teachers teach 4–5 words per week during ELA instruction using a predictable routine. They use the same routine to teach additional words, when needed, during designated ELD instruction. The teachers develop the children's knowledge of the words over time by using the words frequently themselves throughout the day and by providing ample opportunities for the children to use the words in meaningful ways. The lesson-planning template the team uses is provided below.

## Vignette 3.4. General Academic Vocabulary Instruction from Storybooks Designated ELD in Kindergarten (cont.)

**General Academic Vocabulary Instruction - Lesson Plan Template (Whole group and small group)**

Story:
Word:
Cognates:
Timing: (should take 5–10 minutes, depending on the word)

Routine:

1. Tell the students the word, and briefly show them the place in the story where they first heard it. Tell students any cognates in the students' primary language (e.g., *furious* in English is *furioso* in Spanish).
2. Explain what the word means in child-friendly terms (1–2 sentences). Use the word in complete sentences, so you do not sound like a dictionary.
3. Explain what the word means in the context of the story.
4. Provide a few examples of how the word can be used in other grade-appropriate ways.
5. Guide students to use the word meaningfully in one or two think-pair-shares (three, if needed), with appropriate scaffolding (e.g., using a picture for a prompt, open sentence frames, etc.).
6. Ask short-answer questions to check for understanding (not a test – they are still learning the word).
7. Find ways to use the word a lot from now on, and encourage the children to use the word as much as they can. Tell them to teach the word to their parents when they go home.

**If taught in small groups for ELD**

Children in group (names):
EL proficiency level: Emerging, Expanding, Bridging
Differentiated sentence frames for step 5 (see CA ELD Standards):

| *Emerging* | *Expanding* | *Bridging* |
|---|---|---|
| | | |

Mr. Nguyen teaches designated ELD during literacy centers. While the other children are engaged in independent tasks (e.g., at the dramatic play area, the library corner, the listening station, the writing station), he works with small groups of EL children at the same English language proficiency level so that he can focus on their particular language learning needs. The learning target and cluster of CA ELD Standards Mr. Nguyen is focusing on today are the following:

## Vignette 3.4. General Academic Vocabulary Instruction from Storybooks Designated ELD in Kindergarten (cont.)

**Learning Target:** Students will use general academic vocabulary meaningfully in complex sentences.

***CA ELD Standards (Expanding):*** *ELD.PI.K.12b - Use a growing number of general academic and domain-specific words in order to add detail or to create shades of meaning . . . ; ELD.PII.K.6 – Combine clauses in an increasing variety of ways to make connections between and join ideas, for example, to express cause/effect (e.g., She jumped because the dog barked) . . .*

**Lesson Excerpt**

Mr. Nguyen sits at the teaching table facing five of his EL students who are at the Expanding level of English language proficiency. He shows them the book they read that morning, *Wolf*, and briefly summarizes the plot of the story. Next, he tells them about the new word they are going to learn to use: *ignore*.

Mr. Nguyen: (Showing the illustration.) Today, you're going to learn a new word: ignore. Let's all say that together. In the story when the wolf tried to scare the other animals, they just ignored him. When you ignore someone or something, you don't pay attention to it at all. You pretend it's not there. In the story, the animals ignored the wolf—or pretended he wasn't there—because they wanted to read their books.

Mr. Nguyen tells the children some other ways the word can be used so that they have models for using the word in different situations.

Mr. Nguyen: You can use this word a lot and probably every day. For example, this morning, I noticed that Hector ignored a friend who was trying to play with him while I was reading you this story. Hector didn't pay attention to him at all because he wanted to listen to the story. Sometimes when I'm trying to take a nap, there's noise outside my house, but I just have to ignore it so I can go to sleep. Take a look at this picture. Sometimes, my dog ignores me when I call her. She just pretends I'm not there, and I have to tell her "Please don't ignore me."

By this point, the children have a good idea of what the word means, and now it is their turn to use it. Mr. Nguyen provides a structure the students are familiar with (think-pair-share), linguistic support (open sentence frames), and a good question to promote thinking and their meaningful use of the word.

Mr. Nguyen: Now it's time for you to use the word. Here's a picture of a baby bothering a dog (shows picture). It looks like the dog is ignoring the baby. Why do you think the dog is ignoring the baby? (Waits several seconds for students to do their own thinking.) I'm not sure what you were thinking, but I'm thinking that maybe he's ignoring the baby because he's a lot bigger than the baby, and he doesn't want to hurt her. Maybe he's ignoring the baby because he doesn't care if she pulls his ears. You can use your idea, or you can use my idea. Now you get to tell your partner the idea. Use this sentence frame: The dog is ignoring the baby because ___.

## Vignette 3.4. General Academic Vocabulary Instruction from Storybooks Designated ELD in Kindergarten (cont.)

After the children say the sentence frame with Mr. Nguyen, they turn to their partner to share their idea. Mr. Nguyen makes sure that his sentence frames contain the new word and that they are "open," meaning that children can use the frame as a springboard to add a lot, and not just one or two words. He also makes sure to think about the grammatical structure of his sentence frames and to constantly stretch his students linguistically. The sentence frame he uses is a complex sentence, and he would like for his students to use complex sentences to show the relationship between two ideas more often, rather than only using simple sentences to express themselves. He listens as the children share their ideas.

Marco: The dog is ignoring the baby because he's a lot bigger. Maybe he doesn't want to hurt it.

Alexi: The dog is ignoring the baby because he likes it.

Mr. Nguyen: Can you say a little more? What does he like?

Alexi: When she goes on him and pulls him. He loves the baby.

Mr. Nguyen: So he's ignoring the baby because he loves her, and he doesn't care if she pulls on his ears?

Alexi: (Nodding.) He ignoring her because he loves her, and he doesn't care if she hurt him.

Mr. Nguyen does not correct Alexi and require him to say "he's ignoring her" or "she hurts him" because he wants to keep Alexi's focus on the meaningful use of the word *ignore*. However, he makes a note in his observation log to address this grammatical point in another lesson. He asks the children another question and has them share their ideas with a partner, and then he asks them some short-answer questions to reinforce their understanding.

Mr. Nguyen: Now we're going to play a little game. If what I say is a good example of something you should ignore, say "ignore." If it's not, say "don't ignore." Your friend wants to play with you during circle time.

Children: (In unison.) Ignore.

Mr. Nguyen: Your friend falls off the swing and hurts herself.

Children: (In unison.) Don't ignore.

At the end of the lesson, Mr. Nguyen returns to the places where the word *ignore* appears in the story and briefly reminds the children of how it was used. The vocabulary lesson has taken about eight minutes, and now the children have a solid foundation for using the word and for understanding the word when they encounter it again in *Wolf* (when Mr. Nguyen reads it again) and in other stories.

Mr. Nguyen will continue to develop the children's knowledge of the word over time and will encourage the students to use the word meaningfully. For example, he will encourage the students to "ignore" the sounds outside as they are enjoying quiet reading time. He will also encourage the children to use the word when speaking to one another ("Please don't ignore me. I want to play with you," for example). The children will also learn many other words, some taught directly and many more they are exposed to through the rich stories and informational texts Mr. Nguyen reads aloud daily. In addition, Mr. Nguyen will often choose

## Vignette 3.4. General Academic Vocabulary Instruction from Storybooks Designated ELD in Kindergarten (cont.)

different words to teach his ELs at the Emerging level of proficiency, words that are important to understanding the stories he reads and that the other students in the class may already know well (e.g., dangerous practice), as well as some everyday words the children may not pick on their own (e.g., town, village, farm).

### Teacher Reflection and Next Steps

Over the next week, Mr. Nguyen observes the children closely as they speak and write to see if they begin to use the words he has taught them. He deliberately finds ways to use the new words several times each day for the next week, and he posts the new words, along with the picture that depicts or triggers a reminder of the meanings of the words (e.g., the dog and the baby) on the class "Big Kids Words" wall. Each week, he sends home a sheet with the new words and a supportive illustration so that his students can "teach" their parents the new words they are learning and so that parents can reinforce the learning.

**Resource**

Bloom, Becky, and Pascal Biet. 1999. *Wolf*. New York: Orchard Books.

**Sources**

Lesson inspired by

Beck, Isabel L., and Margaret G. McKeown. 2001. "Text Talk: Capturing the Benefits of Read-aloud Experiences for Young Children." *The Reading Teacher*, 55: 10–20.

Silverman, Rebecca D. 2007. "Vocabulary Development of English-language and English-only Learners in Kindergarten." *Elementary School Journal*, 107: 365–383.

Spycher, Pamela. 2009. "Learning Academic Language through Science in Two Linguistically Diverse Classrooms." *Elementary School Journal* 109 (4): 359-379.

**Additional Information**

Web site

- Colorín Colorado has information about selecting vocabulary words to teach to ELs. (http://www.colorincolorado.org/educators/content/vocabulary/).

**Recommended reading**

Beck, Isabel, Margaret McKeown, and Linda Kucan. 2002. "Taking Delight in Words: Using Oral Language To Build Young Children's Vocabularies." Colorín Colorado. (http://www.readingrockets.org/article/11917).

## Conclusion

The information and ideas in this grade-level section are provided to guide teachers in their instructional planning. Recognizing California's richly diverse student population is critical for instructional and program planning and delivery. Teachers are responsible for educating a variety of learners, including **advanced learners**, **students with disabilities**, **ELs at different English language proficiency levels**, **standard English learners**, and other **culturally and linguistically diverse learners**, as well as **students experiencing difficulties** with one or more of the themes of ELA/literacy and ELD instruction (Meaning Making, Effective Expression, Language Development, Content Knowledge, and Foundational Skills).

It is beyond the scope of a curriculum framework to provide guidance on meeting the learning needs of every child because each child comes to teachers with unique dispositions, skills, histories, and circumstances. Teachers need to know their students well through appropriate assessment practices and other methods, including communication with families, in order to design effective instruction for them. They need to adapt and refine instruction as appropriate for individual learners and capitalize on opportunities for collaboration with colleagues and others (see figure 3.27).

Kindergarten children have just embarked on the voyage of their lifetime. The world of words, stories, and ideas is a new adventure for them, and they bring fresh eyes to every schooling event. As they prepare to move to grade one, kindergarten children find excitement in new concepts, comfort in familiar tales, and new-found pride in the skills and knowledge so recently acquired.

***Figure 3.27. Collaboration***

**Collaboration: A Necessity**

Frequent and meaningful collaboration with colleagues and parents/families is critical for ensuring that all students meet the expectations of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards. Teachers are at their best when they frequently collaborate with their teaching colleagues to plan instruction, analyze students' work, discuss students' progress, integrate new learning into their practice, and refine lessons or identify interventions when students experience difficulties. Students are at their best when teachers enlist the collaboration of parents and families—and the students themselves—as partners in their education. Schools are at their best when educators are supported by administrators and other support staff to implement the type of instruction called for in this *ELA/ELD Framework*. School districts are at their best when teachers across the district have an expanded professional learning community they can rely upon as thoughtful partners and for tangible instructional resources. More information about these types of collaboration can be found in chapter 11 and throughout this *ELA/ELD Framework*.

# Grade One

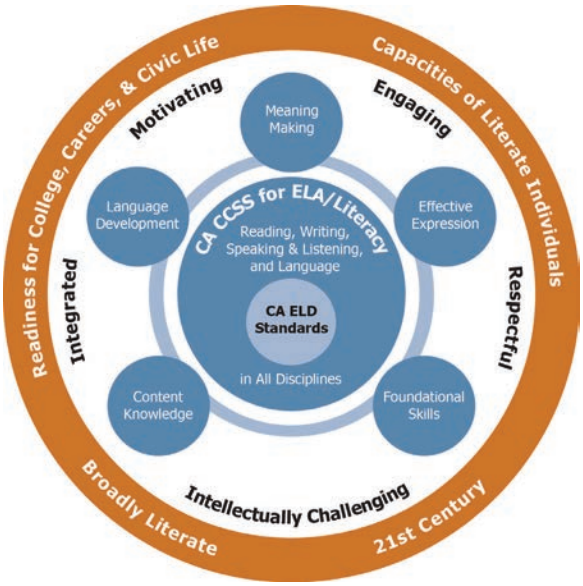
First grade is an exciting year filled with remarkable advances in literacy and language. Children continue to learn skills that enable them to read, write, and communicate more independently. They apply their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code and they recognize a growing number of words accurately and automatically. They learn to write and spell many words and use them to communicate ideas and experiences. They engage deeply with high-quality literary and informational texts as listeners and readers, and they compose different types of texts for different purposes. They continue on the path toward becoming broadly literate. (See chapter 2 of this *ELA/ELD Framework*.) Concurrently, children have rich experiences in the content areas that expand their knowledge of the world and their language.

