Chapter Six

of the

English Language Arts/ English Language Development Framework

for California Public Schools
Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve

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Content and Pedagogy: Grades Six Through Eight

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Overview of the Span

During their middle years students undergo some of the most striking transformations in human development. These transformations occur in the development of brain and cognitive functioning, physical and hormonal growth, and psychological and social awareness. As children enter puberty a spurt in brain growth occurs after which the brain undergoes a process of consolidation (pruning and myelination) that continues throughout adolescence. Tied to this growth and consolidation is an increase in the ability to think abstractly, solve problems, and consider multiple perspectives; however, these increases do not proceed at a uniform pace for all adolescents or even within individuals. This uneven growth is also true of physical and sexual development as young adolescents mature along different timelines, often marked by differences between boys and girls. Body consciousness and increased social awareness can make for awkward moments for students in grades six through eight as they work to establish their own sense of themselves as individuals and within peer groups (NIMH 2011; Alexander and Fox 2011).

The turbulence of the middle years can challenge both educators and families. Middle grades educators encounter students who are highly changeable—happy one moment and sad the next, easily embarrassed, often distractible, and sensitive to criticism.

The turbulence of the middle years can challenge both educators and families. Middle grades educators encounter students who are highly changeable—happy one moment and sad the next, easily embarrassed, often distractible, and sensitive to criticism. At this age students crave social affiliation while still wanting adult guidance and approval. Adults who are successful in connecting with young adolescents are perceived as caring; they capture students' interests and help students pay attention by "tapping into this warehouse of emotions" (CDE 2010). Successful educators use their enthusiasm to challenge young adolescents' increasing capacity to learn new information, perceive new connections and perspectives, and experience the pleasure of creating new knowledge. Young adolescents' quest for autonomy, relevance, meaning, and competence begins in earnest during these years, and motivation and engagement become critical factors in students' school success. Educators help students harness their abilities to focus, offering repeated opportunities to practice while also providing novel ways to learn and promoting positive peer relationships (CDE 2010). Importantly, as students in the middle school years explore the various layers of their identities, the adults around them exude acceptance, understanding, and validation

Importantly, as students in the middle school years explore the various layers of their identities, the adults around them exude acceptance, understanding, and validation of who they are as individuals and as members of various cultural, linguistic, religious, and many other types of groups.

of who they are as individuals and as members of various cultural, linguistic, religious, and many other types of groups. See chapter 9 on access and equity for some of the groups with which young adolescents may identify.

The school setting may represent a change for some students as they enter a middle school organized by departments and experience days divided by different periods and multiple teachers. Expectations for personal responsibility and academic performance increase at these grades as student begin their transition into the world of secondary schooling. For students who are new to the American schooling system, including ELs who immigrate to the U.S. just prior to or during the middle school years, differences in language, culture, race and ethnicity, religion, and prior schooling experiences may both complicate and amplify these already complex transitions.

Middle school students' expanding cognitive abilities position them to make big strides in acquiring the second goal—attaining the **capacities of literate individuals** *(demonstrating independence; building strong content knowledge; responding to varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline; comprehending as well as critiquing; valuing evidence; using technology and digital media strategically and capably; and coming to understand other perspectives and cultures).*

The overarching ELA/literacy and ELD goal, developing the **readiness for college, careers, and civic life**, takes on new meaning as educators help young adolescents start to connect their learning to their future adult lives. Middle school students' expanding cognitive abilities position them to make big strides in acquiring the second goal—attaining the **capacities of literate individuals** (demonstrating independence; building strong content knowledge; responding to varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline; comprehending as well as critiquing; valuing evidence; using technology and digital media strategically and capably; and coming to understand other perspectives and cultures). Their interactions with a growing body of literary and informational texts and performances help students move towards the goal of becoming **broadly literate**. So too do students' interactions with a range of technology and digital media, instructional modes (including inquiry-based, collaborative, and direct), and global cultures and perspectives prepare them for the goal of successfully navigating life in the **21st century.** (See the introduction to this *ELA/ELD Framework* and chapter 2 for discussions of these goals.)

The CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy for grades six through eight represent a big leap for students as they move from the elementary grades to the middle grades. Moving beyond details and examples, students now are expected to cite textual evidence to support their analysis of what the text states explicitly and what they infer from it. Argument is introduced at grade six, and students are expected to go beyond stating reasons and evidence by tracing and evaluating arguments and claims in texts and writing their own arguments, rather than opinions, to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. The CA ELD Standards also introduce argument at grades six through eight, echoing the growing sophistication of the thinking expected at this level. These expectations exist across the many disciplines that students study; new to grades six through eight are specific literacy standards in history/social studies, science,

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and technical subjects for the strands of reading and writing. Not only do students engage in careful analyses of texts in English language arts, they do so in history/social studies, science, mathematics, arts, world language, and physical education as well. Students write to argue, explain, and inform in all areas of the curricula.

Teachers at these grades are guided by standards for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language that make clear what students are to know and do; English language arts teachers are guided by the CA CCSS for ELA, while teachers in all other disciplines are guided by the CA CCSS for Literacy. All teachers with EL students in their classrooms use the CA ELD Standards to determine how to support their ELs in achieving the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the content standards specific to each discipline. The CA ELD Standards guide teachers to support their EL students to fully engage with the academic grade-level curricula that the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and other content standards call for while developing English in an *accelerated time frame*.

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In elementary school, the various disciplines are most often taught by one teacher, and students most often spent their days in one classroom. In middle school, students most often learn in a variety of classrooms with a variety of teachers—teachers who in this grade span more than ever before need to work together to ensure that the experience of each student is sufficiently coordinated and articulated to accomplish the overarching goals of ELA/literacy and ELD. Teacher collaboration to plan curriculum, assess student progress, develop schedules, examine instruction, and adjust lessons according to student needs is critical. As noted in the introduction of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy, the Standards "insist that instruction in reading, writing, speaking, listening,[1] and language be a shared responsibility within the school" (CDE 2013, 3). This obligation extends to all students, including ELs, students with disabilities, and students who experience reading difficulties.

Students in this span expand on their ability to analyze ideas, literary elements, and connections in what they read, hear, and/or view, while incorporating these skills into their own writing and presentations. They write and present in different genres, including arguments supported by evidence, informative/explanatory texts with clear organization, and well-structured narratives exhibiting effective literary techniques.

All students in grades six through eight are expected to comprehend literary works and informational and technical materials of increasing length and complexity, basing their analyses and inferences on explicit and relevant evidence from the texts. Students in this span expand on their ability to analyze ideas, literary elements, and connections in what they read, hear, and/or view, while incorporating these skills into their own writing and presentations. They write and present in different genres, including arguments supported by evidence, informative/explanatory texts with clear organization, and well-structured narratives exhibiting effective literary techniques. Their research projects draw on numerous sources, incorporating multimedia in both the information gathering and production phases, and are often conducted across multiple disciplines.

1 As noted throughout this framework, speaking and listening should be broadly interpreted. Speaking and listening should include deaf and hard of hearing students 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.

Middle school students engage in collaborative discussions while considering ideas and information expressed by others. As they evaluate the impact of author's choices, their appreciation for uses of language becomes more sophisticated, including understanding of concepts such as tone, analogy, allusion, dramatic irony, and connotative meanings. Students also learn to analyze authors' reasoning and use of text features. Their control of conventions of standard English grows more sophisticated, as does their awareness and proficiency in a range of academic registers in a variety of disciplines.

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Students who are ELs engage in all of these academic activities at the same time they are learning English as an additional language, and some students may be simultaneously developing literacy and academic skills in languages other than English. It is important to note that, even as students learn English as an additional language, California values the primary languages of its students and encourages continued development of those languages. All students benefit from knowing more than one language, and middle school is an optimal time to begin or continue the development of multilingualism. 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 students. This framework views the "non-standard" 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.

California's diverse population includes students with disabilities. These students 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 the achievement of all students in grades six through eight of the 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. It then highlights key themes in English language arts and in literacy across the disciplines, including selected instructional practices; ways to support students strategically, including those with disabilities or reading difficulties; and appropriate ELD instruction. Grade-level sections provide additional guidance for grades six, seven, and eight.

An Integrated and Interdisciplinary Approach

The CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards recognize the role that complex skills in literacy and language analysis and applications play across the curricula. The language arts are used in all content areas to acquire knowledge and inquiry skills (through reading, listening, viewing, and conversing) as well as convey knowledge in a variety of modes (writing, speaking, and incorporating multimedia). Although presented separately in the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy, the strands of Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language are learned and used by students in an interrelated fashion. This relationship is made even more visible by the focus on literacy across the content areas in grades six through eight.

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characteristic of effective middle grades schools (Association for Middle Level Education 2010). So too are organizational structures, such as collaboration among teachers and flexible scheduling, that foster purposeful learning and meaningful relationships. Teachers in these settings plan and teach in small interdisciplinary teams and share common planning time; flexible schedules permit longer and shorter blocks of time that allow for a range of instructional practices, including inquiry-based projects, service learning activities, experimentation in science, and more (McEwin and Greene 2011). The integrated and interdisciplinary approach calls for the very type of 21st century learning that engages active and passionate middle grades students—learning that fosters creativity, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking, is globally focused, and utilizes technology in meaningful ways. (See chapter 10 in this *ELA/ELD Framework* for more on learning in the 21st century.)

The reciprocal relationship between the language arts and content learning is made explicit in the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy as discussed in the preceding section. Indeed, literacy expectations are found throughout all of California's subject matter content standards as shown in the examples below from a variety of California content areas in grades six through eight.

- Construct an argument supported by empirical evidence that changes to physical or biological components of an ecosystem affect populations. (California Middle School Next Generation Science Standard, MS-LS2-4)
- Describe situations in which opposite quantities combine to make 0. For example, *a hydrogen atom has 0 charge because its two constituents are oppositely charged.* (California Grade Seven CCSS for Mathematics Standard 7.NS.2a)
- Explain the significance of Greek mythology to everyday life and how Greek literature continues to permeate our literature and language today, drawing from Greek mythology and epics, such as Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey,* and from *Aesop's Fables. (California Grade Six History–Social Science Content Standard 6.4.4)*
- Explain the variety of roles dance plays among different socioeconomic groups in selected countries (e.g., royalty and peasants). (California Grade Eight Visual and Performing Arts Dance Content Standard 3.2)
- Practice effective communication skills to prevent and avoid risky situations. (California Grade Six Health Education Standard 4.1.S)

Similarly, 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 curriculum in classrooms with ELs, rather than being addressed exclusively during designated ELD time. Snapshots and longer vignettes presented in the 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 literacy program. This integration of the development of English as an additional language in ELA and all academic content courses also necessitates collaboration among ELD and content area instructors. Given these interrelationships, all teachers become teachers of language—the language needed to understand, engage with, and communicate about written texts, digital formats, and oral discourse in each discipline.

Key Themes 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 grades six through eight (see figure 6.1): **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 6.2 is research on **motivation and engagement**, discussed in 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 6.1): 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 6.1. Circles of Implementation of ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction

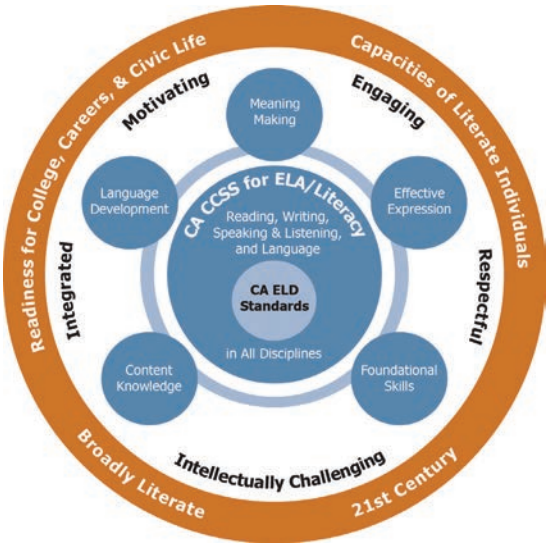

Figure 6.2. Motivation and Engagement

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 the CA ELD Standards. The panel report *Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices* (Kamil, and others 2008) makes clear the importance of addressing motivation and engagement throughout the grades and recommends the following practices in classrooms with adolescents:

1. Establish meaningful and engaging content-learning goals around the essential ideas of a discipline as well as the specific learning processes students use to access those ideas.
   - Monitor students' progress over time as they read for comprehension and develop more control over their thinking processes relevant to the discipline.
   - Provide explicit feedback to students about their progress.
   - Set learning goals. When students set their own goals, they are more apt to fully engage in the activities required to achieve them.

2. Provide a positive learning environment that promotes students' autonomy in learning.
   - Allow students some choice of complementary books and types of reading and writing activities.
   - Empower students to make decisions about topic, forms of communication, and selections of materials.
3. Make literacy experiences more relevant to students' interests, everyday life, or important current events (Guthrie, and others 1999).
   - Look for opportunities to bridge the activities outside and inside the classroom.
   - Find out what your students think is relevant and why, and then use that information to design instruction and learning opportunities that will be more relevant to students.
   - Consider constructing an integrated approach to instruction that ties a rich conceptual theme to a real-world application.
4. Build in certain instructional conditions, such as student goal setting, self-directed learning, and collaborative learning, to increase reading engagement and conceptual learning for students (Guthrie, and others, 1999; Guthrie, Wigfield, and VonSecker 2000).
   - Make connections between disciplines, such as science and language arts, taught through conceptual themes.
   - Make connections among strategies for learning, such as searching, comprehending, interpreting, composing, and teaching content knowledge.
   - Make connections among classroom activities that support motivation and social and cognitive development.

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 2010; 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 and respectfully reflect students' cultural, linguistic, 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 in this *ELA/ELD Framework*.)

To improve adolescent literacy, the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) Practice Guide, *Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices* (Kamil, and others 2008), offers five research-based recommendations:

- Provide direct and explicit comprehension strategy instruction
- Provide explicit vocabulary instruction
- Provide opportunities for extended discussion of text meaning and interpretation
- Increase motivation and engagement in literacy learning
- Make available intensive individualized interventions for struggling readers taught by qualified specialists

These recommendations echo, in part, the themes and contexts of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards and will be addressed in the discussions that follow.

Meaning Making

Meaning making is central in each of the strands of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy in grades six through eight. Reading standards for literature and informational text in English language arts, as well as reading standards for literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects, require students to understand ideas and information from a range of types of texts and media formats that are increasingly complex. Writing standards require students to convey meaningful content as they use evidence from texts they have read to present an argument, explain, and persuade. Speaking and listening standards require students to share ideas and thoughts with one another in text-based discussions, and language standards require students to both clarify and interpret nuances of the meaning of words they read. As students engage with specific subject area disciplines, they are expected to learn from what they read as texts become increasingly complex and academic. In other words, as in all prior grades, meaning making is central and cuts across the strands of standards.

Meaning making is also emphasized in the CA ELD Standards, particularly in the standards for the Interpretive mode in Part I: "Interacting in Meaningful Ways." These standards focus on active listening, close reading, critical viewing, and evaluation and analysis of writers' and speakers' language use for specific purposes. The standards in Part II: "Learning About How English Works" build students' awareness and understanding of the discourse patterns, grammatical structures, and vocabulary of the English language necessary for understanding complex academic texts.

Reading standards for literature and informational text in English language arts, as well as reading standards for literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects, require students to understand ideas and information from a range of types of texts and media formats that are increasingly complex.

By the end of grade five, students learned to quote accurately from a text when explaining what it says explicitly and when drawing inferences (RL/RI.5.1), as well as to determine a theme or two or more main ideas and summarize the text (RL/RI.5.2) and draw on specific details to compare and contrast characters or events and explain relationships between two or more individuals or events (RL/RI.5.3). They learned to make sense of figurative language, such as metaphors and similes, and determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words (RL/RI.5.4),

compare and contrast the overall structure of two or more texts (RI.5.5), and analyze different points of view and accounts of the same event or topic (RI.5.6). By the end of grade five, students learned to analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to meaning, tone or beauty of a text (RL.5.7), and they learned to draw on information from multiple print or digital sources to locate an answer or solve a problem (RI.5.7). They can explain how an author uses evidence to support points in a text (RI.5.8), compare and contrast texts in the same genre with similar themes or on the same topic (RL.5.9), and integrate information from different texts (RI.5.9). By the end of grade five, they read independently and proficiently texts at the high end of the grades four through five text complexity band. They also learned to share meaning through writing, communicating opinions, information, and stories with others (W.5.1–3) and through discussions and presentations (SL.5.1–6). And, they learned about oral and written language conventions in order to more clearly convey meaning (L.5.1–6).

New to grades six through eight in the Reading strand, significantly more rigorous concepts of evidence, argumentation, and integration and analysis of multiple sources and perspectives emerge in meaning making. The following list alternates between standards for English language arts (ELA) and literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects (HST). These are interspersed to highlight the connections between ELA and HST, as well as their distinctions.

- In ELA, citing textual evidence to support analysis of text (RL/RI.6.1) exercising increasing sophistication by citing multiple pieces of evidence (RL/RI.7.1) and identifying the evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of text (RL/RL.8.1)
- In H/SS, citing textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources (RH.6–8.1); in science and technical subjects, citing textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts (RST.6–8.1)
- In ELA, determining central themes or ideas in text and summarizing with increasing objectivity (RL/RL.6–8.2); analyzing the development of central themes and ideas over the course of the text (RL/RI.7–8.2)
- In HST, determining central ideas, information, or conclusions of a source or text and providing summaries distinct from prior knowledge and opinions (RH/RST.6–8.2)
- In ELA, analyzing interactions, connections, and distinctions between and among individuals, incidents, elements, and ideas within text (RL/RI.7–8.3)
- In H/SS, identifying key steps of a process described in text (RH.6–8.3); in science and technical subjects, following precisely multistep procedures (RST.6–8.3)
- In ELA, analyzing use of text features (RL/RI.6–8.5a); analyzing how structure of texts contributes to meaning, style, and development of ideas (RL/RI.6–8.5)
- In HST, describing how a text presents information (RH.6–8.5) and analyzing how organizational structures contribute to understanding a topic (RST.6–8.5)
- In ELA, determining authors' purposes (RI.6–8.6) and analyzing how authors acknowledge and respond to different points of view (RI.8.6) and how the different points of view of the author, characters, narrators, and audiences create literary effects (RL.8.6)
- In H/SS, identifying aspects of text that reveal author's point of view (RH.6–8.6); in science and technical subjects, analyzing the author's purpose in providing an explanation, description, or discussion (RST.6–8.6)
- In ELA, analyzing different written, oral, and multimedia versions of texts and evaluating the impact of choices made by authors, directors, and actors (RL.7–8.7) and the advantages and disadvantages in presenting ideas (RI.7–8.7)
- In HST, integrating quantitative and visual information with other information in print and digital texts (RH/RST.6–8.7)

- In ELA, tracing and evaluating the argument and specific claims in a text (RI.6–8.8) assessing whether reasoning is sound and evidence is relevant (RI.7–8.8)
- In HST, distinguishing among facts, reasoned judgments, and opinions or speculation in a text (RH/RST.6–8.8)
- In ELA, comparing and contrasting different forms or genres (RL.6.9), fictional and historical accounts (RL.7.9), and one author's presentation with another (RI.6.9); analyzing two or more authors' texts (RI.7.9), two or more conflicting texts (RI.8.9), and how authors draw upon themes, patterns, and characters from traditional texts and render new material (RL.8.9)
- In H/SS analyzing relationships between primary and secondary sources (RH.6–8.9); in science and technical subjects compare and contrast information from multiple sources and from written texts (RST.6–8.9)

In the Writing strand, meaning making now includes the following:

- In ELA, writing arguments to support claims, selecting relevant content in informative/explanatory essays, and using language in more sophisticated ways to develop narratives (W.6–8, Standards 1–3)
- In HST, writing arguments and informative/explanatory texts focused on discipline-specific content (WHST.6–8, Standards 1–2)

In the Speaking and Listening strand, meaning making now includes the following:

- In ELA and HST, analyzing ideas (SL.6–7.2) and evaluating purposes and motives (SL.8.2) presented orally and in diverse media; presenting claims and findings orally (SL.6–8.4)

See the section on language development in this overview of the span for language standards related to meaning making new to grades six through eight.

English learners in grades six through eight explain ideas, phenomena, processes and relationships based on close reading of texts, making inferences and drawing conclusions.

The CA ELD Standards intersect with and amplify these CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy. English learners in grades six through eight explain ideas, phenomena, processes and relationships based on close reading of texts, making inferences and drawing conclusions (ELD.PI.6–8.6a-b). They evaluate and analyze language choices, explaining how well writers and speakers use language to present ideas and claims that are well supported (ELD.PI.6–8.7) and explaining how phrasing or different words with similar meanings produces shades of meaning and nuances (ELD.PI.6–8.8). English learners also express their ideas through writing and presenting (ELD.PI.6–8, Standards 9–11) using an expanded set of general academic words (ELD.PI.6–8.12), and engage in collaborative discussions (ELD.PI.6–8, Standards 1–3) while adjusting their language choices according to task (ELD.PI.6–8.4). English learners do all this by applying their understanding of how English works on a variety of levels: how different text types are organized and structured to aid comprehending and writing, how text can be expanded and enriched using particular language resources, and how ideas can be connected and condensed to convey particular meanings (ELD.PII.6–8, Standards 1–7).

Meaning Making with Complex Text

Students in grades six through eight encounter texts that are substantially more complex than those they encountered in elementary school, and by the end of grade eight they are to read at the high end of the grades six through eight complexity band independently and proficiently. In terms of quantitative measures of complexity, suggested ranges of multiple measures of readability for the grades six through eight complexity band recommended by the NGA/CCSSO are provided in figure 6.3.

Figure 6.3. Associated Ranges from Multiple Measures for the Grades Six through Eight Text Complexity Band

ATOS (Renaissance Learning)	Degrees of Reading Power®	Flesch-Kincaid	The Lexile Framework®	Reading Maturity	SourceRater
7.00–9.98	57–67	6.51–10.34	925–1185	7.04–9.57	4.11–10.66

Source

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers. n.d. "Supplemental Information for Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy: New Research on Text Complexity," 4. *Common Core State Standards Initiative.*

The increasing complexity of text occurs across a number of dimensions: levels of meaning and purpose; text structure; linguistic features and language conventions, including vocabulary; and knowledge demands, including life experiences, cultural and literary knowledge, and content knowledge. (See chapter 2 of this framework.) Texts judged as relatively simple on a measure of quantitative complexity may be far more complex because of one or more of these dimensions. Students' growing cognitive capacities at this age enable them to grapple with ideas and concepts that are more difficult; however, students' comprehension may be constrained by their level of exposure and depth of knowledge in each content area, the breadth of their vocabulary, their understandings of the features of academic language and standard English beyond vocabulary, their command of the foundational skills in reading, or other dimensions. Text complexity is also affected by the tasks that students are asked to do. For example, many students may find it easier to summarize a text and determine its central argument and claims than to assess whether the reasoning is sound and if irrelevant evidence has been introduced.

To support students as they grapple with complex readings, teachers need to understand the text and task dimensions that contribute to the complexity of a text or texts and consider the background and skills of their students. Teachers should work together to analyze the features of texts they use in lessons at a grade level or in an interdisciplinary project and to identify the ways in which they can scaffold instruction for students to increase comprehension. As students encounter rich and demanding texts, it is important that they engage deeply and call upon their own thinking to make meaning of what they read. Teachers support students' meaning making by calling attention to text features and the language used in texts, bringing students back to texts to reread for different purposes, supporting their background knowledge, and more. As students increase their volume of reading and build stamina for engaging with intriguing and complicated concepts and language, they make steady progress towards the upper ends of the text complexity band for grades six through eight. (See chapter 2 of this *ELA/ELD Framework* for more on text complexity.)

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Questioning. Teachers use questions during instruction to monitor student understanding, and they guide students to generate questions to help make meaning of text for themselves. Teachers ask questions before and during reading to guide students as they interpret the meaning of text (Boardman, and others 2008). They also teach students to generate their own questions about what they read before, during, and after reading by engaging them in metacognitive conversations about how they are making meaning from what they read. Generating questions about text engages readers and helps them establish purposes for reading (National Institute of Child Health and Human

Development 2000). Different types of questioning can help students clarify meaning, speculate about text, analyze an author's perspective, analyze the language an author uses, and focus on specific aspects of the text. Students can also use questions to organize, elaborate, probe, and sort information and structures in a text, such as compare and contrast or cause and effect.

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Teachers help students make meaning as they model their own comprehension processes using think alouds and then ask students to practice the same think aloud process. These *metacognitive conversations* (Schoenbach, Greenleaf, and Murphy 2012) provide a way for students to figure out where their understanding is incomplete and how to clarify their confusions. Teacher modeling of the use of different types of questions also helps students go beyond clarifying questions to ask questions that engage critical thinking and analysis. For example, describing questions as *thin* or *thick* helps students conceptualize questions along a continuum from basic or obvious to more complex or unstated. Thin questions are literal, recall questions whose answers are provided in the text. Thick questions require student readers to go beyond the text and speculate, hypothesize, or make inferences (Lewin 2010). Using Bloom's taxonomy, students can learn to identify different types of questions, ranging from questions that pull facts and information from the text, to questions that ask the reader to examine and analyze the information in the text by understanding what is missing or implied, to questions that reflect on the author's point of view or that offer a different perspective on the topic (Bloom 1956)[2]. Using questions to guide student thinking and understanding helps students learn to make inferences (RL/RI.6–8.1), integrate knowledge and ideas (RL/RI.6–8.7, RI.6–8.8, RL/RI.6–8.9) and further comprehension.

Using Other Comprehension Strategies. The report, *Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices*, recommends that direct and explicit comprehension strategy instruction be provided. This recommendation is well-supported in the research and tied to improved reading outcomes (Kamil, and others 2008; Boardman, and others 2008). The goal of strategy instruction is to help students become active readers who are in charge of their own comprehension and are capable of using tools to make sense of what they read (Kosanovich, Reed, and Miller 2010). According to the National Reading Panel report (NRP 2000, as found in Boardman, and others 2008), comprehension "involves complex cognitive processes that enable the reader to gain meaning from the text and repair misunderstandings when they occur."

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Successful readers monitor their own comprehension as they read and make connections between new information and prior learning, including other texts they have read, knowledge, and personal experiences (Boardman, and others 2008). When text is conceptually dense, challenging to understand, or uninteresting, successful readers use *fix-up*

2 While both Bloom's Taxonomy and Webb's Depth of Knowledge (DOK) provide descriptors for levels of cognitive complexity, they were developed separately for different purposes. See chapter 2 of this *ELA/ELD Framework* for further discussion of DOK levels. See Hess (2013) for a comparison of Revised Bloom's Taxonomy and DOK.

strategies, such as rereading or summarizing (Kosanovich, Reed, and Miller 2010). Teachers help all students learn ways to monitor their comprehension, be aware of their reading process, and identify and apply strategies when they are having difficulty comprehending. Repeated exposure to reading comprehension strategies interwoven with subject-area content also benefits students (Torgesen, and others 2007).

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Guiding students to use multiple strategies with a single text passage can help students develop the flexibility they need to move back and forth between strategies. For example, a teacher might illustrate the skills of accessing prior knowledge and making connections using the same text. Selecting and using appropriate texts when modeling a new comprehension strategy is also important. For example, finding the main idea and supporting details can be demonstrated with an informational text. With literary text, students learn to identify central ideas and themes, as well as how they develop over the course of a text. Introducing a strategy with less complex text may help students learn the strategy more quickly as well. Once students successfully employ the strategy with less complex or familiar texts, working with more complex or unfamiliar texts helps them apply their newly learned skills. Teachers use formative assessment as part of the instructional process to guide their decision making about the level of scaffolding students need and how quickly responsibility can be released to the students for independent strategy use (Fisher and Frey 2014).

Writing can also improve reading. Writing helps students consolidate their thinking and arrive at new understandings of text. Graham and Hebert (2010) in *Writing to Read: Evidence for How Writing Can Improve Reading,* identified several research-based writing practices that support reading improvement (see figure 6.4).

***Figure 6.4. Recommendations from* Writing to Read**

I. Have students write about the texts they read.
   - Respond to a text in writing (writing personal reactions, analyzing and interpreting the text)
   - Write summaries of a text
   - Write notes about a text
   - Answer questions about a text in writing, or create and answer written questions about a text

II. Teach students the writing skills and processes that go into creating text.
   - Teach the process of writing, text structures for writing, paragraph or sentence construction skills (improves reading comprehension)
   - Teach spelling and sentence construction skills (improves reading fluency)
   - Teach spelling skills (improves word reading skills)

III. Increase how much students write.

Collaborative conversations about texts also enhance comprehension. By engaging in extended conversations about complex texts, students have an opportunity to clarify their thinking and extend it. For example, when students explain their analyses of texts, using evidence from the texts to do so, they are forced to *package and present* their ideas in a clear, coherent, and persuasive manner,

which helps them to clarify and refine their analyses. When they answer questions with elaborations, formulate and pose probing questions to others, and truly listen to their peers, their understandings of texts is extended and enhanced.

Language Development

All students continue to develop as learners of language throughout their academic careers, and indeed their lives. The development of academic English is critical for successful and equitable school participation as students progress through middle school and into high school. Notably, students need to build their linguistic awareness, in other words, their conscious awareness about how language works. They need many guided opportunities to analyze how English is organized and structured in a variety of texts across academic disciplines and how the language in these texts is different depending on text type, audience, purpose, topic, and content area. Further, they need many opportunities to experiment with language, applying what they learn and adapting their own language to express their ideas in ways that meet the expectations of different text types and contexts.

Academic language broadly refers to the language used in academic texts and settings, such as those found in school. Some students in the middle grades may have developed an awareness of academic language and can use it flexibly; others, including ELs and standard English learners, may need specialized instruction to further develop their proficiency in academic English registers. Academic language shares characteristics across disciplines, but is also highly dependent upon disciplinary content. Thus, instruction in academic English benefits from collaborations among teachers across disciplines to address the variations of language use and text structures in multiple subjects and text types. For more on the characteristics of academic English, see chapter 2 of this *ELA/ELD Framework* and chapter 5, "Learning About How English Works," of the CA ELD Standards (CDE 2014).

By the end of grade five, students expanded their language development in several ways. In the realm of vocabulary, they learned to use Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to meaning (L.5.4b) and acquired and accurately used grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (L.4.6) or signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships (L.5.6); they also learned how to use a thesaurus (L.5.4c). They practiced expanding, combining, and reducing sentences for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style (L.5.3a) in writing and speaking, and used precise language and domain-specific vocabulary in informational/explanatory writing (W.5.2d) and concrete words and phrases and sensory details in written narratives (W.5.3d). By the end of grade five, students also had opportunities to differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion) (L.4.3c), as well as to compare and contrast the varieties of English (e.g., dialects, registers) used in stories, dramas, or poems (L.5.3b). They determined the meaning of words and phrases in texts relevant to grade-five topics and subjects, including figurative language (RL/RI.5.4).

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Both the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and CA ELD Standards for grades six through eight reflect the importance of students' continuing development of academic language and show how students' language skills increase in breadth and complexity as they progress through the middle grades. Students demonstrate new understandings and increasing sophistication in the use of language to make meaning when reading, writing, speaking, and listening. New to this span in terms of developing and using academic language in the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy across all disciplines are the following:

- Varying sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style (L.6.3a), maintaining consistency in tone and style (L.6.3b), expressing ideas precisely and concisely while eliminating wordiness and redundancy (L.7.3a), and using verbs of various types to achieve effects (L.8.3a) when writing, speaking, reading, and listening
- Tracing the etymology of words (L.7–8.4c) and verifying preliminary determinations of the meaning of a word or phrase by consulting a dictionary (L.6–8.4d)
- Interpreting figures of speech (L.6–8.5a), using word relationships to better understand individual words (L.6–8.5b), and distinguishing among connotations of words with similar denotations (L.6–8.5c)
- Gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression (L.6–8.6)
- Determining connotative, figurative, and technical meanings of words and phrases and analyzing the impact of word choices on meaning and tone (RL/RI.6–8.4), including analogies or allusions to other texts (RL/RI.8.4); determining meaning of subject-specific words, phrases, and symbols in texts (RH/RST.6–8.4)
- Using words, phrases, and clauses to clarify relationships (W.6.1c) and create cohesion (W.7–8.1c); using appropriate transitions to clarify relationships and create cohesion (W/WHST.6–8.2c)
- Using appropriate transitions to clarify relationships and precise language and domain specific vocabulary in informative/explanatory presentations (SL.6.4a); using words and phrases to create cohesion in argument presentations (SL.7.4a)

By design, all of the CA ELD Standards center on building EL students' proficiency in the rigorous academic English necessary for participation in and achievement of grade-level content. For example, in grades six through eight, the Interpretive and Productive strands now focus on ELs using increasingly sophisticated knowledge of morphology, context, and other cues to determine the figurative and connotative meanings of unknown and multiple-meaning words (ELD.PI.6–8.6c) and using an expanded set of general academic words, domain-specific words, synonyms, antonyms, and figurative language to create precision (ELD.PI.6–8.12a). Beyond vocabulary, the CA ELD Standards emphasize building students' abilities to analyze and evaluate the language that writers use in arguments, informative/explanatory texts, and narratives (ELD.PI.6–8, Standards 7–8) and to adapt their own language choices based on context (ELD.PI.6–8.4). The CA ELD Standards also focus on ELs' abilities to extend and apply their knowledge of text organization and structure, as well as how ideas are expanded or condensed in a variety of academic texts across the disciplines (ELD.PII.6–8, Standards 1–7).

All teachers create language-rich environments for students. They model use of academic language as they interact with students and provide instruction across the curriculum. They also ensure that students have many opportunities to explore and use the academic language they are learning. They engage students in structured as well as informal academic conversations with partners, in small groups, and in large groups. Instructional routines guarantee equitable participation. Crucial for all learners, but especially ELs and other culturally and linguistically diverse students, is an atmosphere of respect for all students' efforts to communicate their ideas.

Explicit vocabulary instruction increases both vocabulary and reading comprehension and is especially effective for ELs and students with disabilities. . . . Important to note is that explicit vocabulary instruction occurs in the context of rich content learning and the use of complex texts, where the vocabulary for instruction is found, and not in isolation (e.g., memorizing word lists or definitions out of context).

Vocabulary

Research indicates that not all students have the depth and breadth of vocabulary knowledge necessary to succeed in their content-area classes (Kosanovich, Reed, and Miller 2010; Nagy and Townsend 2012). At the same time, research shows that teachers can improve students' knowledge and use of appropriate levels of academic vocabulary through explicit instruction combined with extensive exposure in a variety of ways (Kamil, and others 2008; Kosanovich, Reed, and Miller 2010). Thus, a targeted and purposeful focus on vocabulary in all content areas is crucial. Vocabulary instruction will look different depending on content area and should be part of a coherent schoolwide approach to building academic vocabulary knowledge that is consistent with the larger learning goals of particular disciplines.

The following research-based practices are recommended for teaching vocabulary to young adolescents:

- Dedicate a portion of the regular classroom lesson to explicit vocabulary instruction (Kamil, and others 2008).
- Provide new vocabulary in combination with hands-on experiences to link the term to students' background knowledge (Cromley and Azevedo 2007; Kosanovich, Reed, and Miller 2010).
- Use repeated exposure to new words in multiple oral and written contexts and allow sufficient practice sessions (Graves 2006; Kamil, and others 2008).
- Give sufficient opportunities to use new vocabulary in a variety of contexts through activities such as discussion, writing, and extended reading (Graves 2006; Kamil, and others 2008).
- Provide students with strategies to make them independent vocabulary learners (Graves 2006; Kamil, and others 2008).
- Provide explicit instruction of the vocabulary needed to understand a specific text or content area by offering simple definitions prior to reading, generating examples and non-examples, or creating semantic maps that contain word families or list multiple uses of a target word (Boardman, and others 2008).