Instruction is designed such that the range of learners in the classroom receives excellent *first teaching*. Some children may require additional instruction in order to achieve the standards. Additional instruction is provided in a timely fashion and is targeted to ensure all children make the progress necessary for access to the same future opportunities in their educations, careers, and lives as their peers.

## Key Themes of ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction in Grade One

Instruction in ELA/literacy is appropriately challenging, focused on clear objectives, carefully sequenced, and responsive to children's needs. Furthermore, instruction occurs in an inviting and empowering context that integrates the curricula and is motivating, engaging, respectful, and intellectually challenging (displayed in the white field of figure 3.28). In this section, the key themes of ELA/literacy and ELD instruction as they apply to grade one are discussed. These include **Meaning Making**, **Language Development**, **Effective Expression**, **Content Knowledge**, and **Foundational Skills**. Grade one instruction is an important step toward students' ultimate achievement of the overarching goals of ELA/literacy and ELD instruction (displayed in the outer ring of the figure): Students develop the readiness for college, careers, and civic life; attain the capacities of literate individuals; become broadly literate; and acquire the skills for living and learning in the 21st century.

***Figure 3.28. Circles of Implementation of ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction***



## *Meaning Making*

As noted in chapter 2 and previously in this chapter, meaning making is a theme that runs throughout each of the strands of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards. The standards ensure that children understand texts, write to communicate meaning, speak and listen to convey and clarify meaning, and learn and develop their language to expand opportunities for meaning making. This section focuses on meaning making with text.

### Meaning Making with Text

*Comprehension* is used synonymously with *meaning making* in the context of engagement with text. (See figure 2.6 in chapter 2 for a definition of comprehension.) Comprehension is the focus of read aloud experiences with literary and informational text. Children ask and answer questions (RL/RI.1.1), with special, but not exclusive, emphasis on text-dependent questions, particularly those that demand higher-level thinking. (See the overview of the span of this chapter for a discussion of text-dependent questions.) They retell stories or information, identify the central message or main topic, and describe story elements (characters, settings, major events) and information (RL/RI.1.2–3). They learn about the craft and structure of literary and informational text, shifting their attention from meaning to how meaning is conveyed as they identify words that evoke feelings or use text features to locate information; explain differences between different genres and the purposes of various text features (glossaries, icons, headings); and identify the source of the story (the voice) or information (images or text) (RL/RI.1.4–6). They also attend to illustrations and details to describe characters, settings, and events, or key ideas, and they compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters and of two texts on the same topic (RL/RI.1.7, 9). Teachers provide systematic instruction in comprehension to ensure that children understand, enjoy, and learn from texts that are being read aloud.

Comprehension is vitally important as children gain independence with print. As beginning readers, children use considerable mental energy to identify words when first learning to decode. Excellent instruction ensures that they become accurate decoders and that they build automaticity quickly so that decoding efforts are not so demanding that they prevent comprehension. Teachers continue, as they work with small groups and individuals, to provide instruction in comprehension and turn children's attention to meaning even as children build skill with the code.

> *Excellent instruction ensures that they [students] become accurate decoders and that they build automaticity quickly so that decoding efforts are not so demanding that they prevent comprehension.*

Questions are skillfully used by teachers for several purposes. Some questions are used to assess children's understanding; others are used to guide understanding, inference-making, and thinking. Some questions prompt children to make connections between the text and their lives or other learning. Some help children integrate information across paragraphs or pages. Some focus children's attention on word choice and how it impacts interpretation. Children are given opportunities to reflect on and respond to the content of texts in a variety of ways, including critically and creatively, and to engage in many conversations with peers and others about meaning.

EL first graders benefit from and participate in all of the instruction discussed in this chapter. Particularly critical for EL children are opportunities for equitable interaction and a focus on meaning making. Questioning and scaffolding are provided strategically with children's English language proficiency in mind.

## *Language Development*

As noted in previous sections, language undergirds literacy and learning, and children's command of academic language in particular is related to present and future achievement. Serious attention is given to developing children's language, yet instruction is age-appropriate and meaning-based. In other words, new vocabulary (see next section) and complex sentence structures are relevant for six-year-olds and serve real purposes: to understand and appreciate increasingly complex texts, learn new concepts and information in the content areas, and communicate effectively and precisely.

A great deal of conversation about texts and content area subject matter occurs in grade one. Children meet with different partners to react to a character's actions in a story, summarize a brief selection from a text, tell what they learned after a content investigation, and identify questions they want to ask. They are given *think time* to plan what they are going to say and they are encouraged to *say more* about topics and to explain their comments and ideas. They write in response to texts and content lessons and experiences, independently, with a partner, or through dictation to older children or an adult. In doing so, they have repeated opportunities to use new language.

They also have many of the same opportunities that kindergarteners have to immerse themselves in a variety of language-based activities throughout the day. They use puppets to create or reenact stories. They engage in sociodramatic activities and role playing. They participate in collaborative explorations of content and creative problem solving. See other sections on language development in this chapter.

### Vocabulary Instruction

Vocabulary is acquired largely through interactions with text. In fact, wide reading has been identified as the single most powerful factor in vocabulary growth (Cunningham and Stanovich 2003; Stahl and Nagy 2006). Because most children in grade one are not yet able to read independently text that is sufficiently sophisticated to expand language, it is critical that teachers continue to read aloud to children from a range of literary and informational text. Reading aloud occurs daily with the entire class and small groups. It occurs in every content area.

> *Because most children in grade one are not yet able to read independently text that is sufficiently sophisticated to expand language, it is critical that teachers continue to read aloud to children from a range of literary and informational text.*

As they read aloud (and sometimes before they read aloud), teachers provide child-friendly definitions of selected unknown words. The definitions are stated in terms children understand and are often accompanied by several examples of usage. For example, before reading *Balloons Over Broadway: The True Story of the Puppeteer of Macy's Parade* by Melissa Sweet (2011), teachers may introduce the word *marionette*, the meaning of which is important in the story. They pronounce the word carefully, perhaps writing it on a chart and drawing a quick sketch, and tell what it means and how it would be used in a sentence. If possible, they share an actual marionette.

Teachers also provide instruction on how to make sense of unknown words while reading. They teach children that both context (including images) and examination of word parts may support them in gaining meaning. For example, in *Pop! The Invention of Bubble Gum* by Meghan McCarthy (2010), the primary character is described as "a young accountant." Teachers direct children to the sentence

that follows the term and ask what it suggests about the meaning of the word: "His job was to add numbers and balance budgets." In *Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez,* author Kathleen Krull (2003) writes that Chavez experienced "homesickness" when he and his family left their home state of Arizona in search of work. Teachers instruct children to use their knowledge of the parts of the word to consider its meaning. Teachers ask questions that prompt children's use of new vocabulary ("Tell your partner how Chavez felt and why he felt that way. How do we know?"). Strategies for gaining word meanings are explicitly taught (L.1.4).

*This comprehensive approach to vocabulary instruction—wide reading, intentional and explicit instruction in specific words and in word learning strategies, and building word consciousness—is important for all children and critical for EL children's vocabulary development.*

Teachers also ensure that they create word-conscious environments to pique children's interest in words. They talk about word origins and draw attention to interesting words. They highlight the relationships among words (e.g., *word, reword, wordy*; *final, finally, finalized*), including words from different languages (i.e., cognates such as *different* and *diferente*).

This comprehensive approach to vocabulary instruction—wide reading, intentional and explicit instruction in specific words and in word learning strategies, and building word consciousness—is important for all children and critical for EL children's vocabulary development (see August, Carlo, Dressler, and Snow 2005; Baumann and Kame'enui 2004; Graves 2000, 2006, 2009; Stahl and Nagy 2006). One of these components, intentional and explicit instruction in specific words, when combined with teacher read alouds of sophisticated texts, has been shown to expand EL students' vocabularies and improve their reading comprehension. This approach includes selecting words carefully for instruction from high-quality text, providing rich explanations of words, providing opportunities for word play, and developing deep knowledge of words over time (Collins 2005; Robbins and Ehri 1994; Sénéchal, Thomas, and Monker 1995; Silverman 2007; Spycher 2009).

## *Effective Expression*

In grade one, children make progress toward expressing themselves effectively as they write, discuss, and present their ideas and knowledge to others. They continue to expand their command of written and spoken language conventions.

### Writing

Children progress considerably in their writing, both in terms of substance (including organization and style) and mechanics during grade one. They have daily opportunities to write with their teacher, their peers, and on their own for a variety of purposes and in a variety of contexts. They write in learning and literature response journals. They write messages to others. They write directions for visitors. They write lists of ways to improve the playground.

Children learn to reflect on the effectiveness of their own and others' writing as they share their written work. Some selections are revised after feedback from the teacher or peers (W.1.5). Some are published, such as when each child contributes a page produced digitally to a class book. Children engage deeply with a number of texts, use language to communicate with peers, and problem solve as they pursue research topics and present in writing what they learned (W.1.7).

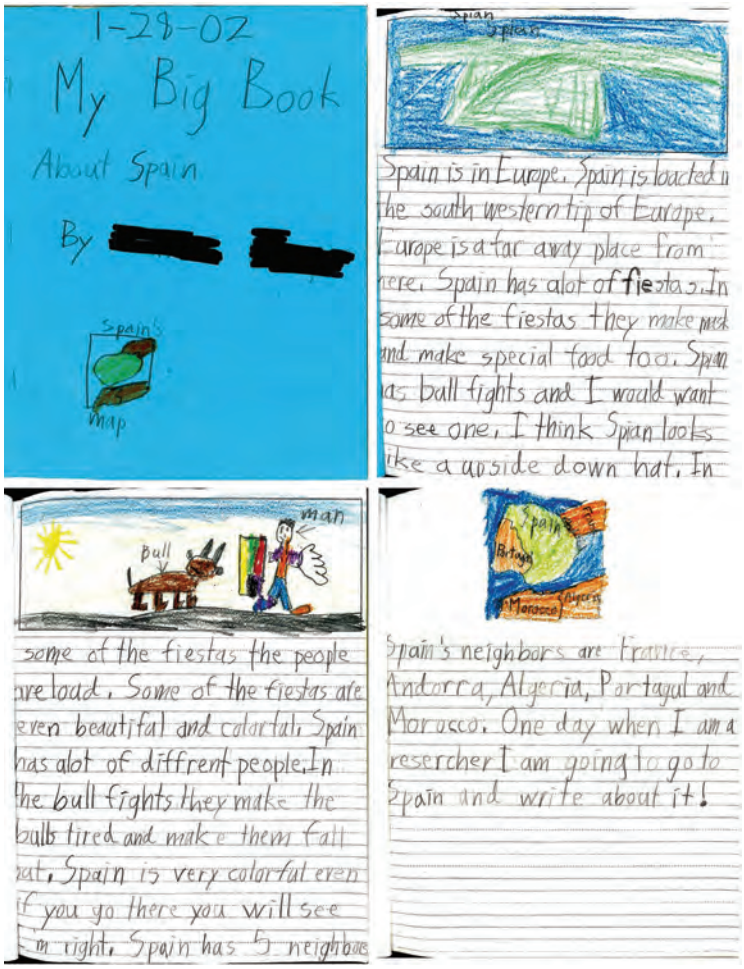
In grade one, children write opinion pieces, informative/explanatory texts, and narratives. To meet grade-level expectations for opinion pieces, such as responses to literature, children learn to state an opinion and provide a reason and some sense of closure (W.1.1). Informative/explanatory writing includes a topic, some facts, and a sense of closure (W.1.2). Narratives recount two or more sequenced events, include use of temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure (W.1.3). Children work collaboratively with peers and participate in shared research and writing projects, which include the use of a variety of digital tools to edit and publish their work (W.1.6–7). Writing occurs in relation to text and topics under study.

*Children are provided and discuss many models of writing, including the texts they are read, those they begin to read on their own or with others, and those written by and with the teacher as well as those written by peers.*

Children are provided and discuss many models of writing, including the texts they are read, those they begin to read on their own or with others, and those written by and with the teacher as well as those written by peers. They attend to and discuss word choice and sentence structures.

Figure 3.29 displays a well-developed informational text written by a first grader (NGA/CCSSO 2010b: Appendix C, 11). It reveals the child's command over certain conventions, ability to organize information, and, importantly, knowledge of the topic, including relevant vocabulary.