Explicit vocabulary instruction increases both vocabulary and reading comprehension and is especially effective for ELs (August and Shanahan 2006; Lesaux, and others 2010) and students with disabilities (Bryant, Goodwin, Bryant, and Higgins 2003; Jitendra, and others 2004; as cited by Boardman, and others 2008). Important to note is that explicit vocabulary instruction occurs in the context of rich content learning and the use of complex texts, where the vocabulary for instruction is found, and not in isolation (e.g., memorizing word lists or definitions out of context). Explicit vocabulary instruction can also include teaching about cognates, which are a linguistic resource for

vocabulary development for ELs whose native language is Latin based. Cognates are words in two or more different languages that are the same or similar in sound and/or spelling and that have similar or identical meanings. See chapter 2 in this *ELA/ELD Framework* for more information on cognates in multiple languages and leveraging students' cognate knowledge for learning English and developing biliteracy.

Students grow in their understanding of grammatical patterns as a result of extensive exposure to and guided analysis of complex texts that contain particular grammatical patterns (e.g., long noun phrases, complex sentences, embedded clauses), as well as multiple opportunities to apply these understandings in their own writing.

Grammatical Understandings and Syntax

Supporting students to develop academic English involves more than attending to vocabulary development. Middle school students also need to gain deeper grammatical understandings, including syntax, or the way that words are combined into phrases and sentences and the way that sentences are structured and ordered. Although formal expectations for syntax appear in high school standards, students as early as grade six (and indeed, as early as the elementary grades) can use their grammatical knowledge to vary sentence patterns in their writing and speaking to adjust for meaning, reader or listener interest, and style (L.6.3a). They also work to express ideas precisely and concisely and eliminate wordiness and redundancy (L.7.3a).

The effective application of grammatical understandings, including sentence patterns, can help students increase the information density of sentences, which is a characteristic of academic English. Students grow in their understanding of grammatical patterns as a result of extensive exposure to and guided analysis of complex texts that contain particular grammatical patterns (e.g., long noun phrases, complex sentences, embedded clauses), as well as multiple opportunities to apply these understandings in their own writing. Students gain exposure through wide reading of many types of texts that contain varied and rich grammatical structures. Speeches and debates also afford opportunities to hear and produce well-crafted oral sentences and longer stretches of discourse. Students learn about grammatical structures when teachers draw their attention to how they are used to convey meanings, which can range from informal comments to deeper analysis of text, paragraph, sentence, clause, and phrase structures. In turn, students can emulate the writing of *mentor texts* they have read and analyzed and experiment with ways to incorporate these model approaches into their own writing.

. . . metalanguage (language for discussing language) supports analytical discussions about how language works to make meaning, and students benefit by using it when they analyze and write texts.

In addition, *metalanguage* (language for discussing language) supports analytical discussions about how language works to make meaning, and students benefit by using it when they analyze and write texts. Using metalanguage enables students to be explicit about and discuss what is happening in language (Schleppegrell 2013; Fang, Schleppegrell, and Moore 2013). Furthermore, the language students examine and discuss serves as models for their own writing. For example, many students are already familiar with using metalinguistic terms such as *verb*, *sentence*, and *paragraph*. Using metalanguage that focuses on meaning can help students better understand how or why writers make choices about language and how they can make more informed language choices when they write or speak. Teachers help students identify and discuss the different types of verbs they encounter in texts (e.g., *doing*, *saying*, *sensing*, *being*) and how different text types tend to use particular types of verbs. Teachers also facilitate conversations with students in which they unpack lexically dense sentences to examine how

the different grammatical features (e.g., long noun phrases, text connectives, pronoun reference) affect how the meanings are conveyed. Engaging in these types of discussions about the meanings of texts without metalanguage can be imprecise or even confusing. Rather than teaching language in isolation (e.g., having students silently complete grammar worksheets), teachers facilitate active dialogue about how language works and contextualize language learning in the rich content students are engaged with throughout the curricula. The CA ELD Standards emphasize the development of language awareness appropriate for academic texts across the disciplines.

Effective Expression

The development of effective communication skills is one of the hallmarks of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards. This section provides an overview of writing, discussing, presenting, and using language conventions for the grade span.

Writing

By the end of grade five, students demonstrated their growing writing skills by writing multiple-paragraph texts (W.5.4), logically grouping ideas in written work to effectively convey opinions and information (W.5.1–2), and using narrative techniques to write about experiences or events (W.5.3). They drew evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research (W.5.9) paraphrasing information and listing sources (W.5.8). Students also used formatting, such as headings, and multimedia in written work to aid comprehension (W.5.2a); they produced writing appropriate to the audience, as well as the task and purpose (W.5.4), and used the Internet to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others (W.5.6). By the end of grade five, students used their keyboarding skills to produce a minimum of two pages in a single sitting (W.5.6).

As students advance through the middle school grades, they become increasingly effective at expressing themselves through different genres of writing. In grades six through eight, they build on previous learning to write more complex and cohesive texts of different types for various purposes (W.6–8, Standards 1–3) continuing to develop and organize their writing in a way that is appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience (W.6–8.4). With only some guidance, they engage in planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach in their writing (W.6–8.5). They continue to write routinely over extended and shorter time frames for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences (W.6–8.10).

New to the grades six through eight span are the following:

- In ELA, writing arguments by introducing claims with relevant evidence (W.6–8.1a), acknowledging and addressing opposing claims (W.7.1a), supporting counterarguments (W.7.1b), using credible sources (W.6–8.1b), creating cohesion (W.7–8.1c), and establishing and maintaining a formal style (W.6–8.1d)
- In HST, writing arguments on discipline-specific content by introducing claims and distinguishing them from opposing claims (WHST.6–8.1a), supporting claims logically and with relevant and accurate data and evidence (WHST.6–8.1b), and establishing and maintaining a formal style (WHST.6–8.1d)
- In ELA, writing informative/explanatory texts by introducing a thesis statement (W.6–8.2a), using appropriate organization (W.6–8.2a), using appropriate (W.6–8.2c) and varied (W.8.2c) transitions for clarity (W.6–8.2c) and cohesion (W.7.2c)

- In HST, writing informative/explanatory texts, including narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes (WHST.6–8.2), using relevant, well-chosen facts (WHST.6–8.2b) and appropriate and varied transitions (WHST.6–8.2c) and establishing and maintaining a formal style and objective tone (WHST.6–8.2e)
- In ELA, writing narratives that engage the reader and establish context (W.6–8.3a) and point of view (W.7–8.3a) using language to signal shifts in time frame or setting (W.6–8.3c) and show relationships among experiences and ideas (W.8.3c)
- In HST, producing clear and coherent writing (WHST.6–8.4)
- In ELA and HST, considering how well purpose and audience have been addressed in their writing (W.7–8.5; WHST.6–8.5)
- In ELA and HST, using technology with less support to produce and publish writing (W.6–8.6; WHST.6–8.6), typing a minimum of three pages in a single sitting (W.6.6), linking and citing sources (W.7.6), and presenting relationships between ideas and information clearly and efficiently (W.8.6; WHST.6–8.6)
- Across ELA and HST, writing a balance of texts to parallel the expectations of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP 2008) at grade eight: 35 percent of writing to persuade, 35 percent to explain, and 30 percent to convey experience

New to the CA ELD Standards is writing arguments collaboratively and independently (ELD.PI.6–8.10a) in longer and more detailed literary and informational texts. All students, especially ELs, benefit from a focus on making choices about how to use language in their writing for clarity, precision, and variety. They learn to adapt their choices to be appropriate for the task, purpose, and audience. For example, students learn to express attitudes and opinions or temper statements with nuanced modal expressions (ELD.PI.6–8.11b), use grade-appropriate general academic words and domain-specific words and phrases (ELD.PI.6–8.12a), and use knowledge of morphology (e.g., select prefixes and suffixes) to manipulate language for accuracy of vocabulary and sentence structure (ELD.PI.6–8.12b). They also develop their understandings about how English works to make meaning via structuring cohesive texts (ELD.PII.6–8.1–2), expanding and enriching ideas (ELD.PII.6–8, Standards 3–5), and connecting and condensing ideas in writing (ELD.PII.6–8, Standards 6–7). English learners in middle school work their way towards full proficiency in English by becoming increasingly conscious about the language choices they make to express their ideas in writing. In other words, like all students, they learn to make intentional choices about particular language resources (e.g., cohesive devices, grammatical structures, vocabulary) to illustrate their content understandings.

All students, especially ELs, benefit from a focus on making choices about how to use language in their writing for clarity, precision, and variety. They learn to adapt their choices to be appropriate for the task, purpose, and audience.

The CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and CA ELD Standards promote writing and reading as inextricably linked. Students write about what they read (W/WHST.6–8.9) and read in order to write (R/RH/RST. 6–8.2); in addition students write about what they do, such as engaging in hands-on explorations in subject matter. Students also talk about what they are reading, writing, and exploring, listen to others, and present findings of research. Students integrate the use multimedia and print and digital sources in their writing and use technology to produce and publish their writing (W/WHST.6–8.6, 8). These connections argue for writing in response to all reading students do. Writing assignments may be short or long; they may be accomplished quickly or as the result of days or weeks of writing, revising, and editing. Writing in the classroom should incorporate many forms, including notes, annotations, questions, answers to questions, journal and lab entries, quickwrites, blog posts, summaries,

responses, interpretations, poems, stories, drama, essays, speeches, research reports, and more. While students use many forms of writing, their writing is not formulaic. Students develop their thinking and explore ideas through talking and writing, and opportunities for both should be substantial, including collaborating on writing projects with partners and small groups. Many students view writing as difficult or time consuming. Yet adolescents use writing every day to communicate via social media and express themselves via poetry and songs. Bridging the literate worlds of adolescents outside of school and inside school is a way to build students' motivation to write and engage them as members of the *academic community* (Schoenbach, Greenleaf, and Murphy 2012; Hull and Schultz 2002; Morrell 2004).

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Effective writing—writing that is appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience—is the result of instruction, practice, and feedback. Graham and Perin in *Writing Next: Effective Strategies to Improve Writing of Adolescents in Middle and High Schools* (2007) identified 11 elements of effective adolescent writing instruction based on a meta-analysis of research. These elements are related and overlap in their use. "In an ideal world, teachers would be able to incorporate all of the 11 key elements in their everyday writing curricula, but the list may also be used to construct a unique blend of elements suited to specific student needs" (Graham and Perin 2007, 11). The key elements, arrayed in order of their effect size, are displayed in figure 6.5:

Figure 6.5. Elements of Effective Adolescent Writing Instruction

1. Writing strategies	7. Prewriting
2. Summarization	8. Inquiry activities
3. Collaborative writing	9. Process writing approach
4. Specific product goals	10. Study of models
5. Word processing	11. Writing for content learning
6. Sentence combining	

Teachers of all subjects, but especially English language arts, need support to assign writing frequently. Teachers should engage in professional learning on strategies for providing feedback to students that do not require marking every sentence and grading every writing product. Teachers working collaboratively across disciplines need to establish writing norms, rubrics, and processes for providing feedback to students, and students need to be guided to respond to the feedback they receive to improve their writing.

A process approach to writing positively impacts the quality of student writing. The approach "involves a number of interwoven activities, including creating extended opportunities for writing; emphasizing writing for real audiences; encouraging cycles of planning, translating, and reviewing; stressing personal responsibility and ownership of writing projects; facilitating high levels of student interactions; developing supportive writing environments; encouraging self-reflection and evaluation; and offering personalized individual assistance, brief instructional lessons to meet students' individual needs, and in some instances, more extended and systematic instruction" (Graham and Perin 2007, 19).

Teachers can share mentor texts—that is, texts that are excellent examples of the focus of instruction, such as the organization of particular text types, the vocabulary used to create precision, or transitional phrases that help create cohesion. The authors' craft is discussed and, as appropriate to the purpose, emulated.

In addition to using the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy to examine student writing and provide timely and targeted feedback to all students, teachers of ELs can use the CA ELD Standards to analyze their students' writing to determine how well they are using particular language resources to meet the expectations of different text types, such as general academic and domain-specific vocabulary, expanded noun phrases, text connectives to create cohesion, and so forth. The CA ELD Standards also support teachers in determining the types of writing outcomes that may be appropriate for EL students at different English language proficiency levels. Teachers should differentiate instruction to address their EL students' current level of skills and abilities and to stretch them to higher levels of writing ability. Teachers can share mentor texts—that is, texts that are excellent examples of the focus of instruction, such as the organization of particular text types, the vocabulary used to create precision, or transitional phrases that help create cohesion. The authors' craft is discussed and, as appropriate to the purpose, emulated. This provides a scaffold for students to advance their writing abilities. Chapter 8 in this *ELA/ELD Framework* provides an example of writing by an EL student with annotations based on the CA ELD Standards.

English learners may also need attention in specific areas to ensure their full inclusion in grade-level writing tasks and activities. Depending on their region of origin and extent of school experiences in their home country and in the U.S., EL students may need clarification or explanation of cultural or historical background on topics that are assumed to be familiar to native English speakers schooled in the U.S. In addition, ELs may need specific and explicit instruction in particular areas of English grammar, conventions, and vocabulary—incorporated into the actual practice of their expression of ideas and content. The CA ELD Standards serve as a guide for *planned* scaffolding of writing tasks for students at different English language proficiency levels (Emerging, Expanding, Bridging) on specific standards, and they can also help teachers notice particular aspects of students' writing so they can provide *just-in-time* scaffolding.

Discussing

Collaborative discussions at all grade levels are a priority in both the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards. By the end of grade five, students developed skills in discussing texts and grade-level topics, carrying out assigned roles (SL.5.1b) and responding to specific questions to clarify, follow up or otherwise contribute to discussions (SL.5.1c). They practiced reviewing the key ideas expressed in discussions and drawing conclusions (SL.5.1d) as well as paraphrasing and summarizing text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats (SL.5.2). By the end of grade five, students learned to identify reasons and evidence provided by speakers or media sources for particular points and identify and analyze any logical fallacies (SL.5.3). They also learned to adapt their speech to a variety of contexts, using formal English as appropriate (SL.5.6).

The CA ELD Standards serve as a guide for planned *scaffolding of writing tasks for students at different English language proficiency levels (Emerging, Expanding, Bridging) on specific standards, and they can also help teachers notice particular aspects of students' writing so they can provide* just-in-time *scaffolding.*

The speaking and listening standards for grades six through eight build on these skills, requiring students to continue engaging in collaborative discussions (one on one, in groups, and teacher led) and to learn to both express their own ideas clearly and to be able to build on others' ideas as they participate in the discussion. Students are asked to come to discussions prepared by having read the required material and to contribute by posing questions, responding to others' questions, and commenting with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas. New to the grades six through eight span are the following:

Students are asked to come to discussions prepared by having read the required material and to contribute by posing questions, responding to others' questions, and commenting with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.

- Setting specific goals and deadlines in collaborative discussions (SL.6–7.1b) and tracking their progress (SL.8.1b); defining individual roles as needed (SL.6–8.1b)
- Posing questions that elicit elaboration (SL.7.1c) and connect the ideas of several speakers (SL.8.1c); responding to others' questions with relevant observations, ideas (SL.7–8.1c), and evidence (SL.8.1c)
- Acknowledging new information expressed by others and modifying their own views when warranted (SL.7–8.1d)
- Interpreting information (SL.6.2), analyzing main ideas and supporting details (SL.7.2), and analyzing the purpose of information (SL.8.2) presented in diverse media and formats, explaining how the ideas contribute to (SL.6.2) and clarify (SL.7.2) a topic, text, or issue; evaluating the motives behind presentations (SL.8.2)
- Delineating a speaker's argument and specific claims (SL.6–8.3) with increasing sophistication across the grades

The CA ELD Standards amplify this focus on discussion and collaborative conversations—about content and about language—throughout both Parts I and II. In grades six through eight, ELs are expected to interact in meaningful ways through collaborative discussions on a range of social and academic topics, offer and justify opinions, and persuade others in communicative exchanges. For example, the CA ELD Standards call for ELs to contribute to whole class, small group, partner discussions adding relevant information and evidence (ELD.PI.6–8.1). When engaged in conversations with others, they negotiate with or persuade others using a variety of phrases (e.g., "I heard you say X, and that's a good point. I still think Y though, because . . .") (ELD.PI.6–8.3), and they learn to shift registers, adjusting and adapting their language choices according to purpose, task, and audience (ELD.PI.6–8.4).

Engaging students in meaningful discussions starts with ensuring students have intellectually rich topics to talk about and are supported to share their ideas in respectful and increasingly academic ways.

Engaging students in meaningful discussions starts with ensuring students have intellectually rich topics to talk about and are supported to share their ideas in respectful and increasingly academic ways. Teachers can prepare for collaborative conversations by developing stimulating questions for students to discuss, asking relevant follow up questions to probe and extend the conversation, providing a structured format for students to follow when working in small groups, and encouraging students to use agreed-upon discussion protocols to promote equitable participation (Kamil, and others 2008). It is essential that teachers create

Along with speaking skills, students cultivate listening skills. Technology can be used to present information in audio formats such as speeches. Audio files encourage students to pay close attention to the type of speech being delivered and consider its purpose—to inform, persuade, entertain, or instruct—and discuss where, when, and to whom it was delivered, while accessing its primary source.

a supportive environment in the classroom by modeling an acceptance of diverse perspectives and minimizing criticism and negative feedback on participants' contributions (24). This is important for all students, but especially for culturally and linguistically diverse students, including ELs, who may feel on the outskirts of conversations unless their teachers actively and visibly promote classroom environments where all students feel safe to share their viewpoints and ideas. Similarly, teachers can support full participation of students with disabilities by openly fostering a classroom culture where each student's voice is not only acknowledged but seen as a vital component of discussion.

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Engaging in meaningful discussions about intellectually rich text and content is a critical skill for all students. Particularly in the middle grades when students are increasingly socially oriented, discussions can engage students in challenging texts and subjects because of students' inherent interest in the social meaning making process. For many students who struggle with understanding a challenging text, the opportunity to engage in a collaborative conversation is a way for them to learn more about the text than they would by only reading it independently. Engaging in conversations with peers using prompts and guided practice allows students to delve into complex texts together and grapple with them through dialogue to gain new understandings. This peer collaborative work can be facilitated through use of Socratic seminars, roundtables, expert group jigsaws, and simply by having partners or small groups work together using focus questions. (See chapter 2 in this framework for an expanded list of collaborative discussion formats.) For some ELs developing oral proficiency, particularly for ELs at the Emerging level of English language proficiency, these discussions also offer a safer environment to engage in conversations about texts that may prove less daunting than sharing ideas in front of the whole class. Pairing newcomer ELs with other students who speak their primary language (if possible) supports students who may not yet have the confidence or fluency in spoken English to engage in a range of conversations and discussions. These students who serve as *language brokers* should be supported to understand how to assist their newcomer EL peers, and teachers should acknowledge their sophisticated multilingual and social skills.