***Figure 3.29. Grade One Writing Sample***



**Annotation**

The writer of this piece:

- Names the topic (in the title).
  - *My Big Book About Spain*
- Supplies some facts about the topic.
  - *Spain is loacted* (located) *in the south western tip of Europe.*
  - *Spain has alot of fiestas.*
  - *Spain . . . has bull fights . . . .*
  - *Spain's neighbors are France, Andorra, Algeria, Portugal and Morocco.*
- Provides some sense of closure.
  - *One day when I am a researcher I am going to go to Spain and write about it!*
- Demonstrates command of some of the conventions of standard written English.

This piece illustrates the writer's awareness of beginning-of-sentence capitalization and end-of-sentence punctuation as well as the use of capital letters for proper nouns.

**Source**

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers. 2010b. *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects. Appendix C*, 11-12. National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, Washington DC.

Teachers carefully examine students' writing to determine achievement of selected objectives, reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching, and inform subsequent instruction. They involve students in reviewing their work. Teachers of EL children also use the CA ELD Standards to guide their analysis of student writing and to inform the type of feedback they provide to students.

## Discussing

As in all grades, text interactions and other learning experiences (e.g., science investigations, research projects, skill instruction in dance, concept development in mathematics) are surrounded with discussions. Children converse with one another in pairs and small groups, and they participate in large group discussions led by the teacher before, during, and after engaging with texts and topics. These discussions contribute to meaning making and language development, and they broaden children's exposure to a range of perspectives.

*As in all grades, text interactions and other learning experiences (e.g., science investigations, research projects, skill instruction in dance, concept development in mathematics) are surrounded with discussions.*

For children to express themselves effectively in discussion, teachers provide explicit instruction and guidance in discussion behaviors and skills. They talk about discussion norms (e.g., giving and taking the floor, respecting others' contributions, listening actively), and they provide children with daily opportunities to engage in discussion in a variety of configurations. See the overview of the span and the transitional kindergarten and kindergarten sections of this chapter for guidance on supporting children's progress in collaborative conversations.

Special emphases in discussion in grade one include building on the comments of others (SL.1.1b) and asking questions to clear up any confusion about topics and texts under discussion or to gather additional information (SL.1.1c, SL.1.3). Initially, teachers model these discussion behaviors, provide explicit examples, and talk about them. They promote children's building on one another's comments and requesting clarification or additional information with questions and prompts such as those in figure 3.30. Eventually, children employ these conversational behaviors without direct prompting. Grade one students also learn to give, restate, and follow two-step directions (SL.1.2a).

***Figure 3.30. Questions and Sentence Starters to Promote Responses to and Building on the Comments of Others***

| Questions | Sentence Starters |
|---|---|
| • How would you like to respond to Melissa's comment?<br>• Can someone add to Raphael's point?<br>• Let's take that a little further. Tell a neighbor more about what Idris just said.<br>• Can someone add a few details to Phyllis's summary?<br>• What does Clarence's idea make you think?<br>• What would you ask Tom to clarify?<br>• What would you like Betsy to say more about? | • I have this to say about Josh's comment: _____.<br>• I would like to add _____.<br>• Talia said _____, and I agree because _____.<br>• Someone who disagrees might say _____.<br>• Another reason is _____.<br>• Ruth's comment was interesting because _____.<br>• What he said was important because _____.<br>• I don't understand _____.<br>• I'd like to know more about _____.<br>• Please explain _____. |

Children are also given specific tasks to address in small groups. For example, they discuss how to improve playground cleanup, how to reorganize the classroom furniture for more space for independent activities, when to best schedule quiet reading time during the day, where to store art supplies, or how to care for the class garden on weekends. When confronted with a class conflict, teachers ask children to talk in small groups to identify and discuss at least three solutions to the issue.

It is crucial that all children learn how to engage in discussions and, importantly, that they feel welcome to contribute. Teachers play a critical role in ensuring that both of these happen. Formative assessment, in the form of close observation, informs teachers' decisions for in-the-moment scaffolding as well as their plans for subsequent instruction.

*It is crucial that all children learn how to engage in discussions and, importantly, that they feel welcome to contribute. Teachers play a critical role in ensuring that both of these happen.*

## Presenting

In grade one, children have many opportunities to present their opinions, stories, and knowledge to others. Some presentations require more planning and rehearsal than others. Some presentations are collaborative and some are individual. Teachers ensure that students have adequate background knowledge and vocabulary to present ideas and information effectively. They provide instruction and demonstrate effective presentations themselves, and they debrief with children, as appropriate. Presenting in grade one takes many forms, including:

- Showing and telling (see the kindergarten section)
- Retelling a familiar story
- Explaining how to perform a task
- Sharing with others a group experience
- "Reading" a wordless picture book
- Reporting the outcome of a research project

- Reciting, with expression, poems and rhymes that have been memorized (SL.1.4a)
- Singing, with expression, songs that have been memorized (SL.4a)

Drawings and other visual displays are included as appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings (SL.1.5). Audiences vary, most often including peers. However, children have opportunities to present for family and community members. Some presentations are video or audio recorded and shared with audiences well beyond the local region. Presentations in English and the primary languages of the children are encouraged.

### Using Language Conventions

The use of language conventions contributes to effective expression. In grade one, children learn many grammatical and usage conventions for writing and speaking (L.1.1a-j) and they learn grade-level capitalization, punctuation, and spelling conventions when writing (L.1.2). Conventions are taught explicitly, and children have immediate opportunities to apply their knowledge in meaningful writing and speaking. They also find the application of written conventions in the texts they read. They learn that conventions enable better communication.

> *As they [students] learn to spell, encoding language contributes to decoding skills. These reciprocal processes are taught in tandem to optimize development of both.*

Spelling is an important component of the ELA/literacy program. Children learn to employ their increasing knowledge of the alphabetic system to record their ideas. As they learn to spell, encoding language contributes to decoding skills. These reciprocal processes are taught in tandem to optimize development of both. In subsequent grades, the emphasis in spelling instruction shifts from a phonological approach to a morphological approach.

In grade one, many children spell phonetically. (See the discussion of spelling development in the overview of the span in chapter 4 of this *ELA/ELD Framework*.) They use their growing knowledge of letter-sound and spelling-sound correspondences along with their developing phonemic awareness to map sounds to print. Invented spellings are typical; children record the sounds they hear in words, writing *duk* for *duck* and *frnd* for *friend*. This is a productive time as children gain insight into the logic of the alphabetic system. Instruction focuses on drawing the connections between decoding and phonological awareness. Children use letter tiles to construct spoken words. They learn common spelling patterns along with high-frequency irregularly spelled words. Grade one teachers witness the impact of their instruction as children progress from prephonetic/emergent spelling to phonetic spelling to largely accurate use of spelling patterns in single-syllable words. (See figure 4.8 in chapter 4 for a description of spelling stages.)

## *Content Knowledge*

The importance of content knowledge is discussed throughout this framework. Grade one children are provided rich content instruction that deepens their knowledge of the world; expands their language; familiarizes them with diverse ways of thinking about, pursuing, and expressing information; and ignites their interests. Content knowledge is built through excellent subject matter instruction (which includes hands-on experiences, investigations, demonstrations, and discussions) as well as through wide reading, rich interactions with informational text, and engagement in research projects.

Wide reading is promoted and facilitated. Wide reading occurs through teacher read alouds and, as children become

skilled with decoding and word recognition, through independent reading. Informational texts represent about half of the texts in the curricula. They are selected for read alouds, large and small group reading instruction, and independent reading. Informational texts used in grade one reflect and expand children's interests and experiences, and they are carefully chosen to support content area standards. (See also chapter 2 in this *ELA/ELD Framework* for a discussion of wide and independent reading.)

*Research projects are an important part of building content knowledge. Children pursue questions and gather relevant information.*

Research projects are an important part of building content knowledge. Children pursue questions and gather relevant information. They interview knowledgeable others, explore texts, and, with guidance, engage in Internet searches. They participate in hands-on investigations and keep records in journals, including diagrams, lists, findings, and more questions. Research is a powerful way to integrate many of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy. The CA Model School Library Standards (CDE 2010) and the CA ELD Standards amplify and highlight many of the skills demanded by research.

## *Foundational Skills*

In grade one, children advance significantly in their phonological awareness, basic decoding and word recognition skills, and fluency. They learn to decode and recognize an increasing number of words accurately and automatically, and they have many opportunities to practice using their skills.

First grade ELs can and should develop foundational reading skills at the same pace as their non-EL peers. However, teachers assess children's knowledge both in English and the primary language in order to provide appropriate instruction. Figure 3.11 in the overview of the span of this chapter offers guidance on considerations for using the CA CCSS foundational reading skills with EL children.

### Print Concepts

In kindergarten, children developed many print concepts. In grade one, they learn the distinguishing features of a sentence, such as first word capitalization and ending punctuation. These concepts are taught explicitly, and attention is drawn to them in texts they read. Furthermore, they employ these concepts in their own writing.

### Phonological Awareness

Children made great strides in their development of phonological awareness in kindergarten. In grade one, they accomplish the remaining phonological awareness standards (RF.1.2a–d) displayed in figure 3.31.

***Figure 3.31. Grade One Standards in Phonological Awareness with Examples***

| Standard 2 | Example |
|---|---|
| a. Distinguish long from short vowel sounds in spoken single-syllable words. | They say that *tape* and *tap* are different words when they hear them spoken. |
| b. Orally produce single-syllable words by blending sounds (phonemes), including consonant blends. | They say *stop* when asked to blend the orally presented phonemes /s/-/t/-/ŏ/-/p/. |
| c. Isolate and pronounce initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in spoken single-syllable words. | They say /f/ when asked the first phoneme in the orally presented word *food*. They say /ŏ/ when asked the medial phoneme in the orally presented word *dog*. They say /t/ when asked the final phoneme is the word *hot*.<br>[Note: Isolating the medial vowel is more difficult than isolating the initial or final phonemes and generally is addressed after children successfully isolate initial and final phonemes.] |
| d. Segment spoken single-syllable words into their complete sequence of individual sounds (phonemes). | They say /f/-/r/-/ŏ/-/g/ when asked to say all the sounds in order (segment) in the spoken word *frog*. |

As noted previously, phonological awareness is an exceptionally important understanding—one that contributes to children's ability to gain independence with the alphabetic code. Some children achieve phonological awareness prior to grade one and require little instruction in the grade level; their time is better spent engaged in other learning experiences. Other children require quite a bit of instruction. Because children who experience difficulty with phonological awareness are likely to have difficulty becoming independent readers and writers, assessment is crucial and should be followed by appropriate additional, highly targeted instruction.

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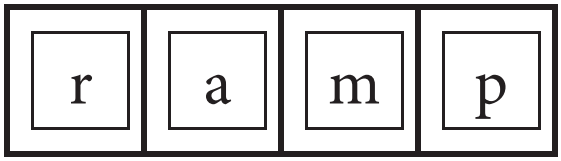
In grade one, phonemic awareness instruction is tied closely to decoding. Children use letters to represent the sounds comprised by words they hear. They may use Elkonin boxes to segment words into phonemes, but rather than using blank chips, children place letter cards or tiles in the boxes to represent each sound in a spoken word. (See figure 3.32.) The class environment continues to support phonological play as children recite and compose poems and songs that manipulate sounds and listen to and interact with books that prominently feature play with phonemes. The phonological characteristics are explicitly discussed. (See previous sections on phonological awareness in this chapter.)

***Figure 3.32. An Elkonin Box with Letter Tiles***




Children experiencing difficulty with phonological awareness are provided additional or intensified instruction because this insight is crucial for reading and writing development. As noted previously, a careful progression of instruction is important. Two- and three-phoneme words containing continuous sounds (such as *as* and *man*) are typically easier to blend and segment than words containing noncontinuous sounds (such as *tap* and *bug*). Children experiencing difficulty benefit from explicit attention to the manner and place of articulation of sounds. Thus, using mirrors to observe how different sounds are made by the mouth, followed by an explicit discussion, can be a productive approach. Differentiated instruction is crucial and should move from what children know to what they still need to learn.

## Phonics and Word Recognition

In terms of decoding and word recognition, children entering grade one ideally possess two critical skills: (1) a developing understanding of the phonological basis of spoken language, and (2) knowledge of letter-sound correspondences. Some children combine the two skills intuitively. They use their awareness of sounds in spoken words with their knowledge of letter-sound correspondences to identify and blend the sounds represented in a printed word, and thus, generate a word. A priority of grade one instruction is for children to develop the alphabetic insight and use that insight and accompanying skills to decode words independently and, with practice, automatically. Decoding is essential to reading unfamiliar words and is a critical benchmark in a child's reading development.