For many students who struggle with understanding a challenging text, the opportunity to engage in a collaborative conversation is a way for them to learn more about the text than they would by only reading it independently.

Presenting

In grades six through eight, students are expected to develop and perform increasingly sophisticated presentations on complex and varied topics, adjusting their use of language based on audience, topic, purpose, text type, and discipline.

By the end of grade five, students learned to report on a topic or text and present an opinion sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant and

descriptive details (SL.5.4). They planned and delivered an opinion speech (SL.5.4a) and memorized and recited a poem or section of a speech (SL.5.4b). They included multimedia components as appropriate (SL.5.5) to enhance ideas, and they began to adapt speech as needed to tasks and contexts (SL.5.6).

In grades six through eight, students plan and deliver presentations in a variety of genres, including informative/explanatory (SL.6.4a), argument (SL.7.4a), and narrative (SL.8.4a). New to the span are the following more advanced presentation skills:

- Presenting claims and findings by sequencing ideas logically (SL.6.4) and emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner (SL.7–8.4)
- Using nonverbal elements (SL.6.4), adequate volume, and clear pronunciation (SL.6–8.4)
- Using precise language and domain-specific vocabulary; using words and phrases to create cohesion; and using narrative techniques such as dialogue and sensory language (SL.6–8.4a)
- Demonstrating a command of formal English when appropriate (SL.6–8.6)

The CA ELD Standards also expect ELs to make presentations, and ELs in grades six through eight plan and deliver longer oral presentations and reports on a variety of concrete and abstract topics. They use reasoning and evidence to support ideas. They also demonstrate a growing understanding of register (ELD.PI.6–8.9).

Students have many opportunities to present information and ideas to their peers and other audiences during the middle school grades. While speaking and listening standards are not specified in the literacy standards for history/social studies, science, and technical subjects, students are expected to deliver presentations across content areas in middle school, and students engage in projects incorporating reading, writing, listening, and speaking across disciplines.

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Sixth through eighth graders also learn to employ technology appropriately and effectively. For example, students may create virtual artifacts such as blogs, media, or voice threads that can be shared collaboratively with others to reflect upon and critique using text, images, video, and audio files; and they may incorporate textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive digital elements into their presentations (SL.6–8.5). Technology can be utilized to foster speaking and listening presentation skills as students create their own *avatars* adapting the avatars' character and speech to a variety of audiences and presenting information in a way that others can follow by recording or uploading an audio file to share on social media or Web sites (e.g., www.voki.com) or through the use of videoconferencing tools requiring an invitation to join a chat (e.g., Skype or Google Hangout). Multimedia chats require competency in complex interfaces that involve managing audio, video, and often textual components providing novice learners opportunities to gain competence integrating technologies for various modes of communication becoming ubiquitous in the 21st century (Schwartzman 2013).

Using Language Conventions

Contributing to effective expression is students' command over language conventions, such as grammar and usage in writing and speaking and capitalization, punctuation, and spelling in writing. By the end of grade five, students learned the function of nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs (L.3.1a), prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections (L.5.1a) in general and in particular sentences. They learned specialized forms of these language elements and used them in their writing and speaking. Students learned the use of capitalization, punctuation (end punctuation for sentences, apostrophes for possessives and contractions, commas, and quotation marks), and spelling of grade-appropriate words (L.K–5.2) when writing. Students also gained knowledge of language related to the use of words, phrases, and sentences in writing, speaking, reading, and listening; they developed understandings about the contexts that call for formal and informal uses of English (L.2–5.3). The command of standard English conventions and knowledge of English have grown as the result rich reading, writing, and language opportunities in which students have had repeated exposures, contextualized practice, and meaningful language use.

The Language strand is designed so that language skills and abilities and knowledge about language learned in earlier grades serve as a base for those learned in later grades. Since language is continually developing, the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy identify some skills first specified in the earlier grades that may need continued attention through the later grades. See figure 6.6.

Figure 6.6. Language Standards That May Need Continued Attention Through Middle School

L.3.1f. Ensure subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement.

L.3.3a. Choose words and phrases for effect.

L.4.1f. Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.

L.4.1g. Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., to/too/two; there/their).

L.4.3a. Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.

L.4.3b. Choose punctuation for effect.

L.5.1d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense.

L.5.2a. Use punctuation to separate items in a series.

L.6.1c. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.

L.6.1d. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).

L.6.1e. Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.

L.6.2a. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.

L.6.3a. Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.

L.6.3b. Maintain consistency in style and tone.

L.7.1c. Place phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers.

L.7.3a. Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.

Students who are ELs, especially at the early English language proficiency levels, may need to learn elements of English grammar that native English speakers (including nonstandard English speakers) typically already know. Examples include basic verb tenses and aspects (such as present perfect and past progressive) and English syntax.

Standards for language conventions that are new to the grade span are specified in the grade-level sections.

All students need to develop understandings of certain elements of standard English conventions since the conversational or everyday spoken and written English students use does not necessarily have these features. (See chapter 9 of this *ELA/ELD Framework* for more details.) Students who are ELs, especially at the early English language proficiency levels, may need to learn elements of English grammar that native English speakers (including nonstandard English speakers) typically already know. Examples include basic verb tenses and aspects (such as present perfect and past progressive) and English syntax. Thus, some ELs, particularly those new to English, may need additional, differentiated instruction in the English language conventions, integrated into ELA and other content-area instruction as integrated ELD and also provided as designated ELD. The CA ELD Standards provide guidance on supporting students at different levels of English language proficiency to develop both language awareness and skills and abilities to use standard English, with an emphasis on academic English. Deaf students who use American Sign Language may also need to learn written English grammar as a new language. They do so through visual means as they do not have access to spoken English grammar. (See chapter 9 of this framework for details.)

Conventions are taught to all students in the context of meaningful communication.

Conventions are taught to all students in the context of meaningful communication. In the *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing* teachers are advised to "help students develop knowledge of conventions by providing opportunities and guidance for students to write, read, and analyze a variety of texts from various disciplines and perspectives in order to

- Investigate the logic and implications of different conventions
- Practice different conventions and analyze expectations for and effects on different audiences
- Practice editing and proofreading one's own writing and explore the implications of editing choices . . ." (2011, 9)

Students can explore the use of conventions and their impact by

- Comparing different types of text, such as poetry, drama, speeches, narratives, arguments, and informative/explanatory texts
- Comparing texts in different registers (i.e., for different purposes and audiences), such as formal speeches, literature, and articles versus texting, spoken word poetry, and blogging
- Analyzing texts written in different time periods
- Analyzing written texts in which the author represents nonstandard varieties of spoken English using contrastive analysis (e.g., contrasting standard English with English dialects in Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* or with African American English or Chicana/Chicano English used in hip-hop lyrics)

As students write, discuss, and present, they keep in mind the effects of conventions and work to apply the conventions appropriate for their purposes and audiences.

Content Knowledge

Content knowledge is an important factor in developing reading comprehension (Anderson and Pearson 1984; Hirsch 2006), and skilled reading, writing, speaking and listening, as well as language knowledge contribute to content knowledge. The literacy standards at grades six through eight make clear the importance of both content and literacy. Previous chapters discussed the powerful relationship between content knowledge and literacy and language development. The following points highlight the previous discussion:

- Content areas should be given adequate time in the curriculum so that all students have access to content instruction.
- All students—including ELs, students with disabilities, and students experiencing difficulty reading—should have full access to core content areas (e.g., science, history/social studies, the arts).
- Literacy and language instruction should occur across the curricula (complementing and contributing to content instruction, not replacing inquiry and other content approaches) based on the CA CCSS for ELA and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects and the CA ELD Standards. Understandings of disciplinary literacy should guide how teachers approach literacy in their particular disciplines or subjects.
- In English language arts classrooms, students should read and study a variety of classic and contemporary literature (e.g., novels, short stories, graphic texts, drama, poetry), literary nonfiction (e.g., memoirs, biographies, personal essays), and nonfiction (e.g., exposition, argument, functional text, technical accounts, journalism).
- In content classrooms, students should read and study texts that are important to the discipline (e.g., textbooks, primary and secondary sources in history, technical texts in science and other subjects).
- All students should have opportunities to read widely (as an organized part of the curriculum and independently), and they should have access to a variety of print and digital texts in the classroom and school library.

In this section, four areas supporting content knowledge are highlighted: understanding disciplinary literacy; engaging with literature and informational text in English language arts and other content areas; engaging with research; and planning for wide reading.

Understanding Disciplinary Literacy

The term *disciplinary literacy* (Moje 2007, 2011; Shanahan and Shanahan 2008; Schleppegrell 2013) refers to the particular ways in which content areas or disciplines (history/social studies, mathematics, science and engineering, arts, physical education, health, and world languages) use language and literacy (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) to engage with content knowledge and communicate as members of discourse communities (e.g., scientists, historians). Fang, Schleppegrell, and Moore (2013, 1) argue that "learning in the content areas is best conceived of as learning specialized ways of making meaning within the disciplines. . . . Each discipline has its own culture and ways of reading, writing, speaking, thinking, and reasoning." The authors' describe the features of advanced literacy as deployed by disciplinary experts in science, history, mathematics, and language arts in figure 6.7.

Figure 6.7. Advanced Literacy in Four Disciplines

[S]cientists construct theoretical explanations of the physical world through investigations that describe, model, predict, and control natural phenomena (Yore et al, 2004). The task of . . . **historian[s]**, on the other hand, is interpretive, investigating events in the past in order to better understand the present by reading documents and examining evidence, looking for corroboration across sources, and carefully thinking about the human motivations and embedded attitudes and judgments in the artifacts examined (Wineburg, 2001). **Mathematicians** see themselves as problem-solvers or pattern-finders who prize precision and logic when working through a problem or seeking proofs for mathematical axioms, lemmas, corollaries, or theorems (Adams, 2003). **Language arts** experts attach great significance to the capacity for creating, responding to, and evaluating texts of various kinds (Christie & Derewianka, 2008). These varied ways of meaning-making call on particular ways of using spoken and written language as well as a range of multimodal representations (Coffin & Derewianka, 2009; O'Halloran, 2005; Unsworth, 2008).

Source

Fang, Zhihui, Mary J. Schleppegrell, and Jason Moore. 2013. "The Linguistic Challenges of Learning Across Disciplines." In *Handbook of Language and Literacy: Development and Disorders*. 2nd ed., edited by C. Addison Stone, Elaine R. Silliman, Barbara J. Ehren, and Geraldine P. Wallach, 1–2. New York: Guilford Press.

Proficient users of language in particular disciplines make language choices (sometimes unconsciously) to meet the expectations of their audiences. These choices include the use of precise vocabulary, how sentences and paragraphs are structured, and how ideas are connected throughout an entire text so that it is cohesive.

From this perspective, speakers and writers make deliberate choices about how they use particular language resources and how they organize their spoken or written texts (e.g., speeches, debates, arguments, stories). These choices depend on the discipline in which they are being produced, among other things. Proficient users of language in particular disciplines make language choices (sometimes unconsciously) to meet the expectations of their audiences. These choices include the use of precise vocabulary, how sentences and paragraphs are structured, and how ideas are connected throughout an entire text so that it is cohesive. Audience expectations are determined by the nature of the communicative activity (e.g., talking with someone casually about a movie, persuading someone in a debate, or writing a science report); the nature of the relationship between the language users in the activity (e.g., friend-to-friend, expert-to-learner); the subject matter and topic (e.g., photosynthesis in science, the U.S. Civil War in history); and the medium through which the message is conveyed (e.g., a text message versus an essay). These *register* choices, as linguists have found, vary from discipline to discipline and from situation from situation. (See chapter 2 of this *ELA/ELD Framework* for a discussion of register.) A major task for teachers is to support all students in understanding how to shift registers and make informed language choices that meet the expectations of different disciplinary contexts.

Shanahan and Shanahan (2008), in describing their investigation of the literacy practices of experts in mathematics, chemistry, and history, indicate that each group approached reading quite differently and valued the literacy strategies that "mirrored the kinds of thinking and analytic practices common to their discipline" (56). Although disciplines share certain features in their use of text and academic language, they also employ unique practices. Selected strategies that align with those disciplines include the following:

- ELA: engaging in Socratic Seminars, SQP2RS (Survey, Question, Predict, Read, Respond, Summarize), and GIST (Generating Interactions between Schemata and Text)
- Science: writing procedures for experiments, summarizing sections of texts, responding to text from single or multiple sources for the purposes of deep inquiry
- Mathematics: constructing viable arguments, writing explanations and justifications, responding to charts, graphs, patterns, and other data
- History: constructing events charts, summarizing using *multiple-gist* strategy (Shanahan and Shanahan 2008, 56), and engaging in Questioning the Author (Beck, McKeown, and Kucan 2013)

As stated in previous chapters, the relationship among English language arts and literacy, English language development, and the content areas or disciplines is interdependent. Content knowledge grows from students' knowledge of language and ability to use language effectively to accomplish their disciplinary goals through reading, writing, speaking, and listening; just as literacy and language proficiency grow from increased content knowledge (Short, Echevarria, and Richards-Tutor 2011; Echevarria and Short 2010, 250–321). All students should be provided rich instruction, with appropriate pedagogy, in the content areas. Those needing additional support in language or literacy development should not miss opportunities to take content area courses. In other words, additional assistance should be provided at a time that does not preclude enrollment in content courses.

Engaging with Literature and Informational Texts

Literature is at the heart of the content of the English language arts curriculum, and its power and beauty should not be overshadowed by the discussions in this framework—although critically important—about literacy in the other disciplines. Our collective humanity and wisdom rest in the words of writers past and present—writers who have created worlds into which young adolescents gain admittance with the hope that the encounters will sharpen their minds and feed their spirits. The CA CCSS for ELA identify three categories of text within literature: stories, drama, and poetry. Stories include novels, short stories, and graphic texts, including the subgenres of adventure, historical fiction, mysteries, myths, science fiction, realistic fiction, allegories, parodies, satire, and more. Drama includes the subgenres of one-act and multi-act plays in written form and on film. Poetry includes the subgenres of narrative poems, lyrical poems, free verse poems, sonnets, odes, ballads, and epics. Literary nonfiction includes the subgenres of personal essays, speeches, opinion pieces, criticism, biographies, memoirs, and literary journalism. All of these forms include classical through contemporary works representing a broad range of literary periods and cultures.

Literature is at the heart of the content of the English language arts curriculum, and its power and beauty should not be overshadowed by the discussions in this framework—although critically important—about literacy in the other disciplines.

When selecting literary texts, including literary nonfiction and nonfiction, teachers, teacher librarians, and school leaders should consider the various resources available to them. The appendix of this *ELA/ELD Framework*—"The Role of Literature in the Common Core State Standards and Book Resources for Teachers"—offers advice about teaching literature and numerous suggestions for locating high-quality books and texts. In addition, teachers and others should take into account the cultural and linguistic diversity of their students and choose texts that are appealing to their students for a variety of reasons, including texts by authors from similar cultural backgrounds or who address issues that are relevant for high school students, such as racism, poverty, gender identity, communities, immigration, and other topics that motivate adolescents approaching adulthood to engage with deep thinking, writing, and rich discussions.

Literature and informational text—both literary nonfiction and nonfiction—comprise the content of what students in grades six through eight read, analyze, and talk and write about. Teacher teams, in collaboration with their schools and districts, need to identify the literature and informational texts for the curriculum at each grade, as well as the opportunities for writing, discussing, presenting, researching, and language development based on the CA CCSS for ELA and the CA ELD Standards. Maintaining the breadth and variety of literary and informational texts within and across grades is key; finding ways to incorporate nonfiction texts in units of study, including the creative pairing of literary and informational texts, is also important. Teachers and curriculum planners need to carefully plan and select instructional materials to meet the needs of all students and achieve the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy.

> *Maintaining the breadth and variety of literary and informational texts within and across grades is key; finding ways to incorporate nonfiction texts in units of study, including the creative pairing of literary and informational texts, is also important.*

Several text exemplars, organized by grade-level spans, can be found in Appendix B of the CCSS for ELA/Literacy (NGA/CCSSO 2010a: Appendix B). Listed below are examples of literary texts to illustrate the complexity, quality, and range of literature in grades six through eight:

- *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott
- "I, Too [, Sing America]" by Langston Hughes
- *Sorry, Wrong Number* by Louise Fletcher
- "Jabberwocky" by Lewis Carroll
- *Dragonwings* by Laurence Yep
- *The Dark is Rising* by Susan Cooper
- "Eleven" by Sandra Cisneros
- *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain
- "Oranges" by Gary Soto

Although the following reading standards have been discussed in the section on meaning making, the standards represent content unique to literature new to grades six through eight:

- Describing how a plot unfolds (RL.6.3), analyzing how particular elements of a story interact, (RL.7.3) and analyzing how specific lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision (RL.8.3)
- Determining the connotative meanings of words and phrases (RL.6–8.4); analyzing the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama (RL.7.4); and analyzing the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone (including analogies or allusions to other texts) (RL.8.4)
- Analyzing how a drama's or poem's form of structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning (RL.7.5); comparing and contrasting the structure of two or more texts (RL.8.5)
- Comparing and contrasting the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version (RL.6–7.7)
- Comparing and contrasting a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period (RL.7.9) and analyzing how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible (RL.8.9)

Informational text occupies a prominent space in grades six through eight both within English language arts and in all other content areas. According to the reading framework of the NAEP and the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy, 55 percent of the texts that students should read and study across all disciplines by grade eight should be informational, and 45 percent should be literary. These percentages are not a prescription for the balance of text types in ELA but rather are achieved across the range of subjects, including ELA, that students study. Critically important in each content area is that students actually read and learn from the texts designated for the subject and grade. Too often information is presented orally or read aloud to content classes because of a concern for students' ability to successfully read a text and interact with its ideas in speaking and writing. The suggestions provided in the meaning making, language development, and effective expression sections of this framework are designed to support teachers to help their students achieve proficiency in literacy and language across all subject areas. For students to progress toward each of the overarching goals of ELA/literacy and ELD instruction by the time they complete high school, reading and communicating effectively in all content areas is essential. See the outer ring of figure. 6.1; see also the discussion of the goals in chapter 2 in this framework.

The CA CCSS for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects are meant to complement the specific content demands of the disciplines and help students grapple with the texts they encounter. The Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, for example, expect students to cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources (RH.6–8.1); identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes a law) (RH.6–8.3); and analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic (RH.6–8.9). The Reading Standards for Literacy in Science and Technical Subjects expect students to follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks (RST.6–8.3); determine the meaning of symbols, key terms, and other domain-specific words and phrases (RST.6–8.4); and compare and contrast the information gained from experiments, simulations, video, or multimedia sources with that gained from reading a text on the same topic (RST.6–8.9). See the section on meaning making for more detail on the standards for reading informational text new to grades six through eight.

Literary text need not be limited to English language arts. Students in history classes can be exposed to a wealth of supportive readings such as biographies, essays, plays, films, and novels, which deepen understanding of key historical narratives, ideas, periods, events, and influential actors.

Literary text need not be limited to English language arts. Students in history classes can be exposed to a wealth of supportive readings such as biographies, essays, plays, films, and novels, which deepen understanding of key historical narratives, ideas, periods, events, and influential actors. Science teachers can help students deepen their understanding and interest in how the world works by providing students opportunities to read stories, biographies, and readings that show how specific scientific breakthroughs occurred (for example, works on Darwin and Marie Curie, and books such as *How I Killed Pluto and Why It Had It Coming* by Mike Brown (2010). Excerpts of full-length literary works may be a good strategy for introducing textual variety to content classrooms as well. Listed below are examples of informational texts to illustrate the complexity, quality, and range of student reading in grades six through eight:

- *The Great Fire* by Jim Murphy
- *The Omnivore's Dilemma: The Secrets Behind What You Eat* by Michael Pollan
- *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* by Frederick Douglass

- *Farewell to Manzanar* by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James D. Houston
- *Words We Live By: Your Annotated Guide to the Constitution* by Linda R. Monk

As suggested earlier, teachers should work collaboratively to plan curriculum and select instructional materials. Interdisciplinary teams play a particularly valuable role in implementing the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy. Teams of teachers from different subject areas who instruct a common group of students should plan together to select appropriate texts, create joint projects, plan lessons, and examine student performance. Working together these teams can identify students who need additional support and modify instruction, scheduling, and grouping as appropriate. For teachers, teams can provide a collaborative and supportive work group. For students, teams offer stable relationships with teachers and peers (Jackson and Davis 2000). Interdisciplinary teams can also cultivate meaningful and regular communication with families.

Research-Based Learning Techniques (Study Skills). Students in middle school employ a variety of strategies to learn new material. Learning to prepare efficiently for quizzes, unit tests, and other forms of assessment is important so that students' efforts yield the best results. A team of cognitive and educational psychologists (Dunlosky, and others 2013) examined research studies for 10 learning techniques and rated their effectiveness in terms of low, moderate, and high utility. All of the techniques examined were ones that students could implement without assistance. The results of the research review identified practice testing (self-testing or taking practice tests) and distributed practice (implementing a schedule of practice over time) as the most effective and, perhaps surprising to some students, highlighting and underlining as two of the least effective. Techniques that were rated as high utility because they were generalizable across a range of materials (e.g., vocabulary, lecture content, science definitions diagrams); learning conditions (e.g., amount of practice, reading vs. listening, incidental vs. intentional learning); student characteristics (e.g., age, verbal ability, interests); and criterion tasks (e.g., cued recall, problem solving, essay writing, classroom quizzes). Some techniques, such as summarization of to-be-learned text, were rated as low utility; however, the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy call for students to summarize proficiently. While summarizing may not be effective as a study technique, summarizing for different purposes is an important foundational writing skill.

Students in middle school employ a variety of strategies to learn new material. Learning to prepare efficiently for quizzes, unit tests, and other forms of assessment is important so that students' efforts yield the best results.

Engaging in Research

Opportunities to engage in research contribute to students' content knowledge. Teachers can use writing instruction to provide opportunities for students to conduct research to build and present knowledge (W.6–8, Standards 7–9). Teachers can also engage students in collaborative discussions about grade-level topics, texts, and issues (including research conducted by students) (SL.6–8.1). A brief overview of the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy regarding research to build and present knowledge follows.

Students left grade five able to conduct short research projects, gather relevant information from print and digital sources, summarize information, provide a list of sources, and draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research (W.5.7–9). In middle school, research projects expand and become more complex; contributing to students' motivation and engagement. For example, teachers provide students choices of topics and create opportunities for students to interact with interesting texts and resources.

New to the grade span in terms of building content knowledge through engagement in research are the following:

- In ELA and HST, conducting short research projects to answer a question (W/WHST.6–8.7), generating additional related, focused questions for further research (W.7.7; WHST.6–8.7) or that allow for multiple avenues of exploration (W.8.7; WHST.6–8.7)
- In ELA and HST, gathering relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assessing the credibility of sources, quoting or paraphrasing data and conclusions of others, avoiding plagiarism, providing basic bibliographic information (W.6–8.8/WHST.6–8.8), using search terms effectively, and following a standard format for citation (W.7–8.8; WHST.6–8.8)
- In ELA, evaluating the argument and specific claims in an informational text (RI.6–8.8)
- In HST, distinguishing among facts/opinions, reasoned judgment based on research, and speculation in a text (RH/RST.6–8.8)
- In ELA, comparing and contrasting one author's presentation with another (RI.6.9) and analyzing two or more authors writing on the same topic (RI.7.9) or two or more texts providing conflicting information (RI.8. 9)
- In HST, analyzing the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic (RH.6–8.9); comparing and contrasting information gained from experiments and other multimedia sources with written sources (RST.6–8.9)

The CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards call for students to engage with complex texts to build knowledge across the curriculum. When provided with appropriate scaffolding, ELs can interact meaningfully with complex informational texts to engage in research, which in turn helps them to build up academic language and content knowledge. Techniques that support ELs in research include the following:

- Encouraging ELs with strong primary language literacy backgrounds to draw upon this resource to help them locate, evaluate, and analyze information (e.g., by pairing grade-level texts in their primary language with texts in English at or above their reading level in English).
- Assisting ELs to select reading and drafting strategies appropriate for varied research tasks (e.g., using different types of notetaking templates for different types of text).
- Teaching ELs how not to plagiarize by providing explicit guidance on the conventions of textual ownership and citations in U.S. academic settings, alongside clear and critical explanations of the purposes these conventions serve.
- Creating opportunities that allow ELs to learn research processes by participating in teacher guided and collaborative endeavors before attempting research independently.

Planning for Wide Reading

Starting in third grade, and continuing through middle school, extensive reading is an important source of new vocabulary (Nagy and Anderson 1984), as well as providing students exposure to a range of text types, information, and ideas. Students in grades six through eight are expected to be able to read an increasing amount of literature and informational text, including literary nonfiction and informational/expository texts across content areas. Students need to read a wide variety of literature and informational texts in English language arts, as well as a variety of informational and technical texts in other content areas. As indicated previously, genres of literature include short stories, poetry, drama, and novels; genres of literary nonfiction include essays, speeches, opinion pieces, biographies, and journalism; and informational texts include historical, scientific, or other reports documents. All students need to

Starting in third grade, and continuing through middle school, extensive reading is an important source of new vocabulary, as well as providing students exposure to a range of text types, information, and ideas.

engage with grade-level complex text; students experiencing reading difficulties need scaffolding to interpret and respond to texts above their reading level.

Providing opportunities for students to engage in extended periods of structured independent reading of self-selected challenging books, accompanied by supported, individualized reading instruction can have a positive effect on reading achievement (Reis, and others 2008; Taylor, Frye, and Maruyama 1990). When planning an independent reading program, teachers design structures for students to record what they read and to chart their progress toward meeting their reading goals. Students should be taught how to select books that interest them and to evaluate the complexity of the text so that they know how challenging it will be. Student choice is a hallmark of an effective independent reading program. Successful teacher librarians and classroom teachers seek to connect middle school students with books and other texts that inspire, delight, and challenge young minds and spur them to read more. In addition, it is especially important in the middle grades and beyond, as students are intensely interested in establishing their identities, for school and classroom libraries to contain an abundance of literature that reflects the cultural and linguistic diversity of the school and of California. (See chapter 2 of this *ELA/ELD Framework* for more information on wide reading, independent reading, and planning an independent reading program.).

Foundational Skills

Ideally, by the time students enter middle school their knowledge of foundational skills is well established. They have a large base of sight words—those they recognize instantaneously—and they rapidly and effectively employ word recognition skills to identify new printed words. In short, they access printed language efficiently.

Fluency, which includes accuracy, rate, and prosody, continues to develop as students engage in wide and extensive reading. Rate of reading varies, however, as it should, with the text and the task. Data from an extensive study of oral reading fluency revealed the mean words read per minute (that is, the reading rate by students in grades one through eight in unpracticed readings from grade-level materials) (Hasbrouck and Tindal 2006). See the grade-level sections that follow for charts of mean oral reading rates by grade. The researchers recommended that students scoring more than 10 words below the 50th percentile receive additional instruction that targets fluency.

Fluency rates should be cautiously interpreted with all students. They are particularly difficult to apply to speakers of languages other than English and to deaf and hard of hearing students who use American Sign Language. When students storysign, they are actually interpreting the story from one language (printed English) to another (American Sign Language). In this case, fluency rates as listed in the figure do not apply.

Fluency is important in that it supports comprehension. The greater the ease with which students can identify words accurately, the more cognitive resources they have available to engage in meaning making. If students are experiencing difficulty with fluency, that is their reading is slow and labored, it is critical to determine the reason. Some students may have inadequately developed decoding skills. Others may have insufficient language (i.e., vocabulary and syntax) or knowledge, both of which may also impact fluency. Still others may not have developed automaticity with printed language.

It is critical for teachers to understand that pronunciation differences due to influences from the primary language, home dialect of English (e.g., African American English), or regional accent do not necessarily indicate a difficulty with decoding and should not automatically be interpreted as such. In addition, although pronunciation is important, overcorrecting it can lead to self-consciousness and

inhibit learning. Rather, teachers should check for students' comprehension of what they are reading, respectfully model how words are pronounced in standard English, and point out differences between pronunciations of different dialects of English or pronunciations influenced by the primary language as appropriate. (For additional information on different dialects of English, see chapter 9 in this *ELA/ELD Framework*.)

The primary way to support students' fluency is to ensure accuracy in decoding and engagement in wide, extensive reading of texts that are neither too simple nor too challenging. In addition, students should have authentic reasons to reread text because rereading also supports fluency. For example, they may reread text several times as they rehearse for recording narration in a digital presentation or prepare for a poetry reading or other performance.

The primary way to support students' fluency is to ensure accuracy in decoding and engagement in wide, extensive reading of texts that are neither too simple nor too challenging. In addition, students should have authentic reasons to reread text because rereading also supports fluency.

For information on teaching foundational skills to middle school students who need it, see the section on supporting students strategically that follows in the overview of the span. See also chapter 9 on access and equity in this *ELA/ELD Framework*.

Foundational Skills for English Learners

English learners come to middle school with varying levels of English language proficiency. Depending on their prior educational experiences in their home country and in the United States, ELs also have varying degrees of skills and abilities in foundational reading and writing in English. Some ELs have had the benefit of developing foundational literacy skills in their native language and can transfer this knowledge—including decoding skills and using an alphabetic writing system—to English (August and Shanahan 2006; de Jong 2002; Lindholm-Leary and Genesee 2010). As noted in chapter 6 of the CA ELD Standards, literacy instruction for ELs needs to be adapted based on each student's literacy profile, which includes the student's level of oral proficiency in the native language and in English; the student's level of schooling and previous literacy experiences in his or her native language; how closely the student's native language is related to English; and, for students with native language literacy, the type of writing system used.

Foundational literacy skills, as described in the CA CCSS for ELA Reading Standards for Foundational Skills (K–5), are the same for all students who need to learn basic reading and writing skills, including middle and high school students. However, the way the skills are taught and how quickly the students can be expected to acquire the basic skills and move on to higher level reading and writing depend on their age, cognitive level, and previous oral and written literacy experiences in their native language and/or in English. Since the CA CCSS for ELA foundational skills standards are intended to guide instruction for students in kindergarten through grade five, these standards need to be adapted, using appropriate instructional strategies and materials to meet the literacy needs of ELs at the middle grades, and addressing the need to teach foundational literacy skills in an accelerated time frame. In particular, the curriculum needs to be flexible so that it can

Since the CA CCSS for ELA foundational skills standards are intended to guide instruction for students in kindergarten through grade five, these standards need to be adapted, using appropriate instructional strategies and materials to meet the literacy needs of ELs at the middle grades, and addressing the need to teach foundational literacy skills in an accelerated time frame.

address the different profiles of secondary students needing foundational literacy skills instruction. Considerations contributing to the variety of student profiles are described in chapter 6 of the CA ELD Standards.

Figure 6.8 shows the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy Reading Standards for Foundational Skills that need to be adapted for middle school ELs who need these early literacy skills, based on the students' individual language and literacy characteristics. For further details on teaching foundational skills to ELs, see chapter 6 of the CA ELD Standards.

Figure 6.8. Foundational Literacy Skills for ELs in Grades Six through Eight

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** 2. Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes). (RF.K–1.2)
	Spoken English proficiency	Students will need instruction in applying their knowledge of the English sound system to literacy foundational 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** 1. Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print. (RF.K.1; RF.1.1) **Phonics and Word Recognition** 3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words. (RF.K–5.3) **Fluency** 4. Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension (RF.5.4 at 6–12 grade level)
	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 leaning 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) and native language vocabulary (e.g., cognates) and sentence structure (e.g., subject-verb-object vs. subject-object-verb word order).	

Student Language and Literacy Characteristics		Considerations for Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction	CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy Reading Standards: Foundational Skills
Print Skills (cont.)	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).	Review of **Phonological Awareness** skills as needed.

Supporting Students Strategically

Middle school is a remarkable turning point for students. Not only are students undergoing considerable physical, psychological, cognitive, and social changes during these years, they experience significant changes in the structure of schooling. Instead of a single teacher, they likely have many teachers. Instead of one group of classmates, they likely interact with different groups of classmates throughout the day. Instead of relatively flexible periods of time to engage in class projects and lessons, they likely experience tightly constrained instructional periods of time. Middle school students are expected to navigate successfully through all these changes. For the first time they are expected to achieve several sets of standards related to reading and writing (in addition to all content standards): those in their English language arts classes, including reading standards for literature and informational text, and those in their history/social studies, science, and technical classes.

Students who are experiencing difficulty should be identified quickly; their specific needs diagnosed carefully, and intensive and targeted instruction provided deliberately by skillful teachers. By necessity, instruction for these students is differentiated and typically provided in small group settings.

Youth who enter middle school able to engage in **meaning making** with a variety of increasingly complex text and who have well developed **language** (especially academic language), the ability to **effectively express** themselves in writing and speaking, considerable **knowledge** in a range of subject matter, and mastery of the **foundational skills** that enables them to fluently access printed language are well positioned to face the challenges of middle school. Some students, however, experience difficulty in one or more aspects of literacy development. These students are supported strategically to achieve the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy at grades six through eight, so they are ready for what could be exciting and fulfilling years of high school. English learners achieve the standards while also learning English as an additional language. Students with disabilities do so with appropriate supports and accommodations in accordance with their Individualized Education Program. (See chapter 9 in this *ELA/ELD Framework*.)

As noted throughout the framework, to serve students well, teachers conduct formative assessment processes along with interim and benchmark assessments to determine students' progress toward learning goals. What teachers learn about each student through these processes informs immediate and subsequent instruction, with the purpose being to close the gap between the student's current status and the learning goal (Heritage 2010). Students who are experiencing difficulty should be identified quickly; their specific needs diagnosed carefully, and intensive and targeted instruction provided deliberately by skillful teachers. By necessity, instruction for these students is differentiated and typically provided in small group settings. Teachers leverage all available resources at the site (and beyond, as appropriate) to ensure that each and every student advances as quickly as possible toward grade-level expectations. Schools employ a multi-tiered system of supports. Parents are included in the discussions. (See chapter 9.)

Chapter 2 in this *ELA/ELD Framework* identifies several important instructional approaches for supporting students strategically. For example, chapter 2 describes scaffolding instruction, use of students' primary language, and grouping—important supports in all grade levels. In this section, recommendations and findings from research about supporting adolescents who are experiencing difficulty in literacy include the following:

Overall

- Motivation often decreases over the years, especially in students who are experiencing academic difficulties, and so should be given thoughtful attention (Biancarosa and Snow 2006; O'Connor and Goodwin 2011). [See figure 6.2 in this chapter.]
- Extended literacy experiences are necessary for effecting change in reading and writing. A panel report recommended two to four hours of literacy instruction and practice daily that takes place in language arts and content classes (Biancarosa and Snow 2006).
- Content area classes should include a focus on disciplinary literacy and reinforce the skills that students experiencing difficulty are learning; at the same time, specialists should use content area materials as a basis for practicing the reading skills they are teaching (Biancarosa and Snow 2006; Carnegie Council on Advancing Adolescent Literacy 2010).

Meaning Making (reading comprehension)

- Reading extensively and widely and writing about what they are reading builds students' capacity to comprehend (Underwood and Pearson 2004).
- Explicitly teaching students to use strategies that good readers use, such as drawing on background knowledge and creating graphic organizers to gain control of the macrostructure of a text, improves comprehension (Biancarosa and Snow 2006; Underwood and Pearson 2004).
- Teaching students to use one or more metacognitive strategies, such as planning for a task and self-monitoring understanding, improves their comprehension of text (Klingner, Morrison, and Eppolito 2011).

Language Development

- Coordinating vocabulary instruction so that students have multiple exposures increases the likelihood that they will acquire targeted words (Butler, and others 2010).
- Integrating explicit vocabulary instruction into curricula enhances students' ability to acquire vocabulary from content-area textbooks and other texts (Kamil, and others 2008).
- Providing direct instruction in word meanings, instruction in strategies that promote independent vocabulary acquisition, and opportunities for rich discussion of texts enhances students' vocabulary acquisition (Kamil, and others 2008).