Decoding instruction in grade one:

- Ensures children can blend sounds to generate words
- Progresses systematically from simple word types (e.g., consonant-vowel-consonant), word lengths (e.g., number of phonemes), and word complexity (e.g., phonemes in the word, position of blends, stop sounds) to more complex words
- Includes explicit modeling at each of the fundamental stages (e.g., associating letters with the sounds they represent, blending sounds to generate whole words)
- Sequences words strategically to incorporate knowledge of letter-sound and spelling-sound correspondences
- Provides practice in controlled connected text in which children apply their newly learned skills successfully (i.e., decodable text)
- Includes repeated opportunities to read words in contexts in which children apply their knowledge of letter-sound and spelling-sound correspondences and which leads to automaticity with words
- Teaches necessary sight words to make more interesting text accessible

As noted previously, instruction in phonics and word recognition is carefully sequenced so less complex understandings precede more complex ones and new learning is built upon previously acquired knowledge. Furthermore, it is paced in accordance with individual students' progress.

One technique for facilitating children's command of the alphabetic principle is to engage them in building words, which directs their attention to each grapheme in a word. Notably, it is not uncommon for children who experience difficulty with decoding to demonstrate accurate decoding of the initial

sound in a printed word but not the subsequent vowel(s) and consonant(s) (McCandliss, and others 2003). Word building helps move children from *partial alphabetic decoding* to *full alphabetic decoding* (Ehri 2005), which research indicates "plays a central role in the development of effective and efficient word recognition skills" (McCandliss, and others 2003, 102). Supporting full alphabetic decoding is crucial in the primary grades; that is, developing readers are taught to attend to all the letters and letter patterns as they decode previously unencountered words. The words and spellings addressed in word-building activities progress systematically, but they may vary depending upon each child's knowledge and the grade-level standards. Thus, the activity is most appropriately used with individuals or small groups of children who have the similar skills.

*Supporting full alphabetic decoding is crucial in the primary grades; that is, developing readers are taught to attend to all the letters and letter patterns as they decode previously unencountered words.*

Word building entails the use of selected letter cards or other manipulatives (e.g., plastic letters or letter tiles), from a small pool of letter, to build a word. The children are told the word to form with the letters. After the word is built accurately, the word is read aloud. Then, the teacher directs the children to insert, delete, or replace one letter in the word with a specified letter from the set of cards (e.g., "Replace the letter *p* at the end of the word you built with the letter *t*.").The children read aloud the new word. If the word is not read accurately, the teacher encourages additional attempts and provides scaffolding to ensure accuracy. The process of changing the word and reading the resulting new word continues. Letters in different positions are changed; in other words, sometimes the first letter is changed, sometimes a medial letter is changed, and sometimes a final letter is changed. In addition, the same letter is used in different positions in the word building progression; for example, *p* may be used in the initial position of one word and in the final position of another in the progression.

McCandliss, and others (2003, 84) share the following example of a progression of word transformations:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | s | a | t |
| | s | a | p |
| | t | a | p |
| | t | o | p |
| s | t | o | p |
| | t | o | p |

The sequence continues as follows: tot → pot → pat → sat → spat → pats → past → pat → pot → top → stop.

Over time, word building progressions targets more difficult letter-sound and spelling-sound combinations and word forms, including words with common vowel teams and consonant digraphs. (See also Spear-Swerling 2011 for a discussion and Cunningham and Hall 2001, 2008, for variations on word building.)

*Grade one instruction in word recognition includes teaching high-frequency irregular words systematically. Words with high utility are selected and used judiciously in early reading. Teachers point out irregularities while focusing children's attention on all letters and letter combinations in the word and provide repeated practice.*

Grade one instruction in word recognition includes teaching high-frequency irregular words systematically. Words with high utility are selected and used judiciously in early reading. Teachers point out irregularities while focusing children's attention on all letters and letter combinations in the word and provide repeated practice. The number of irregular words introduced is controlled so that the children are not overwhelmed, and previously introduced words are reviewed daily. High-frequency irregular words (e.g., *was, said, they, there*), often confused by young children, are strategically separated for initial instruction. Formative assessment is important to determine the appropriate pace of introducing new words and the amount of review necessary for individual children. Careful record-keeping of children's accuracy informs subsequent instruction.

Instruction in word families and word patterns (i.e., reading orthographic units of text, such as *at, sat, fat, rat,* sometimes referred to as *phonograms*) begins after children have learned the letter-sound correspondences in the unit (Ehri and McCormick 1998). Teaching children to process larger highly represented patterns increases fluency in word recognition. However, the instruction is carefully coordinated and builds on knowledge gained from instruction in letter-sound correspondences and phoneme blending. A different path is followed by students who are deaf and hard of hearing and do not have complete access to the letter-sound correspondences of English. American Sign Language, fingerspelling, reading, and writing skills are interwoven for students who are deaf. The merging of these skills enables the development of the alphabetic principle (Visual Language and Visual Learning Science of Learning Center 2010).

Children practice their increasing knowledge of the code with decodable text, which serves as an important intermediary step between initial skill acquisition and the children's ability to read quality trade books. (See the discussion of decodable text in the overview of the span of this chapter.) Decodable text gives children the opportunity to apply word analysis skills rather than simply reconstruct text they have memorized.

*Teaching children to process larger highly represented patterns increases fluency in word recognition. However, the instruction is carefully coordinated and builds on knowledge gained from instruction in letter-sound correspondences and phoneme blending.*

By the end of grade one, children know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words both in isolation and in text (RF.1.3a–g), see figure 3.33. See figure 3.34 for guidance on one way to teach children to blend printed words.

***Figure 3.33. Grade One Standards in Phonics and Word Recognition with Examples***

| Standard 3 | Example |
|---|---|
| a. Know the spelling-sound correspondences for common consonant digraphs. | When children see the printed letter *sh*, they indicate that it represents the sound /sh/. When they hear the sound /sh/, they identify the letter combination that represents it. Additional consonant digraphs are *th, wh, kn, wr, ph.* |
| b. Decode regularly spelled one-syllable words. | When children see the written word *dog* (CVC pattern), they use their knowledge of letter-sound and spelling-sound correspondences to say and blend the sounds to pronounce the word. Other regularly spelled one-syllable word patterns include VC (*if*), VCC (*ask*), CVCC (*fast*), CCVC (*drop*). |
| c. Know final -e and common vowel team conventions for representing long vowel sounds. | When children see the written word *hide*, they use their knowledge that -e generally indicates that the preceding vowel is long and pronounce the word. They also know other common vowel teams that represent long vowels, such as ai (*rain*), ea (eat), ee (*feet*), oa (*boat*). |
| d. Use knowledge that every syllable must have a vowel sound to determine the number of syllables in a printed word. | When they see the written word *catsup*, they identify the two vowel sounds, /ă/ and /ŭ/, and indicate that the word has two syllables. They use that knowledge to decode the word. |
| e. Decode two-syllable words following basic patterns by breaking the words into syllables. | When children see the word *before*, they identify the two syllables and use their knowledge that the first syllable is open so the vowel is pronounced with the long sound and the second syllable has a final -e so the preceding vowel is pronounced with the long sound. |
| f. Read words with inflectional endings. | When children see the written word *playing*, they recognize the base word and the ending and pronounce the word. Other common inflectional endings are *-est, -ed.* |
| g. Recognize and read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words. | When children see the printed word *once*, they quickly and accurately pronounce it. |

### *Figure 3.34. Blending Sounds in Printed Words in Grade One*

***Prior learning***

Screening and formative assessment are crucial to ensure children have the necessary skills and knowledge for participating in the lesson.

- Children know the letter-sound correspondences for the letters in the target words.
- Children can blend spoken sounds into spoken words.
- Children know that some sounds can be elongated without distortion (that is, vowels and continuant consonants, such as /m/ and /f/) and that others must be pronounced more quickly to avoid distortion (such as /p/, /b/, and /g/, which if elongated become /puh/, /buh/, and /guh/).
- The words used are in the children's oral vocabulary.
- Children have learned to blend two-and three-phoneme printed words, such as *no* and *sun.*

***Considerations***

Assessment provides information regarding important considerations.

- English learners should have been taught in advance any phonemes being used that are not in their primary language.
- Some grade one children do not need blending instruction. Instructional time should not be taken to address a skill they already possess (in English or in a different language). Assessment is crucial.
- Some children learn words by sight very quickly, yet they may not have the skills to decode previously unencountered words. Assessment is crucial.

****Model***

Print the word *slam* on the board. Say: *Today I am going to show you how to sound out words with four letters. Watch me blend the sounds these letters represent.* Point just to the left of *slam* and say: *I will blend this word*. Formative in-the-moment assessment provides the teacher with information necessary to determine whether to continue, scaffold, or alter the lesson.

1. Move your finger to the letter *s*, say: */sss/. I'm going to keep saying this sound until I point to the next letter.*
2. Keep saying /sss/. Slide your finger from the letter *s* to the letter *l*. Pointing to the letter *l*, say: */lll/.*
3. Keep saying /lll/. Slide your finger from the letter *l* to the letter *a*. Pointing to the letter *a*, say: */aaa/.*
4. Keep saying */aaa/*. Slide your finger to the letter *m*. Pointing to the letter *m*, say: */mmm/.*
5. Lift your finger and point just to the left of the word *slam* and say: *Now watch as I read the whole word*. Then quickly sweep with your finger under the whole word and say *slam*. Say: *To slam a door means "to shut it hard." When you slam a door, it usually makes a loud noise. Slam!*
6. Model additional examples, using words that begin continuant sounds, such as *frog.* Stop (that is, noncontinuant) sounds may be in the final position.

****Lead (Guided Practice)***

Print the word *flat* on the board. Say: *Now I am going to lead you in sounding out words. You're going to sound out some words along with me. Remember, we'll keep saying a sound until I point to the next letter.* Point just to the left of *flat* and say: *Let's blend this word.* Formative in-the-moment assessment provides the teacher with information necessary to determine whether to continue, scaffold, or alter the lesson.

1. Move your finger to the letter *f* for one or two seconds and have students respond along with you: /fff/.
2. Keep saying */fff/* with the students. Slide your finger from the letter *f* to the letter *l*. Point to the letter *l* for one or two seconds and have student respond along with you: */lll/*.
3. Keep saying */lll/* with the students. Slide your finger from the letter *l* to the letter *a*. Point to the letter *a* for one or two seconds and have students respond along with you: */aaa/*.

4. Keep saying */aaa/* with the students. Slide your finger from the letter *a* to the letter *t*. Point to the letter *t* for only an instant and have students respond along with you: */t/*.
5. Point just to the left of the word *flat* and say: *Let's read this word.* With your finger, sweep quickly under the word as you lead students in saying the whole word: *flat*.
6. Provide additional guided practice as appropriate.

***Check**

Print the word flag on the board. Say: *Now I am going to lead you in sounding out words. You're going to sound out some words along with me. Remember, we'll keep saying a sound until I point to the next letter.* Point just to the left of flag and say: *Let's blend this word.* Formative in-the-moment assessment provides the teacher with information necessary to determine whether to continue, scaffold, or alter the lesson.

1. Move your finger to the letter f for one or two seconds to signal students to say and continue to say the sound for the letter f. (/fff)/) Nod or provide corrective feedback as necessary.
2. Slide your finger from the letter f to the letter l. Point to the letter l for one or two seconds to signal students to say and continue to say the sound for the letter l. (/lll/) Nod or provide corrective feedback as appropriate.
3. Slide your finger from the letter l to the letter a. Point to the letter a for one or two seconds to signal students to say and continue to say the sound for the letter a. (/aaa/). Nod or provide corrective feedback as appropriate.
4. Slide your finger to the letter g. Point to the letter g for only an instant to signal students to say the sound for the letter g. (/g/) Nod or provide corrective feedback.
5. Lift your finger and point just to the left of the word flag. Quickly sweep your finger under the word to signal students to respond by saying the whole word. Provide feedback and ask students to point to the flag displayed in the classroom.
6. Repeat the routine with additional words.

***Follow-Up*** (in the same or subsequent lessons after students have demonstrated success)

- Use more difficult sound order or combinations, such as words beginning with stop sounds.
- Demonstrate blending "in your head." Print several words on the board. Slide your finger from letter to letter, whispering or mouthing the sounds, elongating those that can be elongated without distortion. Then return your finger just to the left of the word and quickly sweep it under and say aloud the whole word. Model the process, lead the students to join you (whispering or mouthing sounds, then saying the word), and finally have students blend a word in their heads as you (or individuals) point.
- Have the students print orally presented words (thus shifting from decoding to encoding). Use the same words from the lesson or new words that contain the same sound-letter correspondences.