Effective Expression (writing)

- Explicitly teaching strategies for planning, revising, and/or editing has a strong impact on the quality of students' writing and is especially effective for students experiencing difficulty writing (Graham and Perin 2007).
- Setting specific reachable product goals, such as adding more ideas to a paper when revising or including certain structural elements, positively impacts writing quality of all students, including (tentatively) those experiencing difficulty (Graham and Perin 2007).
- Use of word-processing technologies is especially effective in enhancing the quality of texts of students experiencing difficulty with writing (Graham and Perin 2007).

Foundational Skills (word level reading) [from a summary by Curtis 2004]

- Systematic, explicit, and direct instruction produces the best results in word level reading. Instruction should target needs, be brief and multisensory, and applied.
- Instruction should emphasize high frequency spelling-sound relationships and emphasis should be placed on assisting students in identification of common syllables found within multisyllabic words.
- Instruction should focus on patterns and generalizations, not memorization of rules.
- Opportunities to practice identification of words in context should be frequent. Oral reading should occur in a setting in which teens are comfortable taking risks.
- Fluent reading should be modeled and students should have numerous opportunities to practice.
- Students should have opportunities to read independently.
- Study of word structure (e.g., affixes) and word origin (e.g., Latin) enhances students' ability to recognize words and access word meanings.

Support is provided on the basis of ongoing assessment. In other words, students receive the instruction they need; their time is not wasted with instruction in skills they already possess. Time is of the essence: assistance should be provided swiftly, be fast paced to accelerate learning, and address what is needed. Collaboration among all teachers is paramount for serving students experiencing difficulties. Special education teachers, reading specialists, ELD teachers, and content-area teachers should coordinate instruction; co-teaching and co-planning should be regular practices.

Each of the supports for students should be provided in a warm, inviting, and respectful environment that provides access to appropriate high-interest materials and educators committed to advancing the literacy of all students (Carnegie Council on Advancing Adolescent Literacy 2010).

English Language Development in Middle School

As EL adolescents leave their elementary years and progress through middle school, the content they encounter and the language they are expected to understand and produce in school become increasingly complex. The key content understandings and instructional practices described in previous sections of this chapter are important for all middle school students. However, for ELs' development of content knowledge and academic English, it is critical for teachers to create the intellectually rich, interactive, and inclusive types of learning environments called for in the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards. School may be the only place where ELs have the opportunity to

All EL middle school students can engage meaningfully in complex, cognitively demanding, content-rich tasks requiring the use of academic English, as long as they receive appropriately scaffolded instruction to do so.

develop advanced content understandings and linguistic abilities in English. The CA ELD Standards provide teachers with guidance on what they can expect their ELs to be able to do as they gain increasing proficiency in English as an additional language. Teachers use the standards for planning and ongoing observation of ELs so that instruction is tailored to their specific learning needs. All EL middle school students can engage meaningfully in complex, cognitively demanding, content-rich tasks requiring the use of academic English, as long as they receive appropriately scaffolded instruction to do so.

Schools and districts need to be ready to welcome newcomer *ELs (those students just arriving into the U.S. or who have been in the U.S. for a very short time).*

Many ELs in California middle schools were born in the U.S. or arrived early in their elementary years, others are new or relatively new to English, and still others are somewhere in between. The needs of individual EL students in their early adolescent years vary widely and depend on a multitude of factors, including age on arrival to the U.S., immigrant status, prior schooling, primary language and literacy experiences, English language proficiencies, content knowledge, and many other things. Therefore, districts, schools, and teachers should learn as much about their EL students as they can in order to provide them with the educational approaches that best support them to develop English and be ready for the challenges and demands of high school in an accelerated time frame.

Schools and districts need to be ready to welcome *newcomer* ELs (those students just arriving into the U.S. or who have been in the U.S. for a very short time). Some newcomer ELs are literate in their primary language and on par with—or even ahead of—their U.S. peers in terms of rigorous grade-level content knowledge, while others have experienced disruption in their schooling careers and have gaps in their literacy and content knowledge. Still other newcomer ELs arrive from regions assailed with extreme life circumstances, such as war or famine, and require specialized counseling and social services in addition to academic and linguistic support. Whether one or one hundred newcomer ELs arrive at a district at any given time, and whether newcomer ELs have limited or advanced content knowledge and literacy in their primary languages, middle school should be a place where all adolescent ELs can learn and thrive academically, linguistically, socio-emotionally. (For more on supporting newcomer ELs and their families, see the section on English language development in high school in chapter 7 of this *ELA/ELD Framework*.)

Most ELs in California middle schools are not newcomers to English but have been in the U.S. for many years, sometimes since birth. Some of these students begin middle school underprepared for the advanced levels of English and content knowledge required to fully engage with academic middle school subjects. Fluent in conversational English but challenged by academic English and disciplinary literacy tasks, these students may find it difficult to engage meaningfully in increasingly rigorous coursework. Schools should ensure that all ELs, including newcomer ELs, normally progressing ELs, and long-term ELs, are immersed in rich instruction that *accelerates* their understandings about and abilities to use academic English as they continue to develop increasingly complex content understandings. This type of instruction requires teachers to develop sophisticated understandings of the particular content knowledge and disciplinary literacy practices their EL students need to develop in order to be successful in the disciplines of English language arts, science, history/social studies, mathematics, and all other subjects.

Schools should ensure that all ELs, including newcomer ELs, normally progressing ELs, and long-term ELs, are immersed in rich instruction that accelerates *their understandings about and abilities to use academic English as they continue to develop increasingly complex content understandings.*

Like all students at this age, whether it is apparent or not, ELs in middle school look to their teachers as guides and mentors in their continuing apprenticeship in academic subjects and their transition from childhood into and through the teenage years.

Whether adolescent ELs are newcomers to English, are progressing steadily in their development of English, or have *stalled* in their development of academic English and content understandings, teachers are responsible for meeting each of their students wherever they are and facilitating their accelerated cognitive and linguistic development. This entails not only outstanding teaching; it also requires building relationships with students. Like all students at this age, whether it is apparent or not, ELs in middle school look to their teachers as guides and mentors in their continuing apprenticeship in academic subjects and their transition from childhood into and through the teenage years. Like all adolescents, EL students are more deeply engaged with school learning when their teachers are respectful of who they are as individuals and of their communities and families and when they are confident that their teachers believe they can succeed at challenging academic tasks, care about their success, and provide high levels of support. Teachers' respectful attitudes and positive dispositions toward their EL students are critical for academic success and healthy social-emotional development.

The CA ELD Standards support teachers to focus on critical areas of English language development, and they set goals and expectations for how EL students at various levels of English language proficiency will interact meaningfully with content, develop academic English, and increase their language awareness. The CA ELD Standards are used in tandem with the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and other content standards in all classes that include ELs as learners, and they are used as the focal standards for targeted language instruction that *builds into and from* the types of academic tasks EL students are engaged in throughout the day. The goals for comprehensive ELD are the following:

- Building students' abilities to engage in a variety of collaborative discussions about academic content and texts
- Developing students' academic vocabularies and grammatical understandings
- Building students' metalinguistic awareness in order to support close reading and writing of different text types
- Building students' abilities to write coherent and cohesive academic texts in English

Integrated and Designated English Language Development

This *ELA/ELD Framework* promotes the implementation of carefully designed and comprehensive systems that support all ELs to develop advanced levels of English in all content areas. This comprehensive approach to ELD includes *both* integrated and designated ELD. *Integrated ELD* refers to ELD throughout the day and across the disciplines for all ELs. In integrated ELD, the CA ELD Standards are used in all disciplines *in tandem with* the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and other content standards to support ELs' linguistic and academic progress. Teachers use the CA ELD Standards to inform their planning of intellectually rich academic experiences that are provided *through English*. Through these experiences using English meaningfully (e.g., through collaborative conversations, interpreting texts

This ELA/ELD Framework *promotes the implementation of carefully designed and comprehensive systems that support all ELs to develop advanced levels of English in all content areas. This comprehensive approach to ELD includes* both *integrated and designated ELD.*

they read, writing and multimedia projects), ELs build confidence and proficiency in understanding and demonstrating their content knowledge in English. In addition, when teachers support their students' development of *language awareness*, or how specific language resources (e.g., word choice, ways of putting sentences together) enable users of English to convey particular messages in powerful ways (e.g., in an argumentative text or oral debate), they learn to be more deliberate users of English. Through this dual development of academic English and language awareness, teachers support ELs to gain sophisticated understandings of language as a complex, dynamic, and social resource for making meaning; this dual development also helps students develop the ability to intentionally shift their language use based on discipline, topic, task, purpose, audience, and text type.

English learners build language awareness in designated ELD as they come to understand how different text types use particular language resources (e.g., vocabulary, grammatical structures, ways of structuring and organizing whole texts).

Designated ELD is a protected time during the regular school day when teachers use the CA ELD Standards as the focal standards in ways that build *into and from content instruction* so that ELs develop the critical English language skills, knowledge, and abilities needed for rigorous academic content learning in English. Designated ELD should not be viewed as separate and isolated from ELA, science, social studies, mathematics, and other disciplines but rather as a protected opportunity during the regular school day to support ELs in developing the discourse practices, grammatical structures, and vocabulary necessary for successful participation in academic tasks across the content areas. English learners build language awareness in designated ELD as they come to understand how different text types use particular language resources (e.g., vocabulary, grammatical structures, ways of structuring and organizing whole texts). This language awareness is fostered when students have opportunities to experiment with language, shaping and enriching their own language using these language resources. During designated ELD students engage in discussions related to the *content knowledge* they are learning in ELA and other content areas, and these discussions promote the use of the language from those content areas. Students also *discuss the new language* they are learning to use. For example, students might learn about the grammatical structures of a particular complex text they are using in science or ELA, or they might explicitly learn some of the general academic vocabulary used in the texts they are reading in ELA or social studies.

During designated ELD students engage in discussions related to the content knowledge *they are learning in ELA and other content areas, and these discussions promote the use of the language from those content areas. Students also* discuss the new language *they are learning to use.*

Designated ELD should not be viewed as a *place* but rather as a *protected time*. Depending on the particular learning needs of a school's ELs and the number of ELs at particular English language proficiency levels, a school may decide to extend the school day for ELs so that an extra period can be dedicated to time for designated ELD during the regular school day. This specialized course might include other non-EL students who need support in developing academic English related to their content learning in middle school coursework. A logical scope and sequence for English language development is aligned with the texts used and tasks implemented in ELA and other content instruction. Other schools, particularly schools with low numbers of ELs, may opt to provide dedicated time within the school day and within content courses when teachers can work with small groups of students. Some ELs, particularly those at the Bridging level of English language proficiency, likely

require less intensive designated ELD support than ELs at the Emerging or Expanding levels. Schools consider the needs of students when designing program supports and instruction. Regardless of the ways in which individual schools structure time for designated ELD, all ELs require both integrated and designated ELD.

Content teachers and teachers responsible for teaching designated ELD collaborate regularly in order to ensure that what is taught in designated ELD genuinely builds into and from content instruction and integrated ELD. Schools dedicate the time and resources needed for effective collaborations between teachers and for optimal student learning.

These decisions are made using a variety of data, including—first and foremost—EL students' learning needs. Master schedules should be flexible enough to accommodate students' transition out of specialized coursework when they are ready to do so. Content teachers and teachers responsible for teaching designated ELD collaborate regularly in order to ensure that what is taught in designated ELD genuinely builds into and from content instruction and integrated ELD. Schools dedicate the time and resources needed for effective collaborations between teachers and for optimal student learning. Regardless of the structure schools implement in order to provide designated ELD to their EL students, this coursework should not prevent any EL from participating in a comprehensive curriculum that includes full access to all core disciplines and electives, such as the performing and visual arts, world languages, and other classes all students need in order to be college- and career-ready. Examples of integrated and designated ELD are provided in snapshots and vignettes in the grade level sections of this chapter. A lengthier discussion of a comprehensive approach to ELD is provided in chapter 2 in this *ELA/ELD Framework*.

Grade Six

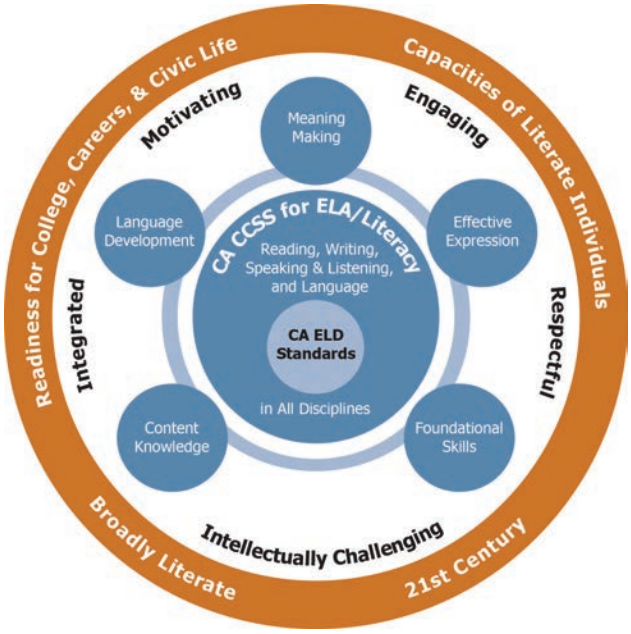
Grade six is often the first year of middle school for students and represents a major transition in students' lives. Just entering adolescence, these students eagerly encounter new areas of study and new ways to express their growing literacy understandings. Grade six also represents a significant step in the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards: argument replaces opinion in reading, speaking, and writing; separate literacy standards in the content areas make clear the literacy practices important in different disciplines; and thesis statements are expected in writing informative/explanatory texts. All students engage in meaningful collaborations with peers, read and savor new and exciting literature, and deepen their knowledge of academic English. Students who are ELs receive rich instruction in all content areas and a comprehensive program of English language development.

This grade-level section provides an overview of the key themes of ELA/literacy and ELD instruction in grade six. It also offers guidance for ensuring ELs have access to ELA and content instruction, including integrated and designated ELD instruction. Snapshots and vignettes bring several of the concepts to life.

Key Themes of ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction in Grade Six

In this section, the key themes of ELA/Literacy and ELD instruction are discussed as they apply to grade six. These include **Meaning Making**, **Language Development**, **Effective Expression**, **Content Knowledge**, and **Foundational Skills**. Instruction occurs in an integrated, motivating, engaging, respectful, and intellectually challenging context. Teachers recognize the importance of this grade level for students on the pathway toward the ultimate goals of transitional kindergarten through grade twelve schooling: developing the readiness for college, careers, and civic life; attaining the capacities of literate individuals; becoming broadly literate; and acquiring the skills for living and learning in the 21st century (figure 6.9). Each of the snapshots for grade six that follow is presented in connection with a theme; however, many snapshots illustrate several themes. The two vignettes at the end of the section for grade six depict integrated ELA and ELD instruction and designated ELD instruction based on the same topic and/or readings.

Figure 6.9. Circles of Implementation of ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction



Meaning Making

In grade six, meaning making grows in importance as students interact with texts of increasing complexity across all content areas. Beginning in grade six, the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy emphasize argument rather than opinion, and students are expected to trace and evaluate arguments and provide summaries different from their personal opinions or judgments when analyzing texts. Teachers provide instruction that enables all students to comprehend text, and students read closely to gain understanding and construct meaning from texts. Students learn to monitor their own understanding as they read and use strategies to clarify any confusions that arise.

The goal of making meaning in grade six is to help students understand and use the information they read in meaningful ways. Standards for informational text and literature require students to analyze text and cite evidence to support their understanding of key ideas and supporting details. Grade six provides a foundation for later grades. For example, the grade six informational reading standards require students to determine a central idea of a text, analyze how a key individual or event is introduced, and determine an author's point of view (RI.6.2, 3, and 6). In subsequent grades, students perform the same analysis for multiple texts, ideas, and points of view.

Summarizing is an important way to demonstrate understanding of text and clarify thinking. Although students have been expected to write summaries since grade four, in grade six students are expected to write summaries that are distinct from personal opinions, judgments, and prior knowledge. Effective summarizing involves identifying a topic sentence and deleting redundant and trivial information to identify a passage's main idea. Often graphic organizers can be used as a scaffold to support learning to write summaries of more complex text (Boardman, and others 2008). For example, a teacher might model how to summarize a passage from a history textbook by using a piece of paper folded into thirds—recording on each third the main idea, key details, and important supporting evidence. In partners, students would each write a summary sentence based on the information in the top third of the paper and read their sentences to their partners to compare. Students then answer the following questions: If you had not read the text yourself, would you be able to understand this sentence's main idea? Why or why not? Is there anything important that should be added? What is it? Is there anything unimportant that could be left out? What is it? Students discuss their responses and revise their summaries based on the feedback they receive (Schoenbach, Greenleaf, and Murphy 2012).

Summarizing is an important way to demonstrate understanding of text and clarify thinking. Although students have been expected to write summaries since grade four, in grade six students are expected to write summaries that are distinct from personal opinions, judgments, and prior knowledge.

In the following snapshot EL students become aware of the language resources used in stories and for summarizing stories during designated ELD instruction.

Snapshot 6.1. Summary and Analysis of Stories Designated ELD Connected to ELA in Grade Six

In English language arts, students in Ms. Chanthavong's sixth-grade class summarize and analyze stories in a variety of ways (e.g., during a teacher-led lesson, during writers' workshop, with a peer). During the analysis, students focus on the overall structure of stories, how elements such as setting and plot interact, the development and point of view of the characters, and the theme or central idea.

During designated ELD time, Ms. Chanthavong continues to promote summary and analysis of stories by expanding the pool of language resources her ELs draw upon during their oral discussions and written analyses. She shows her students how, in the different stages of narratives (e.g., *exposition, rising action, climax, falling action,* and *resolution*), authors use linking words or transitional phrases to guide readers through the story. She explains how these language resources are also useful for retelling stories, writing original stories, and for writing analyses of stories (i.e., literary criticism). For example, in *exposition*, adverbial phrases referring to time and place serve to orient the reader to the setting (e.g., *in a faraway land, one day in late summer, on the vast plains*). In the *rising action* and *climax* stages, words and phrases suggesting manner or mood can be used to introduce conflicts or plot twists (e.g., *unexpectedly, out of the blue, all of a sudden*). In the *falling action* and *resolution* stages of narratives, writers can employ words and phrases that suggest conflict resolution and relationships between events (e.g., *consequently, ultimately*). The teacher supports her students' understanding of how these words and phrases create cohesion by helping students locate relevant examples of such usage in the texts they read, and subsequently encouraging students to use these strategic language resources in their own writing.