**Source**

*These sections are adapted from

Honig, Bill, Linda Diamond, and Linda Gutlohn. 2013. *Teaching Reading Sourcebook*. Novato, CA: Arena Press.

## Fluency

Grade one children learn to read aloud fluently in a manner that resembles natural speech. Although important in its own right, fluency has significant implications for comprehension. If children are not fluent, automatic decoders, they spend so much mental energy decoding words that they have little energy left for comprehension (Stanovich 1994). Comprehension clearly involves more than fluent word recognition but is dependent on fluent word recognition (Shanahan, and others 2010).

Automaticity, the ability to recognize a word effortlessly and rapidly, comes with skill development (as children learn letter-sound and spelling-sound correspondences and how to blend sounds to form words) and practice.

One technique for increasing fluency involves repeated readings of the same text to develop familiarity and automaticity (National Reading Panel 2000; Samuels 1979). Rereadings, however, should be purposeful, such as when children prepare for a performance. In grade one children:

- Read on-level text with purpose and understanding
- Read on-level text orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings
- Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary

Attention to rate (but not racing) is essential because rate reflects automaticity. However, as noted previously, grade-one teachers need to ensure that students become skilled at full alphabetic decoding (that is, not just looking at the initial and final parts of a word to identify it, which is partial alphabetic decoding). Although this may result in slowing reading temporarily (in other words, rate may decrease), without careful attention to full alphabetic decoding, some children do not develop the skills they need for future reading and spelling. Teachers assess students' skills carefully with the goal for students to employ full alphabetic knowledge swiftly. Teachers determine whether children can do so, and if they cannot, teachers determine the reason and the appropriate actions to take.

*When determining how fluently EL children read, it is critical to consider more than reading rate. English learners can be deceptively fast and accurate while reading aloud in English, but they may not fully comprehend the meaning of the text they are reading.*

Fluency rates should be cautiously interpreted with all children. They are particularly difficult to apply to speakers of languages other than English and to students who are deaf and hard of hearing who use American Sign Language. When determining how fluently EL children read, it is critical to consider more than reading rate. English learners can be deceptively fast and accurate while reading aloud in English, but they may not fully comprehend the meaning of the text they are reading.

In addition, when EL children are learning to decode while also learning English as an additional language, common pronunciation or grammatical miscues that do not affect comprehension may sometimes occur. Teachers should use caution in interpreting miscues when assessing fluency, as they are a natural part of developing English as an additional language and may or may not be miscues in need of instructional attention. Pronunciation differences due to influences from the primary language, home dialect of English, or regional accent should not automatically be misunderstood as difficulty with decoding. A consistent focus on meaning making ensures that EL and other children attend to comprehension and not just speed. As with all children, decisions about fluency are not made solely on the basis of reading rate or accuracy.

## An Integrated and Interdisciplinary Approach

As discussed in the overview of the span in this chapter, the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards call for an integration of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. In addition, these two sets of standards are intended to live in every content area. Learning subject matter requires that students understand and use the language of the subject to comprehend, clarify, and communicate concepts. The following snapshots illustrate how the integration of the language arts among themselves and with other content areas occurs in grade one classrooms.

## Snapshot 3.8. Examining a Table of Contents in Grade One

Before guiding a small group of first graders through reading an informational text, Miss Zielonka asks the children to examine the Table of Contents. She asks the children to think about the purpose of the table. What is in it? Why did the author include it? How does it assist readers? The children share their thoughts with a partner and then several offer their ideas to the group. Miss Zielonka acknowledges that the table informs readers of the categories of information in the text and she expresses interest in the topics the author has included. She comments on what she is most excited to learn about and asks the children if they already know about some of the topics. She provides each student with a sticky note to tag the page. With support, the children read the book, identifying and talking about the main ideas of the content at appropriate points. They pause at new sections and revisit the Table of Contents to confirm that the table matches the sections. Later, the children have time to explore other books in the classroom library. They discover that some books have Tables of Contents while others do not. They share their findings with one another. After further instruction, the children will write their own informational books on topics they have been researching. They will think about how to organize the information and will include headings and a Table of Contents, using the books they have explored as examples.

**CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy**: RI.1.2, 5; W.1.2, 4; SL.1.1, 2; L.1.1–3, 6

## Snapshot 3.9. Teaching Science Vocabulary Integrated ELA, ELD, and Science in Grade One

After initial teaching that included child-friendly definitions at point-of-contact (while reading texts aloud to students or discussing science concepts), Mr. Rodriguez selects several domain-specific words from the students' ongoing study of life cycles for deeper exploration. One word he selects is *metamorphosis* because it represents a crucial concept in the content. He asks students to think about where they had heard the word during their study, and with his assistance, they recall that it was used in the book about caterpillars changing into moths and in the time-lapse video clip showing tadpoles becoming frogs. On large chart paper he draws a graphic known as a Frayer Model. He writes the target word in the center and labels the four quadrants. He reminds the students of the definition—it was one they had discussed many times—and asks them to share with a neighbor something they know about the concept after the recent few weeks of investigation. Next he records the definition generated with the children's assistance in one quadrant of the chart.

Mr. Rodriguez then asks students to reflect on their learning and offer some examples of animals that undergo metamorphosis, recording their contributions in the appropriate places on the chart. Importantly, he also asks for examples of animals that do not undergo metamorphosis, thus better supporting concept development. Finally, he supports the children in identifying some characteristics of metamorphosis. What does it entail? What are some important aspects of metamorphosis? As he asks each of these questions, he provides students with sufficient time to turn and talk in triads about their ideas. He supports his EL students' participation and engagement in the conversations with sentence frames (e.g., "One thing that's important about metamorphosis is ___.")

## Snapshot 3.9. Teaching Science Vocabulary Integrated ELA, ELD, and Science in Grade One (cont.)

Mr. Rodriguez subsequently selects several additional words from the unit, ensuring that his selections are words relevant to the science unit that had been explicitly taught and used numerous times. These words included *cycle*, *mature*, and *develop*. The children worked in teams to create a Frayer Model for the term of their choice, using books and other materials for reference. Mr. Rodriguez encourages the children to use the "language frames for conversations" poster in the classroom, which has frames such as "I agree, and ___. I agree, but ___." He tells the children that he expects their charts to be accurate and legible so that other students can understand and learn from them, and he also encourages them to include graphics and illustrations. Mr. Rodriguez circulates from one team to another, providing support as needed. He carefully observes his students with disabilities and the EL children to determine how they are interacting with the task and with others, providing strategic scaffolding based on their particular learning needs. Later, each team presents its chart to the larger group. The children stand at the front of the room, read the text on their chart aloud, provide elaboration on what they had written, and respond to questions and comments from their peers. The charts are displayed on the bulletin board for the duration of the unit of study so that the children can reference and begin to integrate the terms into their speaking and writing.

| **Definition** | **Characteristics** |
|---|---|
| Metamorphosis is a major change in the bodies of certain animals as they become adults. | • the animal's physical appearance changes a lot<br>• the animal's behaviors change<br>• the animal's habitats need change |
| **Examples** | **Non-examples** |
| • tadpoles to frogs<br>• caterpillars to butterflies<br>• larva to mosquitoes | • puppies to dogs<br>• kittens to cats<br>• chicks to hens<br>• calves to cows<br>• cubs to lions |

metamorphosis

**CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy**: L.1.1–2, 5; SL.1.1, 2, 4
**CA ELD Standards**: ELD.PI.1.1–3, 6, 9, 12b; ELD.PII.1.6
**Related CA Next Generation Science Standards**:
*Performance Expectation*
1-LS3-1 Make observations to construct an evidence-based account that young plants and animals are like, but not exactly like, their parents.

## English Language Development in Grade One

*From their first days in grade one, EL children learn English, learn content knowledge through English, and learn about how English works.*

From their first days in grade one, EL children learn English, learn content knowledge through English, and learn about how English works. English language development occurs throughout the day and across the disciplines (integrated ELD) and also during a time specifically designated for developing English based on EL students' language learning needs (designated ELD). Approaches to ELD vary depending on the program of instruction (e.g., mainstream English, alternative bilingual program). The CA ELD Standards serve as a guide for teachers to meet the English language development needs of their EL students and are used in tandem with the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy, as well as other related content standards.

Most ELD instruction occurs throughout the school day through content instruction with integrated ELD. Designated ELD is a protected time during the regular school day when teachers work with EL children grouped by similar English language proficiency levels on critical language students need to develop in order to be successful in school. In designated ELD there is a strong emphasis on developing academic English. Designated ELD time is an opportunity to focus on and delve deeper into the linguistic resources of English that EL children need to engage with content, make meaning from it, and create oral and written texts in ways that meet the expectations of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and other content standards. Accordingly, the CA ELD Standards are the primary standards used during this designated time. However, the content focus is derived from other areas of the curricula.

The main instructional emphases in designated ELD are oral language development, including collaborative discussions, language awareness, and general academic and domain-specific vocabulary. However, other understandings about literary and informational texts enter into designated ELD instruction as well. During designated ELD children *discuss ideas and information* from ELA and other content areas using the language (e.g., vocabulary, grammatical structures) of those content areas and also *discuss the new language* they are learning to use.

For example, a teacher leads her students in a writing activity in which students write opinion pieces about a story they read during ELA. She structures a question in such a way as to promote the use of particular language (e.g., Why did you enjoy this book? Why do you think other children would enjoy reading this book? Give three reasons.). She provides support for children to discuss their ideas using new vocabulary and grammatical structures by giving them an open sentence frame (e.g., I *enjoyed* this book because _____. Other children *might enjoy* this book because _____.). During designated ELD, teachers ensure that EL students have the time and opportunity to discuss their ideas using new language that they need to fully engage in ELA and other content areas. For an extended discussion of how the CA ELD Standards are used throughout the day in tandem with the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and other content standards and as the principal standards during designated ELD, see the overview of the span in this chapter. See also the discussion in chapter 2 in this *ELA/ELD Framework*. Snapshots 3.9 and 3.10 provide brief glimpses of designated ELD instruction.

*During designated ELD, teachers ensure that EL students have the time and opportunity to discuss their ideas using new language that they need to fully engage in ELA and other content areas.*

Snapshot 3.10 describes how a teacher who teaches in English throughout the day uses designated ELD time to support EL children at different English language proficiency levels to fully access mathematical understandings and also develop the English language and literacy abilities needed to interact meaningfully with the math content.

**Snapshot 3.10. Mathematical Word Problems**
**Designated ELD Connected to Mathematics in Grade One**

Mrs. Noguchi is teaching her students to explain their thinking when they solve mathematical word problems. She models how to do this while thinking aloud for her students as she solves word problems using her document camera. She draws figures with labels to make her thinking visible, and she identifies language in the word problems that reveals what kind of word problem it is (e.g., *how many are left, how many are there altogether, how many more).* She provides opportunities for her students to practice what she is modeling, and she has them work collaboratively to solve word problems with peers and explain to one another how they are solving the problems. She also has them draw and label to show visually how they solved the problems.

During designated ELD instruction, Mrs. Noguchi works with her EL students to help them understand and gain confidence using the language needed to explain their mathematical thinking. For example, she uses familiar word problems from mathematics instruction and guides the children to chart the words and phrases needed to solve and explain the problems (e.g., *add, subtract, total, in all, how many more, how many are left*). Using puppets, manipulatives, and small whiteboards, the students work in triads and take turns assuming the role of "math teacher." They show their "students" how to solve the math problems as they *explain* how to solve them. She prompts the "teachers" to ask their "students" questions as they are explaining how to solve the problems so that they can practice using the terms in meaningful ways.

Mrs. Noguchi also prompts the children to provide good reasons for solving the problems the way they did. To support their explanations, she provides them with sentence frames tailored to the English language proficiency levels of her ELD groups. For example, when she works with children at the Emerging level of English language proficiency, to support them in explaining the sequence of their problem solving, she provides them with sentence frames containing sequencing terms (e.g., First, you ___. Then, you ___. Next, you __.). She provides ELs at the Expanding level with sentence frames that will promote more extended explanations of their thinking (e.g., First, you ___, because ___. After that, you have to ____ so you can see ___.). As the children engage in the task, Mrs. Noguchi observes them and encourages them to use the mathematical terms and phrases (e.g., *subtract, how many altogether*) in their explanations.

During math time, Mrs. Noguchi encourages her students to use the new language they have been practicing in designated ELD, and she observes how they are using the language to express their mathematical understanding so that she can continue to tailor her ELD instruction to her students' language learning needs.

**CA ELD Standards**: ELD.PI.1.1, 3, 5, 6, 11, 12b (Em); ELD.PI.1.1, 3, 5, 6, 11, 12b (Ex); ELD.PII.1.2 (Em); ELD.PII.K–1.2, 6 (Ex)
**CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy:** RI.1.1, 2; SL.1.2, 5, 6; L.1.4, 6

## Snapshot 3.10. Mathematical Word Problems Designated ELD Connected to Mathematics in Grade One (cont.)

**Related CA CCSS for Mathematics**:

1.OA.1 Use addition and subtraction within 20 to solve word problems involving situations of adding to, taking from, putting together, taking apart, and comparing, with unknowns in all positions, e.g., by using objects, drawings, and equations with a symbol for the unknown number to represent the problem.

1.OA.2 Solve word problems that call for addition of three whole numbers whose sum is less than or equal to 20, e.g., by using objects, drawings, and equations with a symbol for the unknown number to represent the problem.

MP.1 Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.

MP.2 Reason abstractly and quantitatively.

MP.3 Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.

Snapshot 3.11 illustrates the support EL children at the Bridging level of English language proficiency receive during designated ELD to develop language needed to engage meaningfully with integrated ELA and social studies learning tasks.

## Snapshot 3.11. Expanding Sentences and Building Vocabulary Designated ELD Connected to ELA/Social Studies in Grade One

In Social Studies, Mr. Dupont's class has been learning about how being a good citizen involves acting in certain ways. Through teacher read alouds of informational and literary texts (including stories and folktales), as well as viewing videos and other media, the children experience and identify examples of honesty, courage, determination, individual responsibility, and patriotism in American and world history. Mr. Dupont takes care to emphasize American and international heroes that reflect his students' diverse backgrounds. He frequently asks the children to discuss their ideas and opinions in order to prepare them to write an opinion piece explaining why they admire a historical figure mentioned in one of the texts they have been reading.

Because Mr. Dupont's EL children are at the Bridging level of English language proficiency, during designated ELD he provides his students with extended opportunities to discuss their ideas and opinions, as he knows that this will support them later when writing down their ideas. He strategically targets particular language that he would like students to use in their opinion pieces by constructing sentence frames that contain specific vocabulary and grammatical structures that will enable his students to be more precise and detailed (e.g., My favorite hero is ___ because ___. ___ was *very courageous* when ___.). He explains to the children how they can expand their ideas in different ways by adding information about where, when, how, and so forth. For example, he explains that instead of simply saying, "She worked on a farm," children could say, "She worked on a farm *in California,"* or they could add even more detail and precision by saying, "She worked on a farm *in the central valley of California."* He provides his students with many opportunities to construct these expanded sentence structures as the students discuss the historical figures they are learning about and then write short summaries of their discussions at the end of each lesson. During these lessons, he encourages the children to refer to the texts they have previously read together and to cite evidence from them to support their ideas.

**Snapshot 3.11. Expanding Sentences and Building Vocabulary Designated ELD Connected to ELA/Social Studies in Grade One (cont.)**

Mr. Dupont also delves more deeply into some of the general academic and domain-specific vocabulary critical for discussing and writing opinions and ideas on the topic (e.g., *courage*, *determination, honesty).* He teaches the words explicitly, paying careful attention to the conceptual understanding of the terms, rather than merely providing short definitions. He structures opportunities for his students to engage in collaborative conversations in which they use several of the words in extended exchanges, and he supports the children to use the words accurately and appropriately by providing sentence frames that contain the words (e.g., I show responsibility when I ___. Honesty is important because ___.).

Mr. Dupont thinks strategically about how oral language can serve as a bridge to written language in order to prepare his students for writing their opinion texts, and he observes his students during social studies and ELA to see how they are applying the language they are learning in designated ELD.

**CA ELD Standards (Bridging):** ELD.PI.K–1.1, 3, 6, 10, 12b; ELD.PII.K–1.4–5, 6
**CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy:** RI.1.1; SL.1.1, 4, 6; L.1.6
**Related CA History–Social Science Standard:**
1.5.1 Recognize the ways in which they are all a part of the same community; sharing principles, goals, and traditions despite their varied ancestry; the forms of diversity in their school and community; and the benefits and challenges of a diverse population.

Additional examples of designated ELD linked to different content areas, including one for dual language programs, are provided in the kindergarten grade-level section of this chapter.

## ELA/Literacy and ELD in Action in Grade One

The research-based implications for ELA/Literacy and ELD instruction are outlined in this chapter in the overview of the span, and in chapter 2 of this *ELA/ELD Framework*. In the following section, detailed examples demonstrate implementation of the principles and practices discussed in this chapter. The examples are not intended to present the only approaches to teaching and learning. Rather, they are concrete illustrations of how teachers might implement the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards in integrated ways that support deep learning for all students.

*Teacher read alouds are of critical importance for EL children because school may be the only place where they engage in listening to and discussing texts read aloud in English.*

Both the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards acknowledge the importance of immersing children in complex texts. Because young children's listening comprehension generally outpaces their ability to read independently, teacher read alouds are of critical importance. (See the discussion of reading aloud earlier in this chapter. See also the discussion and figure 2.3 in chapter 2.) When teachers read aloud well-written literary and informational texts, they expose children to rich language (including vocabulary and complex grammatical structures), new ideas, and content knowledge children may not be able to access on their own through independent reading. Young children need many opportunities to discuss the texts teachers read aloud. These discussions about texts help build both content knowledge and oral language development, and they serve as a bridge to successful reading and writing. Teacher read alouds are of critical importance for EL children because school may be the

only place where they engage in listening to and discussing texts read aloud in English. Teacher read alouds in both languages are crucial for biliteracy development in bilingual alternative programs.

Teachers read aloud both literary and informational texts. Reading aloud informational texts in core content areas (e.g., science, social studies) is essential for full literacy development as the content, text organization and structure, vocabulary, and types of grammatical structures used vary by content area. Teacher read alouds of informational science texts is linked to or embedded in rich science instruction, as children's engagement with science practices and concepts enhances their ability to interact meaningfully with science informational texts.

Teacher read alouds require planning so that appropriate levels of scaffolding based on the needs of diverse learners can be provided. Teachers consider their students' particular learning needs, carefully select and analyze books, and know when to incorporate particular tasks and scaffolding techniques. When planning lessons, teachers implement the principles and practices discussed in this chapter and throughout this *ELA/ELD Framework*. Lesson planning anticipates year-end and unit goals, is responsive to assessed needs, and incorporate the framing questions in figure 3.35.

***Figure 3.35. Framing Questions for Lesson Planning***

| Framing Questions for All Students | Add for English Learners |
|---|---|
| • What are the big ideas and culminating performance tasks of the larger unit of study, and how does this lesson build toward them?<br>• What are the learning targets for this lesson, and what should students be able to do at the end of the lesson?<br>• Which clusters of CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy does this lesson address?<br>• What background knowledge, skills, and experiences do my students have related to this lesson?<br>• How complex are the texts and tasks?<br>• How will students make meaning, express themselves effectively, develop language, and learn content? How will they apply or learn foundational skills?<br>• What types of scaffolding, accommodations, or modifications will individual students need for effectively engaging in the lesson tasks?<br>• How will my students and I monitor learning during and after the lesson, and how will that inform instruction? | • What are the English language proficiency levels of my students?<br>• Which CA ELD Standards amplify the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy at students' English language proficiency levels?<br>• What language might be new for students and/or present challenges?<br>• How will students interact in meaningful ways and learn about how English works in collaborative, interpretive, and/or productive modes? |

## *ELA/Literacy and ELD Vignettes*

The following ELA/literacy and ELD vignettes illustrate how teachers might implement the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards using the framing questions and additional considerations discussed in the preceding sections. The vignettes are valuable resources for teachers to consider as they collaboratively plan lessons, extend their professional learning, and refine their practice. The examples in the vignettes are not intended to be prescriptive, nor are the instructional approaches limited to the identified content areas. Rather, they are provided as tangible ideas that can be used and adapted as needed in flexible ways in a variety of instructional contexts.

### ELA/ Literacy Vignette

In vignette 3.5, the teacher guides her students' thinking about the science concepts presented in the text, and she provides them with opportunities to discuss the text in order to make meaning. She focuses on supporting students to identify the main idea of a section in a text, using textual evidence to support their ideas. She also guides students to pay closer attention to the language in the informational text she reads aloud and to use the language of the text as they express their understandings.

**Vignette 3.5. Interactive Read Alouds with Informational Texts Integrated ELA, Literacy, and Science Instruction in Grade One**

**Background**

Mrs. Fabian reads informational texts aloud to her students daily during integrated science and ELA instruction. She intentionally selects informational texts that are rich in content, engaging, and provide opportunities for students to discuss their ideas and develop academic language. Her class of 35 first graders includes 15 native English speakers and 20 EL children with several primary languages. Most of her EL students began the year at an Expanding level of English language proficiency and are comfortable with everyday English.

**Lesson Context**

During integrated science and ELA instruction, Mrs. Fabian is teaching her first graders about bees. Her goal for the end of the unit is for the children to write and illustrate their own informational texts, which will provide descriptions of bees (e.g., their anatomy, habitat, behavior) and explain how bees pollinate crops and why they are so important to humans. The children have listened actively to multiple informational texts on the topic and have asked and answered questions about them. They have also viewed videos and visited Web sites about bees and pollination, used magnifying lenses to view pollen on flowers in the school garden, observed (from a distance) bees pollinating flowers in the school garden, and acted out the process of pollination using models of bees and large flowers with "pollen" in them.

The class began generating a "bee word wall" with vocabulary from the informational texts and activities in the unit accompanied by illustrations and photographs. The words are grouped semantically. For example, the words describing bee anatomy (*head*, *thorax*, *abdomen*, *proboscis*) are presented as labels for an illustration of a bee's body. The class adds new terms as they progress through the unit. Mrs. Fabian, who is fluent in Spanish, strategically "code switches" between English and Spanish to scaffold understanding for her Spanish-speaking EL students. Whenever possible, she also supports her other ELs by using words that she has learned in their primary language.

## Vignette 3.5. Interactive Read Alouds with Informational Texts Integrated ELA, Literacy, and Science Instruction in Grade One (cont.)

**Lesson Excerpts**

In today's lesson, Mrs. Fabian will be modeling how to read a section of the informational text closely. She will then guide students to discuss the content of the text using domain-specific vocabulary from the text. Her goal is not for students to know every fact from the passage but, rather, to focus their attention on what is most important and to think about how the author presents ideas. Her learning target and the clusters of CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and CA ELD Standards in focus for the lesson are the following:

| |
|---|
| **Learning Target:** Students will identify the main topic of an informational text they listen to, using good reasons and evidence to support their ideas. |
| ***Primary CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy****: RI.1.2 – Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text; RI.1.3 – Describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text; RI.1.7 – Use the illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas; W.1.7 – Participate in shared research and writing projects . . . ; SL.1.1 – Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners; SL.1.2 – Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud . . . ; L.1.6 – Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts . . .* |
| ***CA ELD Standards (Expanding)****: ELD.PI.1 – Contribute to class, group, and partner discussions by listening attentively, following turn-taking rules, and asking and answering questions; ELD.PI.5 – Demonstrate active listening to read-alouds and oral presentations by asking and answering questions with oral sentence frames and occasional prompting and support; ELD.PI.11 – Offer opinions and provide good reasons and some textual evidence or relevant background knowledge (e.g., paraphrased examples from text or knowledge of content); ELD.PI.12b – Use a growing number of general academic and domain-specific words . . .* |
| **Related CA Next Generation Science Standard:**<br>1-LS1.A Structure and Function – All organisms have external parts. Different animals use their body parts in different ways to see, hear, grasp objects, protect themselves, move from place to place, and seek, find, and take in food, water and air. (http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=13165&page=143) |

Mrs. Fabian begins by *briefly* activating the children's background knowledge about bees and previewing the passage they will be reading closely.

Mrs. Fabian: Children, we've been learning a lot about bees lately. I'm going to give you one minute to take turns sharing with your partner at least three observations or facts about bees. If you both finish before the minute is up, you can share even more observations and facts.

The children quickly turn to their partners and animatedly share ideas, using the "bee word wall" as a reference. Mrs. Fabian listens to the conversations to determine which ideas students are expressing and how they are expressing them.