Ms. Chanthavong also helps her students build language resources to summarize and analyze a story's elements. For example, she builds students' vocabulary for expressing their ideas and opinions by creating word banks (e.g., synonyms for *think* might include *believe, interpret, propose, come to the conclusion* while a word bank for *says* might include phrases and words like *suggests that, indicates, demonstrates*). She creates similar word banks for adjectives describing characters (e.g., *jealous, courageous, empathetic*) or adverbials that indicate time, manner, or place (e.g., *throughout the winter, fearlessly, along the coast*). The teacher often co-constructs word banks with her students and teaches some vocabulary explicitly (especially general academic vocabulary) so that students can refer back to the word banks as they discuss and compose texts.

During designated ELD, Ms. Chanthavong provides additional structured opportunities for her students to practice using these new language resources so that during ELA they will be able to use the language more confidently when summarizing and analyzing texts.

CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI.6.6b, 8, 10, 12; ELD.PII.6.2b, 3–5
CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: RL.6.2–4; W.6.3; SL.6.4; L.6.6

Text-dependent questions, as developed by Kilgo (2003), is another research-based strategy that can be used to promote meaning making with various types of complex text. In this approach, teachers analyze the text and develop questions to help students comprehend the text at increasingly levels of depth. The questions encourage close reading of the text and support students as they write about the ideas from the text. Students craft their own questions to strengthen comprehension as well. The following are characteristics of these questions:

- Can only be answered with evidence from the text
- Can be literal (checking for understanding) but must also involve analysis, synthesis, and evaluation
- Focus at the word, sentence, and paragraph level, as well as larger ideas, themes, or events
- Focus on difficult portions of text in order to enhance reading proficiency
- Can also include prompts for writing and discussion questions

Questioning helps students process information deeply and relate it to their prior knowledge (Pressley, and others 1992). Four types of questions (labeled as Find It, Look Closer, Prove It, and Take It Apart) serve as a shared language for students and teachers to talk about questioning practices and, when necessary, make explicit the processes underlying reading and listening comprehension. Some question types elicit higher level thinking by requiring students to synthesize information to produce an answer or make complex inferences. Figure 6.10 provides a description and examples of each of the four types of questions and corresponding standards.

Figure 6.10. Text-Dependent Questions

Type	Description of Question	Example Questions	CA CCSS for ELA/ Literacy
Find It	Most literal: requires reader to find explicitly stated facts and details in text that relate to the main idea	Who is . . . ? Where is . . . ? What is . . . ? When is . . . ? When did . . . ? How many . . . ?	RL/RI.6–8.1 RH/RST.6–8.1
Look Closer	Literal: but requires searching in more than one place	Compare and contrast . . . Explain . . . Summarize . . . What do the facts or ideas show . . . ? How would you rephrase the meaning?	RL/RI.6–8.2 RL.6–8.7 RL.6–8.9 RI.6–8.4 RH/RST.6–8.2
Prove It	Inferential: readers search for clues/evidence to support their answers (analyzing or evaluating information)	Identify main idea . . . Draw conclusions . . . Make predictions . . . Make inferences . . . What is the theme . . . ? What is the central idea . . . ?	RL/RI.6–8.3 RI.6–8, Standards 7–9 RH/RST.6–8.3

Type	Description of Question	Example Questions	CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy
Take it Apart	Analyze text structure and organization	The first paragraph is important because . . . How has the author organized the information (cause/effect, clues/evidence, chronological, etc.)? Why does the author use a chart, illustration . . . ? The author uses description to tell . . . give an example from the text.	RL/RI.6–8, Standards 4–6 RH/RST.6–8, Standards 5–6

Source
Adapted from
Kilgo, Margaret J. 2003. *Trailblazers Reading Explorers Tutoring Program: Comprehension Through Deductive Reasoning.* New Rochelle, NY: Benchmark Education.

Language Development

As noted in the overview of this chapter, language development spans all areas of ELA/literacy and ELD: understanding written texts; producing written texts and oral presentations; as well as knowledge and use of standard English grammar and usage, and of vocabulary. Thus, elements of academic language are addressed in the sections on meaning making, effective expression, and content knowledge for each grade. This section highlights vocabulary acquisition and use for grade six. As discussed in previous chapters, a multi-faceted approach is taken to develop vocabulary, including establishing a word-conscious environment, teaching specific words, teaching word-learning strategies, and providing multiple opportunities to experience and use new vocabulary. Standards new to grade six include the following:

- Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary). (L.6.4d)
- Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words. (L.6.5b)
- Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., *stingy, scrimping, economical, unwasteful, thrifty*). (L.6.5c)
- Gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression. (L.6.6)

The following snapshot presents designated ELD instruction connected to world history in which vocabulary is an important element. It addresses many components of ELA/literacy and ELD in addition to vocabulary as well.

Snapshot 6.2. Reading Complex Texts About Slavery in Ancient History Designated ELD Connected to World History in Grade Six

In social studies, students in Mr. Powell's sixth-grade class listen to and read complex texts about slavery in different societies, such as ancient Egypt and Rome. They collaboratively engage in discussions, in which they explain and analyze important elements of slavery, distinguishing between fact, opinion, and reasoned opinion. As they write arguments, they evaluate information in the texts they have read and the multimedia they have viewed, support their claims with evidence, and use credible sources.

During designated ELD time, Mr. Powell shows his students models of arguments, focusing on how the arguments are structured, and points out specific vocabulary and grammatical structures students may want to adopt when they discuss and write about their own claims. He guides the students in evaluating how well the author uses language in the texts to support claims or present ideas. To make his thinking visible, Mr. Powell explains his own reasoning (e.g., how well the language used to illustrate an idea conveys the intended message). He explicitly teaches some of the important vocabulary and phrases necessary for understanding and discussing texts about slavery (e.g., *slave/slavery/enslave, capture, justify, spoils of war, emancipate/emancipation)* and provides sentence frames for collaborative conversations, so students can practice—in meaningful ways—new grammatical structures they will need to explain their ideas in both speaking and writing (e.g., *Depending on the way slaves were captured, _____; In this section of the article, the author explains how _____*).

Importantly, Mr. Powell provides extended opportunities for students to discuss their claims and reasoning with evidence from the texts using the vocabulary and grammatical structures they are learning. As students build up these language resources, he guides them in spoken and written practice using the language resources so that they will eventually feel more confident using these language forms in independent writing.

CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI.6.1, 3, 4, 6a-b, 7, 10a, 11a, 12; ELD.PII.6.1, 4–7
CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: RI.6.1, 3, 4; W.6.1c-d; SL.6.1, 4; L.6.3, 6
Related CA History Social–Science Standards:
6.2. and 6.7. Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Kush (6.2) and during the development of Rome (6.7).

Effective Expression

Students who have achieved the standards in the previous grades demonstrate the ability to express themselves in writing, discussing, and presenting, and they demonstrate considerable command of language conventions. Expectations and examples of instruction for grade six in effective expression are discussed in the following sections.

Writing

In grade six, expectations for students' writing content, skills, and strategies build on those in grade five while expanding in specific ways. Most notable is the move from writing opinion pieces in grade five to writing arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence in grade six (W.6.1). In addition students

use credible sources in writing arguments and organize their claims and evidence clearly. Students continue to write informative/explanatory texts; however, the way in which students select, organize, and analyze relevant content when writing is more specific and advanced (W.6.2) and for the first time includes a thesis statement. Students also continue to write narrative texts, which now contain relevant descriptive details and well-structured event sequences (W.6.3).

Regardless of text type and purpose, students write primarily in response to text or texts while establishing and maintaining a formal style. They also conduct short research projects to answer a question. For the first time students are expected to use multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility of each source, and quote data and conclusions while avoiding plagiarism. Keyboarding is more important; students are expected to type three pages in a single sitting in grade six—increasing from the two expected in grade five and the one in grade four. Students demonstrate greater independence in using technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and interact with others.

Students write for many purposes and many time frames and use a process for planning, composing, revising, and editing.

In the following snapshot, students analyze data, write an argument, and present their findings in mathematics in response to a real-life scenario.

Snapshot 6.3. Choosing and Defending a Unit of Data Analysis Integrated Literacy and Mathematics Lesson in Grade Six

Ms. Smith has been teaching a unit on data analysis to her sixth-grade class. She has provided vocabulary instruction to ensure that her students have an understanding of the terms *mean*, *median*, *mode*, and *range* as well as how these measures of central tendency and spread are applied when organizing and analyzing data. Ms. Smith wants to assess her students' knowledge and skills and also have the students reflect on their own skill levels, so she prepares a set of small scenarios involving real-life situations in which data have been collected. Once she has modeled the process, the students will identify the most appropriate measure of central tendency (mean, median, mode) to use for analyzing the data, construct a viable argument using text and data from the scenario to defend their choice, and critique the choices and reasoning of others during fellow students' presentations.

Ms. Smith knows she will need to thoroughly explain how to complete the data analysis for a scenario and how to defend the choice of data analysis. After a demonstration lesson which includes presenting and defending her choice, she will check for understanding by distributing a rubric designed for this task and ask the students to pair up and *grade* her model. Following brief whole-class discussion, a few pairs share their thoughts. Ms. Smith then distributes the set of scenarios to the students. She gives students an opportunity to independently skim and then briefly discuss the scenarios in their table groups and ask one another clarifying questions. As students discuss the vignette, Ms. Smith circulates around the room listening to their discussions and answering questions, as needed. She then asks students to repeat the directions for the activity, calling on several students to add detail. This open discussion further enables all students to understand the task before them.

Next, students are given time to study one scenario, determine what they believe the most appropriate measure of data analysis would be, and work together in pairs to write a draft argument defending their choice. While students use the data analysis rubric to share, review, and fine-tune their drafts with partners, Ms. Smith provides support to students, as needed.

Snapshot 6.3. Choosing and Defending a Unit of Data Analysis Integrated Literacy and Mathematics Lesson in Grade Six (cont.)

The students then create a poster of their work to present to the class as a final draft. After students present their posters, they are displayed throughout the room. Once the last presentation of the day has been given, students will then conduct a *gallery walk* where, again, working with a partner, they examine their peers' posters and put a sticky note on each one, stating whether or not they believe the argument has been adequately supported and why.

Sample Scenario

The owner of a car dealership is looking to promote a salesperson to the position of Sales Manager. He decides to look at the number of cars and trucks each salesperson sold over a four week period. Since data are easier to read in a table, the owner constructs the table below. The owner spent many days thinking about how best to look at the data to be fair to all his employees. He eventually decided to ask his employees to make an argument as to why they should be the one promoted.

Some of the employees believe John is a good candidate for promotion, but they do not know how to analyze data and would appreciate your help. Determine which measure of central tendency is most appropriate to use to represent how many cars and trucks John sold in a four week period. Since these employees must meet with the owner, they also need to justify why this measure of central tendency best represents John's skills as a salesperson. (Construct a viable argument.) Remember, John wants this job promotion, but he also must be honest with the owner.

Car and Truck Sales

	Jennifer	*José*	*John*	*Ahmad*	*Tim*
Week 1	7	5	0	8	7
Week 2	4	4	9	5	4
Week 3	6	8	8	8	6
Week 4	5	9	7	6	8

By engaging in mathematics argument writing and critiquing the arguments of others in writing, the students in Ms. Smith's class learn to reason like mathematicians while simultaneously strengthening their abilities to understand and use the language of mathematics.

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: WHST.6–8.1; RST.6–8.7

Related CA CCSS for Mathematics:

MP.3 Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.

6.SP.5.c Giving quantitative measures of center (median and/or mean) and variability (interquartile range and/or mean absolute deviation), as well as describing any overall pattern and any striking deviations from the overall pattern with reference to the context in which the data were gathered.

In the writing sample in figure 6.11, the student author demonstrates achievement of Writing Standard 3 for narrative writing. (See sections for grades seven and eight in this chapter for examples of student writing for argument and informative/explanatory text types.)

Figure 6.11. Grade Six Writing Sample

How the great Saltwater came to be A long, long time ago, there were many gods. Two were Sarias the salt god, and Walior the water god. They argued quite a bit and all of the other gods were sick of it. So was a newt named Yellow-Belly. It was the middle of the summer and one day when the gods were on a ship, Yellow-Belly had also snuck aboard. Once again, they were arguing and Yellow-Belly decided to put a stop to it once and for all.	**Engages and orients the reader by establishing context for narrative to follow. Main characters are introduced –** Sarias the salt god, Wailor the water god, and the most important character (protagonist) the newt Yellow-Belly. The arguing between the two gods becomes the focus/ conflict of the narrative.
"Sarias how can you put up with that insolent Walior? You guys should have a battle and whoever loses will be dead and you won't have to worry about arguing anymore."	**Uses dialogue to develop characters and events,** so that the plot develops.
Meanwhile up in the sky the other gods are trying to figure out a way to get the two gods to stop arguing but they didn't want it to be in a violent way. They have no idea what the shrewd newt Yellow-Belly was up to.	**Uses transitional phrase to signal shift in setting**
Yellow-Belly gets Walior alone and now he want Walior to have a battle too. "Walior why are you just sitting here you guys should have a battle to the death so that you won't have to argue about who's right anymore." "Well Yellow-Belly I don't know what if I lose and get killed? "Walior are you really asking me that? Of course you won't lose and get killed. I mean you are the better of the two. You are more handsome and way stronger. You have nothing to lose by having a battle because Sarias is sure to lose." "Of course you are right Yellow-Belly and that is a great idea." Now Yellow-Belly has Walior eager to do battle with Sarias, but what if Sarias doesn't agree? "So Sarias have you made up your mind on whether you will have a battle with Walior?" "No not really because I am worried that Walior might win."	**Uses dialogue to develop character,** which shows the reader how clever Yellow-Belly is
"Oh you mean that great buffoon. He couldn't beat you if your eyes were shut and your hands tied up my lord. You have no need to worry about him because YOU are sure to be the winner. ***You are smaller sure but you have cunning and fearlessness on your side***. I mean, have you lost a battle yet? No, because you are the best god ever." "I guess you are right and I will do as you suggest. But what about Walior?"	**Uses precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details to develop action, events, and characters**

"Oh don't worry about him my lord I have already taken care of him. He will die at your hand." "All right you gods are you ready for your battle? You know who will win and you don't need to worry about it." "So Sarias, you sure you want to do this? You know that I will win because I am much more handsome and I am way stronger." "Even so Walior I am more cunning and I haven't lost to any beast yet." "There's always a first time Sarias."	**Uses dialogue to develop character.** This time, the dialogue is between the two gods, which again shows the reader how clever Yellow-Belly has been in setting up this action.
There was a great battle that lasted 8 days and 8 nights. Eventually Sarias emerged victorious. As he was standing over Walior and gloating: "Ha ha I have killed you W . . . "	**Uses transitional words** (eventually) **to signal shifts from one time frame to another**
As he said this Walior reached up and slashed him in the stomach. As Sarias fell from the pain, his great-sword plunged into Walior's heart. And so the great Sarias won the battle but he died in the end from his stomach wound because Walior had been very vicious and had cut a major artery. And so they both died because of a newt who was fed up with their antics. After they died, they both had left behind great quantities of both salt and water. The other gods saw it and they had to figure out what to do with all of that salt and water. They were smart and they did the smartest thing that they could think of. They mixed all of the salt with all the water, and they made salt water. Then they picked a HUGE place to distribute all of it and there is now salt water because of that crazy newt, Yellow-Belly.	**Uses precise sensory language** (slashed him in the stomach, plunged into Wailor's heart, vicious)
But of course, Yellow-Belly had to be punished. However, the other gods were so happy because they didn't have to deal with arguing between the deceased, that they didn't want to punish Yellow-Belly very much. They just sentenced him and all of his descendants to a life in pond water with NO talking.	**Provides a conclusion which follows from the events** and focus / conflict **of the narrative**

Annotation

In this narrative, the writer tells the story of how the seawater became salty, in the manner of a myth or legend. She focuses it around the conflict between two gods, the god of salt and the god of water. The protagonist is the newt, whose interests and actions to get the gods to stop arguing drive the plot of the narrative.

The writer has organized a well-structured event sequence that unfolds naturally to develop the story line. She uses transition words and phrases to move the plot along, and to signal shifts in time frame and setting (*meanwhile, up in the sky).*

The writer makes the tricky and clever character of the newt very clear throughout. Most of the action and character development is done through dialogue. There is some precise descriptive sensory language used, as well. At times, it would be helpful to have a bit more description or *narrator voice* along with the dialogue, but in general the writer controls this plot and character development well.

The narrative concludes with "how we got salt water," which follows well from the narrated events.

Source

Student Achievement Partners. 2013c. "Collection of All In Common, Writing Samples, K-12." *Achieve the Core.*

Teachers carefully examine their students' writing to determine the students' achievement of selected objectives, reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching, and inform subsequent instruction. They involve students in reviewing their work, and for EL students, teachers 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

Collaborative discussions remain an important element of instruction in grade six. As with reading and writing, students now refer to evidence on the topic, text, or issue during discussions. Students demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing during discussions as well.

Teachers guide students to develop their collaboration and discussion skills by using techniques that promote productive and equitable group work. Methods such as reciprocal teaching, expert group jigsaw, and literature circles can provide students with structured opportunities to engage in collaborative discussions as they grapple with understanding a selection of text. These strategies may involve assigning students specific roles for their small group discussions. Teachers should take time to teach students the responsibilities of each role so they can work independently when they break into small groups. Figure 6.12 presents an expanded version of the small-group roles presented in chapter 5.

Methods such as reciprocal teaching, expert group jigsaw, and literature circles can provide students with structured opportunities to engage in collaborative discussions as they grapple with understanding a selection of text.