**Vignette 3.5. Interactive Read Alouds with Informational Texts Integrated ELA, Literacy, and Science Instruction in Grade One (cont.)**

Mrs. Fabian: Wow! I can tell you already know a lot about bees. Today, we are going to learn something new. We are going reread a couple of pages in one book we've been reading, *The Honeymakers,* by Gail Gibbons. As you listen, I'd like you to think about what the main ideas is in this section. What is it mostly about?. (Reading from a passage mid-way through the book) "At each flower the forager bee collects nectar with her proboscis. She stores the nectar in a special part of her body called the crop, or honey stomach. This stomach is separate from her other stomach" (14).

As Mrs. Fabian reads these first three sentences in the passage, she points to the illustrations depicting some of the domain specific vocabulary (e.g., *proboscis, crop*). She briefly explains other vocabulary (e.g., *nectar*, or the sweet juice inside the flower) to make sure all students understand the text. While the children are familiar with this content because they have been learning about it in science, the language is still quite new for many of them. After she has read the third sentence, she stops and asks the children a question.

Mrs. Fabian: The author is giving us a lot of information here. What do you think the author means by "her other stomach?"

Tyler: I think it gots two stomachs.

Mrs. Fabian: You think the bee has two stomachs? Can you say more about that?

Tyler: It said the bee puts the nectar in the stomach. In the honey stomach. And it said it's different from the other one.

Mrs. Fabian acknowledges that Tyler has inferred correctly and rereads the section aloud again.

Mrs. Fabian: So, let's go back to what I asked you to think about. What do you think this part of the book is *mostly* about? Think for a moment (pauses for several seconds). When you share your idea with your partner, use this sentence frame: This part is *mostly* about _____. Let's say that together.

After the children say the open sentence frame chorally with Mrs. Fabian, they use it to preface their ideas with partners, while Mrs. Fabian listens carefully. She notices that one of her EL students, Chue, has a good grasp on the main idea, and he has shared with his partner some evidence from the text to support it. A few other students are sharing their ideas but are still not quite sure about what the main idea from the passage is.

Mrs. Fabian: Chue, can you tell me what you shared with your partner?

Chue: I share that the part is *mostly* about the bees when they get nectar and they put it in the stomach. In the honey stomach.

Mrs. Fabian: Can you explain why you think that? What did the text say that makes you think that?

Chue: Because it talking about how the forager bee get nectar from the flower with the proboscis and then it put it in it stomach.

**Vignette 3.5. Interactive Read Alouds with Informational Texts Integrated ELA, Literacy, and Science Instruction in Grade One (cont.)**

Mrs. Fabian: That's good evidence that tells me what this section is mostly about. Children, listen carefully as I reread this part so that we can make sure we're getting the main idea (rereads the passage). Thumbs up or down everyone if you agree that this part is mostly about the bees collecting nectar and storing it in their honey stomachs.

Mrs. Fabian writes "bees collect nectar and store it in the honey stomach" on the chart next to her. As she reads the next part of the passage, she again points to the illustrations to draw attention to some of the words that are depicted in them (e.g., *pollen*, *pollen basket*) and she acts out some of the bee behavior that the passage describes (e.g., collect). The information in this part of the passage is relatively new for many of the children, so Mrs. Fabian asks another question to further promote their understanding and model how to read a text more closely.

Mrs. Fabian: "As she goes from flower to flower she comes in contact with a yellow powder called pollen. Some of the pollen is collected in little 'baskets' formed by the special hairs on her hind legs. As the forager bee collects nectar, she carries pollen from flower to flower. This process is called pollination." And down here, in this corner, it says, "This makes seeds to grow new plants" (Gibbons, 1997,14-15). Now, here's some pretty new information for us. This might be a little trickier than the last section we read, but let's try it. What do you think the main idea in this section is? And why do you think that? Think about the details.

Mrs. Fabian places the open book under the document camera so the children can refer to the illustrations and text as they discuss their ideas with partners. As she listens to her students, she observes that most of them say the part is mostly about pollen, while others suggest it is about "baskets" or "seeds." The children continue pointing to the illustrations as they discuss their understandings.

Mrs. Fabian: Inés, what do you think?

Inés: I think it's mostly about the pollen.

Mrs. Fabian: And can you explain more? Why do you think it's mostly about pollen?

Inés: Because it says that the bee gets pollen on its legs and then it goes to the flowers.

Mrs. Fabian: Okay, let's read that again. (Rereads the part.)

Inés: I think maybe it's about pollination?

Mrs. Fabian: That's a big word, isn't it? Let's all say that word together.

Children: (Chorally with Mrs. Fabian) Pollination.

Mrs. Fabian: And what makes you think that, Inés?

Inés: (Shrugging.)

Mrs. Fabian: Can someone add on to what Inés said? Brandon?

Brandon: It said that the bees get the pollen on their legs and then it goes to the flower. (Pauses.)

Mrs. Fabian: And then what happens?

**Vignette 3.5. Interactive Read Alouds with Informational Texts Integrated ELA, Literacy, and Science Instruction in Grade One (cont.)**

Brandon: And then it's called pollination. It makes seeds so the plants grow.

Mrs. Fabian: Oh, so what you're all saying is that the bee gets pollen on its legs, in its pollen baskets, and when it goes from flower to flower, it leaves pollen on the other flowers. And that's what helps the flowers make seeds so that they can grow plants. This process is what we call *pollination*.

Chue: We did that. When we had the flowers and the yellow powder – the pollen.

Mrs. Fabian: Yes, that's right, you acted out the process of pollination. Let's reread this part just to make sure we have the main idea right (rereads). Okay, so thumbs up or down if you think this part is mostly about the process of pollination.

Mrs. Fabian writes "the process of pollination" under "the bee collecting nectar." Rereading the passage again, she guides the students to tell her how she should label a drawing she has prepared in advance, which illustrates bee pollination (a bee going from flower to flower). Later, she will post the diagram on the "bee word wall." To wrap up the lesson, Mrs. Fabian models making an inference, guiding students to think a little more deeply about the text.

Mrs. Fabian: Hmm. I'm noticing something interesting here. First the author told us about the *bee collecting nectar*, and then she told us about the *process of pollination*. I wonder why she put these two ideas in the same passage. Why do you think she did that? (Pauses to let the children refer to the illustrations and text as they consider her question.)

Mrs. Fabian: Share what you are thinking with your partner. (She listens to the children share their ideas.) Solange and Carlos, what did the two of you share with one another?

Solange: Maybe they get the nectar and the pollen at the same time when they go to the flower?

Carlos: And then they carry the pollen on their legs to another flower. And they get more nectar and more pollen, and then they keep doing that.

Mrs. Fabian: (Nodding.) I'm thinking that, too. I'm thinking that the author wanted to show that the bees are getting pollen on their legs from all those flowers *while* they're collecting nectar, and that's why she's telling us these two things at the same time. They are happening at the same time, and that's how the pollen travels from one flower to another. What was that big word we learned?

Children: Pollination!

To wrap up the lesson, Mrs. Fabian asks students to continue being good scientists when they observe what is happening around them and notice what is happening—from a distance—when they see a bee outside of school, in a video, or in a book. She asks them to make connections between the text she read aloud and what they are learning in science instruction. She encourages students to ask themselves questions like these: Does the bee have *pollen* in its pollen baskets? Is the pollen getting on the flowers? Is the bee getting the *nectar* with its *proboscis*?

## Vignette 3.5. Interactive Read Alouds with Informational Texts Integrated ELA, Literacy, and Science Instruction in Grade One (cont.)

### Teacher Reflection and Next Steps

Over the course of the unit, Mrs. Fabian observes her students carefully. She is particularly interested to see if the children understand the science concepts they are learning and whether they use some of the new vocabulary and grammatical structures in their discussions and writing. For the culminating project—student-written informational texts about bees—students use the new language they have developed.

| All About Bees, by _____ | | |
|---|---|---|
| p. 1 Introduction | p. 4 Bee jobs | p. 7 Pollination |
| p. 2 Bee anatomy | p. 5 Metamorphosis | p. 8 Bee dances |
| p. 3 The beehive | p. 6 Honey | p. 9 Interesting facts |

As they write their texts, the children refer to the "bee word wall," charts and sentence frames posted throughout the room, and look back at several informational texts on the topic that Mrs. Fabian has placed on tables and in the classroom library. Once finished, each child reads his or her book to the class from the "Author's Chair." Finally, the books students have written are placed in the classroom library corner to be read over and over again.

One student, Maryam, has just arrived to the U.S. from Somalia and is at the early Emerging level of English language proficiency. Mrs. Fabian watches Maryam carefully, and she assigns her a "buddy," Tanaad, another first grader who speaks Somali and is a good class helper. Maryam sits next to Tanaad during partner talk and at first listens as Tanaad and his partner discuss the science content. Mrs. Fabian models for Maryam and prompts her to use some simple words and phrases (e.g., *yes, no, what's that?, I don't know, I think . . .)* so that she can contribute her ideas to conversations. Maryam is expected to participate in class chants, poems, and songs about bees and pollination, even if she is initially only able to say a few words. At first, she is a little shy, but very soon, she participates enthusiastically in these group language activities because they are engaging.

Mrs. Fabian encourages the class to make Maryam feel welcome and successful in her English language development, and her peers encourage her to participate in the activities with them. Before long, Maryam is chatting on the playground and in the classroom using everyday English. With encouragement from Mrs. Fabian and her classmates she begins to participate more in discussions about texts and content. In addition to social English, she is learning the academic English in the bee unit alongside the other children, labeling her drawings with words related to pollination (e.g., *pollen, bee, fly*) and using more and more of the words in her spoken interactions with others.

**Resource**

Text excerpts are from

Gibbons, Gail. 1997. *The Honeymakers.* New York, NY: Harper Colllins.

## Vignette 3.5. Interactive Read Alouds with Informational Texts Integrated ELA, Literacy, and Science Instruction in Grade One (cont.)

**Sources**

Lesson inspired by

Shanahan, Timothy, Kim Callison, Christine Carriere, Nell K. Duke, P. David Pearson, Christopher Schatschneider, and Joseph Torgesen. 2010. *Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade: A Practice Guide* (NCEE 2010-4038). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.

Spycher, Pamela. 2009. "Learning Academic Language through Science in Two Linguistically Diverse Classrooms." *Elementary School Journal* 109 (4): 359–379.

Yopp, Ruth H., and Hallie K. Yopp. 2012. "Young Children's Limited and Narrow Exposure to Informational Text." *The Reading Teacher* 65: 480–490.

**Additional Information**

Web sites

- Readwritethink has lesson ideas (http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/) for teaching students to read informational texts (www.readwritethink.org).
- Reading Rockets has ideas for using informational texts (http://www.readingrockets.org/reading-topics/content-area-teaching-and-learning) (www.readingrockets.org).

**Recommended reading**

Heisey, Natalie, and Linda Kucan. 2010. "Introducing Science Concepts to Primary Students Through Read-Alouds: Interactions and Multiple Texts Make the Difference." *The Reading Teacher* 63 (8): 666–676. (http://www.readingrockets.org/article/41557)

## Designated ELD Vignette

The example in vignette 3.5 illustrates good teaching for all students with a particular focus on the needs of EL children and children with special needs. In addition to good first teaching, EL children benefit from intentional and purposeful designated ELD instruction, which vignette 3.6 illustrates.

## Vignette 3.6. Unpacking Sentences Designated ELD Instruction in Grade One

### Background

During an integrated ELA and science unit on bees, Mrs. Fabian observes all of her students carefully as they discuss the science concepts and use new language associated with the lesson (see vignette 3.5). She finds that some of her EL students at the Expanding level of English language proficiency are having difficulty describing and explaining their ideas using domain-specific and general academic vocabulary and complex sentence structures. This makes it difficult for them to convey their understandings of the content; she suspects that if they are not comprehending the language in the texts then they may not be fully understanding the scientific concepts.

### Lesson Context

Mrs. Fabian meets with her first grade teaching team and asks for their suggestions for addressing the language needs of her EL students. Because her colleagues have had similar challenges, they decide to collaborate on a series of designated ELD lessons, differentiated by English language proficiency levels. The team begins by analyzing the informational science texts they are using for: (a) language that is critical to understanding the science content; and (b) language they would like students to produce orally and in writing. Some of this language is domain-specific vocabulary, which the teachers decide to address daily in both integrated ELA/science and in designated ELD.

## Vignette 3.6. Unpacking Sentences
## Designated ELD Instruction in Grade One (cont.)

In addition to vocabulary, the team also notices that many ofthe sentences in the informational science texts are densely packed. They decide that instead of simplifying the language for their EL students, they should delve into the language so that their EL students can begin to understand it better. They refer to the CA ELD Standards to see what types of vocabulary and grammatical structures their EL children at the Expanding level should be able to use, and they incorporate this guidance into their planning. The teachers decide to model for students how to "unpack" the dense sentences that characterize their science texts. After studying this particular technique in a professional learning seminar provided by their district, and adapting it to meet their students' needs, they write the procedure they will use knowing that they can refine it after they have seen how well it works.

| Unpacking Sentences |
|---|
| 1. Start with a text that you are already using.<br>2. Identify a few sentences that students find challenging to understand.<br>3. Focus on meaning: Show students how to unpack the meaning in the sentence by writing a list of simple sentences that, when combined, express the meaning of the sentence.<br>4. Focus on form: Show students important features of the sentence (e.g., specialized vocabulary and descriptive language; conjunctions show relationships between two ideas in compound and complex sentences, prepositional phrases are used to add details, vocabulary).<br>5. Guided practice: Guide the students to help you with steps 3 and 4.<br>6. Keep it simple: Focus on one or two things and use some everyday language examples, as well as examples from the complex texts. (Adapted from Christie 2005, Derewianka 2012, Wong Fillmore 2012) |

In today's lesson, Mrs. Fabian will introduce the "sentence unpacking" technique to model how to read/listen to their texts more closely. The learning targets and cluster of CA ELD Standards Mrs. Fabian focuses on are the following:

| |
|---|
| **Learning Target:** Students will discuss how to join two ideas using coordinating and subordinating conjunctions to show relationships between ideas. |
| ***CA ELD Standards (Expanding):*** *ELD.PI.1 – Contribute to class, group, and partner discussions by listening attentively, following turn-taking rules, and asking and answering questions; ELD.PI.7 – Describe the language writers or speakers use to present or support an idea (e.g., the adjectives used to describe people and places) with prompting and moderate support; ELD.PII.6 – Combine clauses in an increasing variety of ways to make connections between and to join ideas, for example, to express cause/effect (e.g.,* She jumped because the dog barked.*), in shared language activities guided by the teacher and with increasing independence.* |

### Lesson Excerpts

During designated ELD time, Mrs. Fabian tells her students that in the science books she is reading to them, there is often a lot of information packed into the sentences, so she is

## Vignette 3.6. Unpacking Sentences
## Designated ELD Instruction in Grade One (cont.)

going to show them some ways to *unpack* sentences so they can understand them better. She shows her students a tightly packed suitcase.

Mrs. Fabian: Sometimes, it is hard to see all the things inside the suitcase when it is packed in tightly like that. (Pulling out some of the things that are packed inside – a shirt, a pair of pants, some books and shoes.) When we *unpack* the suitcase a little, we can see the different things that are in there. Some sentences are like suitcases. When they are jammed full of many different words, they can be hard to understand, but when we *unpack* sentences and take the words apart we can understand the meanings more easily.

Mrs. Fabian reads a passage from one of the informational texts about bees that she has previously read and discussed with the whole class. She follows the procedure her team is using to show the students how to *unpack* or break down densely packed sentences.

Mrs. Fabian: Children, today we're going to be looking closely at a couple of sentences we've seen in the books about bees. Here's the first sentence.

She shows the children a sentence from the book *The Honeymakers,* by Gail Gibbons, which is written on a sentence strip and placed in the pocket chart.

"As the forager bee collects nectar, she carries pollen from flower to flower."
(Gibbons, p. 15)

Mrs. Fabian: I'm going to model for you how I unpack sentences that have a lot of information in them. (Points to the sentence and reads it slowly, thinking aloud.) Hmm. It seems like this sentence is mostly about a bee doing some different things.

As Mrs. Fabian thinks aloud, she pulls shorter sentence strips from behind the original sentence and places them in the rows below, visually *unpacking* the meaning of the sentence so that students can see the break down. She reads each sentence as she places it in the pocket chart.

There's a forager bee.

The bee collects nectar.

The bee has pollen on its legs.

The bee carries the pollen to many flowers.

Mrs. Fabian: Can you see how I unpacked or separated all the ideas in the sentence? There are really just two big ideas. The first is that the bee is collecting nectar, and the second is that the bee is carrying pollen to the flowers. But these ideas are connected in a special way. There's a really important word in the sentence that's connecting the ideas. The word "as" at the beginning of the sentence tells me that the two things are happening at the same time.

Mrs. Fabian pulls out another sentence strip and places it under the sentences.

*As = At the same time*

She has the children read the original sentence with her chorally. Then they read the shorter sentences followed once again by the sentence with the word *as* in it. She models how to unpack another sentence and follows the procedure of thinking aloud as she pulls the shorter sentences from the pocket chart.

## Vignette 3.6. Unpacking Sentences
## Designated ELD Instruction in Grade One (cont.)

While a worker bee crawls around an apple blossom, the bee is dusted with pollen.

There's a worker bee.

There's an apple blossom.

The bee crawls around an apple blossom.

There's pollen.

The bee gets pollen on its body.

The pollen is like dust.

Mrs. Fabian: Hmm. Here, it says that the bee is getting pollen on it and that it's like dust, but it doesn't tell us how the dust is getting on the bee. I think it must be on the flower, and when the bee's body rubs against the flower, the bee gets pollen on it because the pollen is on the flower. The pollen is like dust (shows a picture of dust). Sometimes it's difficult to figure out all the meanings in a sentence, but if you break down the sentence, it's easier to understand. Let's read the original sentence and then the shorter sentences together.

Children: (Reading the sentences chorally.)

Mrs. Fabian: Did anyone notice that there's another special word at the beginning of the sentence that tells us *when* something is happening?

Carla: While?

Mrs. Fabian: Yes, the word "while" is like the word "as." It tells us that two or more things are happening at the same time. The words "while" and "as" are important for showing how the two events are connected in time.

Mrs. Fabian pulls out another sentence strip and places it below the others.

*While = At the same time*

Mrs. Fabian: Let's read the original sentence together again, and then see if you and your partner can tell me what two things are happening at the same time.

Mrs. Fabian helps her students unpack other sentences from the texts they are using in integrated ELA and science. Each one is a complex sentence containing the subordinate conjunctions "as" or "while." She writes each sentence on chart paper, reads them with the students, and invites them to explain in their own words what is happening. Then she writes the students' simpler sentences down on the chart paper for all to see. During this process, she explicitly draws their attention to how the two ideas are connected using the words "as" and "while," and she and the students engage in extensive discussion about the meaning of the original sentence.

Mrs. Fabian: When you connect your ideas using the words "while" and "as," it doesn't matter which idea you put first. For example, I can say, "While you watched me, I wrote a sentence." Or, I can say, "I wrote a sentence while you watched me." I can say, "While I washed the dishes, I sang a song." Or, I can say, "I sang a song, while I washed the dishes." We're going to play a little game connecting ideas.

## Vignette 3.6. Unpacking Sentences
## Designated ELD Instruction in Grade One (cont.)

She hands the children sets of pictures where two things are happening simultaneously (e.g., children are playing on a playground while their parents watch them, a bee is sucking nectar from a flower while it collects pollen on its legs), and she writes the words "while" and "as" at the top of a piece of chart paper. She asks students to work in pairs and create sentences that include two ideas connected with the word "while" or "as." As they work together to combine the ideas, she listens to them so that she can respond to any misunderstandings right away. After the children have constructed multiple sentences in partners, she asks them to tell her some of them, and she writes them on the "while" and "as" chart.

Mrs. Fabian: Who can tell me why we might want to use the words "while" or "as?"

Thao: They help us put two ideas together.

Mrs. Fabian: Yes, they do. Can you say more?

Thao: (Thinking.) They make the two ideas happen at the same time?

Mrs. Fabian: Yes, that's right. The words "while" and "as" let us know that two events are happening at the same time. Today we unpacked sentences to find out what all the meanings are, and we looked especially closely at how the words "while" and "as" are used to connect ideas. From now on, I want you to be good language detectives. A good language detective is always thinking about how to unpack sentences to understand the meaning better. And a good language detective is someone who is always thinking about how words are used to make meaning. Who thinks they can be a good language detective?

Children: (Chorally). Me!

### Teacher Reflection and Next Steps

During the rest of the day, Mrs. Fabian observes her EL children to see if they are using any of the new language resources she is teaching them in their speech and writing. For the rest of the science unit, Mrs. Fabian works with her students during designated ELD time to unpack sentences in other science texts she is using, focusing strategically on the aspects of the sentences that make them dense (e.g., long noun phrases, prepositional phrases). She uses a rubric based on the CA ELD Standards to assess how individual students are progressing with their use of particular language resources (e.g., vocabulary, grammatical structures, text organization). Whenever possible, she encourages them to use the new language, prompting them with questions like, *How can you combine those two ideas to show they are happening at the same time?* Although the children often produce imperfect sentences, Mrs. Fabian offers corrective feedback sparingly since she knows that the children are experimenting with language and practicing the grammatical structures that they will continue to learn as the unit progresses.

**Resource**

Text excerpts are from

Gibbons, Gail. 1997. *The Honeymakers.* New York, NY: Harper Colllins.

**Vignette 3.6. Unpacking Sentences**
**Designated ELD Instruction in Grade One (cont.)**

**Source**

Lesson inspired by

Christie, Frances. 2005. *Language Education in the Primary Years.* Sydney, Australia: UNSW Press.

Derewianka, Beverly, and Pauline Jones. 2012. *Teaching Language in Context*. South Melbourne, Victoria: Oxford University Press.

Wong Fillmore, Lily. 2012. *Supporting Access to the Language and Content of Complex Texts for EL and LM Students*. Presentation at the Title III Accountability Institute. December, 2012.

**Additional Information**

Web sites

- The Council of the Great City Schools pro65vides a Classroom Example of Teaching Complex Text: Butterfly (http://vimeo.com/47315992).

**Recommended reading**

Donovan, Carol A., and Laura B. Smolkin. 2011. "Supporting Informational Writing in the Elementary Grades." *The Reading Teacher* 64: 406–416. (http://www.readingrockets.org/article/52246).

# Conclusion

The information and ideas in this grade-level section are provided to guide teachers in their instructional planning. Recognizing California's richly diverse student population is critical for instructional and program planning and delivery. Teachers are responsible for educating a variety of learners, including **advanced learners**, **students with disabilities**, **ELs at different English language proficiency levels**, **standard English learners**, and other **culturally and linguistically diverse learners**, as well as **students experiencing difficulties** with one or more of the themes of ELA/literacy and ELD instruction (Meaning Making, Effective Expression, Language Development, Content Knowledge, and Foundational Skills).

It is beyond the scope of a curriculum framework to provide guidance on meeting the learning needs of every student because each student comes to teachers with unique depositions, skills, histories, and circumstances. Teachers need to know their students well through appropriate assessment practices and other methods, including communication with families, in order to design effective instruction for them. They need to adapt and refine instruction as appropriate for individual learners. For example, a teacher might anticipate before a lesson is taught—or observe during a lesson—that a student or a group of students will need some additional or more intensive instruction in a particular area. Based on this evaluation of student needs, the teacher might provide individual or small group instruction, adapt the main lesson, or collaborate with a colleague. (See figure 3.36.) Information about meeting the needs of diverse learners, scaffolding, and modifying or adapting instruction is provided in chapters 2 and 9 of this *ELA/ELD Framework*.

First grade children have flung open the doors of literacy and become newly powerful in navigating their way with words, sentences, books, and texts of all types. They have just begun to glimpse where this road can take them. The hope is that they discover paths that fill their imaginations with wonder and their minds with grand plans for the future.

***Figure 3.36. Collaboration***

**Collaboration: A Necessity**

Frequent and meaningful collaboration with colleagues and parents/families is critical for ensuring that all students meet the expectations of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards. Teachers are at their best when they routinely collaborate with their teaching colleagues to plan instruction, analyze student work, discuss student progress, integrate new learning into their practice, and refine lessons or identify interventions when students experience difficulties. Students are at their best when teachers enlist the collaboration of parents and families—and the students themselves—as partners in their education. Schools are at their best when educators are supported by administrators and other support staff to implement the type of instruction called for in this *ELA/ELD Framework*. School districts are at their best when teachers across the district have an expanded professional learning community they can rely upon as thoughtful partners and for tangible instructional resources. More information about these types of collaboration can be found in chapter 11 and throughout this *ELA/ELD Framework*.

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