Figure 6.12. Small-Group Roles for Nonfiction Discussions

Summarizer	**Good readers can pick out the important concepts from the reading and retell them in their own words.** Your job is to prepare a clear summary of the text to share with your group. Identify three to five key ideas or important concepts from the text, excluding any specific details. You may need to synthesize or combine the ideas to make sure the summary provides a clear overview of the text's purpose and main points. Depending on your particular reading, develop a paragraph or list of sentences that retells these concepts using your own words. ***How will you involve other participants in the discussion?*** Be prepared to go over the aspects of a good summary and ask the group how to improve yours.
Connector	**Good readers make connections between what they are reading and what they already know in order to help make sense of the text.** Your job is to find connections between the reading and the outside world, including connections to your own life, previous readings, content you have learned from class or news sources, or other information that this text reminds you of. Make at least three connections to specific sections of the reading. For each one, identify the page number (and/or paragraph number) of the text you are connecting to, explain the connection, and if possible, share how this helps you understand the reading better. ***How will you involve other participants in the discussion?*** Find out if the other members of the group share similar connections. How could you challenge the group to make a connection to previous readings or learning from this class?
Questioner	**Good readers ask questions as they read, noticing when they are confused, curious, or interested in the text.** Your job is to generate questions that you have about the text. Notice questions that pop up as you read and also take time to think of questions after reading. You might include questions you would like to investigate, questions about understanding a key word or important concept, or any other questions you think the group might like to discuss. Write down at least five questions. For each one, write the page number (and/or paragraph number) of the text it corresponds to. ***How will you involve other participants in the discussion?*** Prepare educated guesses or a sample response to the questions whenever possible, but when sharing your questions, give others a chance to respond first.

Passage/ Quote Finder (nonfiction) or Literary Luminary (fiction)	**Good readers notice interesting, funny, puzzling, or important sections of the text that catch their attention.** Your job is to locate a few special sections of the reading that the group should review and discuss. Find at least three special passages that *jumped out* at you as you were reading. These might be passages that seem especially important, puzzling, written well, controversial, or striking in some way. For each one, identify its page number (and/or paragraph number) and write down your reason for picking it. ***How will you involve other participants in the discussion?*** Describe how you plan on sharing and discussing the passage with the group (e.g., read aloud, ask someone to read, read silently). What follow-up questions could you ask to spark ongoing conversation? *Note: This role can be presented as Quote Finder and require students to look for and write down a particular quote.*
Textbook Detective (nonfiction) or Researcher (fiction)	**Good readers notice the key features of nonfiction text that alert you to important information.** Your job as Textbook Detective is to identify examples of key features in the text that help you understand important ideas. Look for examples of special fonts, illustrations or photographs, graphics, and text organizers (headers, glossary, preface, or vocabulary list). Note the page number, paragraph number, and/or location of the features and describe the important idea they are calling to your attention. ***How will you involve other participants in the discussion?*** Decide how you will help members find and discuss these features. For example, you might ask "What does this particular part of the text tell us?" or "Did anyone else notice this feature when they were reading?"
Illustrator	**Good readers are able to visualize what they read about to help make the text clearer and easier to understand.** Your job is to create three drawings connected to the reading to share with the group. They can be any combination of drawings, diagram, graph, flowchart or anything else that helps present the information visually. You might want to draw something complex or difficult to understand, an idea that interests you, or something from the text that is easy to draw. Write the page number (and/or paragraph number) within text that this drawing refers to. ***How will you involve other participants in the discussion?*** When your group meets, do not tell them what the drawing is about. Let them guess and discuss it first, then tell them what the drawing is about and why you chose it. (You might prepare some clues in case your classmates are stuck.) *Note: This can be an especially effective role for all students to complete before beginning work on a complex science lab or any assignment that is difficult to understand. For example, you might require students to draw a visual for each component of a lab procedure to demonstrate their comprehension of the activity before beginning the lab.*

Word Wizard	**Good readers are able to pick out key terms or words in a reading and use clues to figure the meaning of new vocabulary.** Your job is to be on the lookout for words that have special meaning, that interest you, or that you think are very important to the story. Find at least five words. Mark some of these key words while you are reading, and then later jot down their definitions, either from the text or from a dictionary or other source. For each one, identify the page number (and/or paragraph number) it is located on and describe why you chose it. ***How will you involve other participants in the discussion?*** Decide how you will help members find and discuss these words. For example, you might ask, "How does this word fit into the reading?" or "Does anyone know what this word means?"
Discussion Director	Your job is to make sure the group discussion stays on track and that everyone participates. Make a list of what a good discussion would look like. What are questions or prompts you can ask to help the group have a good discussion? *Note: This role can also be added to the role of Summarizer, Questioner, or Passage Master, with the idea that the Discussion Director will present first and then open up discussion to the group. She or he can also ask participants to share their preparation and ask follow-up questions or make connections that help to build ideas.*
Source Adapted from Daniels, Harvey. 1994. *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in the Student-Centered Classroom.* York, ME: Stenhouse.	

Presenting

Students' presentations become more formal in grade six as do expectations for listening to and analyzing information presented orally and through multimedia. For the first time, students are expected to delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not. Students present claims and findings in argument, narrative, informative, and response to literature presentations on a regular basis in grade six (SL.6.4). Specifically in grade six, they plan and deliver an informative/explanatory presentation that mirrors many of the expectations in writing (SL.6.4a). Presentations include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays to clarify information.

For the first time, students are expected to delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not. Students present claims and findings in argument, narrative, informative, and response to literature presentations on a regular basis in grade six.

Using Language Conventions

Students in grade six increase their command of conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing and speaking and capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. They retain and further develop the skills learned in previous years and learn and use new conventions. Conventions are learned through rich instruction and by analyzing model texts and the use of conventions in students' own writing.

New to grade six are the following:

L.6.1a. Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive)

L.6.1b. Use all pronouns correctly

L.6.1c. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person

L.6.1d. Recognize and correct vague pronouns

L.6.1e. Recognize variations from standard English in own and others' writing and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language

L.6.2a. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive and parenthetical elements

L.6.2b. Spell *correctly*

Students improve as they develop their ability to edit their own writing, identifying and correcting their own errors in language conventions. To learn and use conventions effectively students need to write frequently for shorter and extended time frames and receive strategic feedback from their teachers.

Content Knowledge

Reading and interacting with literature and informational text, conducting research, and reading widely and independently build students' knowledge of content in ELA and other disciplines. Students in grade six engage in the study of literature, literary nonfiction, and nonfiction in ELA and other disciplines. Literature study, although not confined exclusively to ELA, primarily occurs in ELA classrooms. As students face increased literacy demands in all content areas in grade six, improved comprehension becomes ever more critical to their academic success. As discussed in meaning making, strategy instruction is an important part of ensuring comprehension; no substitute exists, however, for participation of all students in a full curriculum in all content areas. Knowledge of content, including literature, increases proficiency in all the language arts—most notably reading comprehension.

The following snapshot depicts a historical investigation, in which students read and analyze primary and secondary sources, write short responses, and participate in small-group and class discussions.

Snapshot 6.4. River Systems in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and India Integrated ELA/Literacy and World History Lesson in Grade Six

Mr. Pletcher is teaching his sixth-grade students about the formation of early civilizations in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and India along the Nile, Tigris, Euphrates, and Indus river systems. Using information from the Education and the Environment Initiative Curriculum, Mr. Pletcher poses this historical investigation question: How did the advantages and challenges of river systems lead to the rise of civilizations in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and India?

So that students can locate the key river systems and early civilizations, Mr. Pletcher begins the lesson with a map activity. Then he projects NASA satellite images of the Nile River delta, the 2010 flooding along the Indus River, and the desert landscape surrounding the irrigated zone along the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. He also shows his students artwork from these civilizations that depict rivers. He asked students to brainstorm the advantages and challenges of river systems and recorded their answers on the board.

Next, Mr. Pletcher gives the students a secondary text that explains the concept of *civilization*, provides historical context and examples from the Egyptian, Mesopotamian, and Indus River civilizations, and contains short paragraphs on key terms, such as *city*, *urban*, *centralization*, *society*, *religion*, *government*, *division of labor*, *irrigation*, and *dikes.* Each key term is defined in the paragraph. Follow-up questions in the text prompt students to explain each key term and to state how it is related to the development of early civilizations. The final paragraph of the text selection gives a summary definition of civilization, which students then restate in their own words. After students read the text and answer the vocabulary questions, Mr. Pletcher leads a whole class discussion about their answers and records a class definition of civilization on the board.

He then divides the class into small groups, giving each a graphic organizer with four columns and four rows. In the first column, students are instructed to identify two advantages and two challenges of river systems. In the second column, students write how the advantage or challenge led to the rise of civilization. In the third column, students record specific evidence from the text (on Egyptian, Mesopotamian, or Indian civilizations), and in the fourth column, they cite the source of the evidence (e.g. page number and paragraph).

To conclude, Mr. Pletcher leads the class in a discussion about the historical investigation question: How did the advantages and challenges of river systems lead to the rise of civilizations in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and India? Students cite textual evidence to support their answers.

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: SL.6.1; RH.6–8.1; RH.6–8.4; RH.6–8.7

Related CA History–Social Science Standards:

6.2 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Kush.

6.2.1 Locate and describe the major river systems and discuss the physical settings that supported permanent settlement and early civilizations.

6.2.2 Trace the development of agricultural techniques that permitted the production of economic surplus and the emergence of cities as centers of culture and power.

Source

Adapted from

California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery. 2011. "6.2.1. River Systems and Ancient Peoples." *California Education and the Environment Initiative Curriculum.*

Snapshot 6.4. River Systems in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and India Integrated ELA/Literacy and World History Lesson in Grade Six (cont.)

Additional Information

- California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery. Education and the Environment Initiative. "California Education and the Environment Initiative Curriculum." http://www.californiaeei.org/curriculum/

Content knowledge, as are all the themes, is supported by wide reading. Teachers should plan a program of independent reading that encompasses literature, literary nonfiction, and nonfiction. See the section on wide reading and independent reading in chapter 2 and in the overview of the span in this chapter.

Foundational Skills

Ideally by the time students enter grade six, their knowledge of foundational skills is well established. They have a large base of sight words, and they rapidly and effectively employ word recognition skills to identify new printed words. Fluency, which includes accuracy, rate, and prosody, continues to develop as students engage in wide and extensive reading. Rate of reading varies, however, as it should, with the text and the task. Based on an extensive study of oral reading fluency, Hasbrouck and Tindal (2006) recommend that students scoring more than 10 words below the 50th percentile receive additional instruction that targets fluency. (See figure 6.13.)

Figure 6.13. Mean Oral Reading Rate of Grade Six Students

Percentile	Fall WCPM*	Winter WCPM*	Spring WCPM*	Avg. Weekly Improvement**
90	177	195	204	0.8
75	153	167	177	0.8
50	**127**	**140**	**150**	**0.7**
25	98	111	122	0.8
10	68	82	93	0.8

*WCPM = Words Correct Per Minute **Average words per week growth

Source

Hasbrouck, Jan, and Gerald A. Tindal. 2006. "Oral Reading Fluency Norms: A Valuable Assessment Tool for Reading Teachers." *The Reading Teacher* 57: 646-655.

Fluency rates should be cautiously interpreted with all students. See the discussion of fluency in the overview of the span in this chapter and the section on supporting students strategically. The primary way to support students' fluency is to ensure accuracy in decoding and engagement in wide, extensive reading of texts that are neither too simple nor too challenging. In addition, students should have authentic reasons to reread text because rereading also supports fluency.

For information on teaching foundational skills to middle school students who need it, see the section on supporting students strategically in the overview to the span of this chapter. See also chapter 9 on access and equity.

English Language Development in Grade Six

In grade six, ELs learn English, learn content knowledge through English, and learn about how English works. English language development occurs throughout the day across the disciplines and also during a time specifically designated for developing English based on ELs' language learning needs. In integrated ELD, teachers use the CA ELD Standards to *augment* the ELA and other content instruction they provide. For example, to support ELs at the Emerging level of English language proficiency, particularly ELs who are new to the U.S. and to English, to write an informational text (e.g., an autobiography), teachers might have the students read and discuss short autobiographies as *mentor texts.* They explicitly show the students how autobiographies are organized, specific information typically included in autobiographies, and particular language useful for this text type (e.g., text connectives for showing when things happened in time, such as "when I was ten," "after I came to the U.S."). Teachers also provide sentence or paragraph frames for students to use in their autobiographies and provide bilingual dictionaries and thesauruses, so students can include precise vocabulary and new grammatical structures to convey their knowledge of the topic. Providing opportunities for newcomer ELs to read and discuss texts in their primary language can also help them compose these text types in English.

As they progress in their understandings of English and their capacities to use English to convey meanings, ELs increase in their ability to write longer texts independently and to write specific types. However, all EL students need varying levels of scaffolding depending on the task, the text, and their familiarity with the content and the language required to understand and engage in discussion.

Students at the Expanding and Bridging levels of English language proficiency likely do not need this level of linguistic support. As they progress in their understandings of English and their capacities to use English to convey meanings, ELs increase in their ability to write longer texts independently and to write specific types. However, all EL students need varying levels of scaffolding depending on the task, the text, and their familiarity with the content and the language required to understand and engage in discussion. Figure 6.14 presents a section of the CA ELD Standards that teachers can use, in tandem with the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and other content standards, to plan instructional support differentiated by proficiency level.

Figure 6.14. Using the CA ELD Standards in Integrated ELD

CA ELD Standards, Part I: Interacting in Meaningful Ways		
English Language Development Level Continuum		
→ Emerging →	Expanding →	Bridging →
10. Writing a. Write short literary and informational texts (e.g., an argument for protecting the rainforests) collaboratively (e.g., with peers) and independently.	***10. Writing*** a. Write longer literary and informational texts (e.g., an argument for protecting the rainforests) collaboratively (e.g., with peers) and independently using appropriate text organization.	***10. Writing*** a. Write longer and more detailed literary and informational texts (e.g., an argument about protecting the rainforests) collaboratively (e.g., with peers) and independently using appropriate text organization and growing understanding of register.

Designated ELD is a protected time during the regular school day when qualified teachers work with ELs. Students are grouped by similar English proficiency levels, and teachers focus on critical academic language students need to develop to be successful in academic subjects. Designated ELD time is an opportunity to delve more deeply into the linguistic resources of English that ELs need to develop to engage with and make meaning from content, express their understanding of content, and create new content 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 ELA and other areas of the curricula. (For more detailed information on integrated and designated ELD, see the grade span section of this chapter and chapter 2 in this *ELA/ELD Framework*.)

ELA/Literacy and ELD in Action in Grade Six

Both the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards acknowledge the importance of reading complex texts closely and thoughtfully to derive meaning. Accordingly, teachers prepare reading lessons carefully and purposefully before teaching. This preparation includes selecting challenging texts worth reading and rereading; reading the texts ahead of time to determine why the text might be challenging and identify the language that may be complicated or unfamiliar; and planning a sequence of tasks and a series of lessons that build students' abilities to read complex texts with increasing independence. This process also requires teachers to analyze the cognitive and linguistic demands of the texts, including the sophistication of the ideas or content, students' prior knowledge, and the complexity of the vocabulary, sentences, and organization.

As discussed in the section on meaning making, teachers should model for students the close reading of texts by thinking aloud, highlighting the literal and inferential questions they ask themselves as readers and pointing out language and ideas they notice while reading. Teachers guide students to read complex texts frequently and analytically using concrete methods with appropriate levels of scaffolding.

As discussed in the section on meaning making, teachers should model for students the close reading of texts by thinking aloud, highlighting the literal and inferential questions they ask themselves as readers and pointing out language and ideas they notice while reading. Teachers guide students to read complex texts frequently and analytically using concrete methods with appropriate levels of scaffolding. Sixth graders need many opportunities to read a wide variety of complex texts and to discuss the texts they read. Students ask and answer literal and inferential text-dependent questions to determine the explicit and implicit meanings in the text and to identify *how* and evaluate *how well* authors present their ideas.

Importantly for all students but especially ELs, teachers should explicitly draw attention to particular elements of language (e.g., text structure and organization, complex sentences, vocabulary) that help authors convey particular meanings. These specific elements of language or *language resources* include text connectives to create cohesion (e.g., *for example*, *suddenly*, *in the end*); long noun phrases to expand and enrich the meaning of sentences (e.g., "the whole strange-familial world, glistening white" [NGA/CCSSO 2010a: Appendix B, 80]); and complex sentences that combine ideas and convey meaning in specific ways (e.g., "Now that we no longer belonged to the Company, we somehow had to acquire a thousand dollars worth of property, a faraway figure when you can only save nickels and dimes." [NGA/CCSSO 2010a: Appendix B, 80]). Providing all students, and especially ELs, with opportunities to discuss the language of the complex texts they read enhances their comprehension and develops their awareness of how language is used to make meaning.

Lesson planning should anticipate year-end and unit goals, respond to the current needs of learners, and incorporate the framing questions in figure 6.15.

Figure 6.15. 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? • What are the learning targets for this lesson, and what should students be able to do at the end of the lesson? • Which clusters of CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy does this lesson address? • What background knowledge, skills, and experiences do my students have related to this lesson? • How complex are the texts and tasks? • How will students make meaning, express themselves effectively, develop language, and learn content? How will they apply or learn foundational skills? • What types of scaffolding, accommodations, or modifications will individual students need for effectively engaging in the lesson tasks? • 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? • Which CA ELD Standards amplify the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy at students' English language proficiency levels? • What language might be new for students and/or present challenges? • 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 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

Vignette 6.1 demonstrates how a teacher might implement the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards during an ELA lesson focused on close reading. Vignette 6.2 provides an example of how designated ELD can build from and into the types of lessons outlined in vignette 6.1.

Vignette 6.1. "The Making of a Scientist"
Close Reading of a Memoir in ELA with Integrated ELD in Grade Six

Background

Ms. Valenti's sixth-grade English language arts (ELA) class is learning how to read texts more analytically. Currently, the class is reading memoirs to determine how people depict their formative years, including seminal events that shaped their profession or outlook on the world. Ms. Valenti's class of 35 students includes two students with mild learning disabilities and five English learners at the Expanding level of English language proficiency, four who have been in U.S. schools for at least four years and one who arrived to the U.S. a little more than a year ago. Ms. Valenti collaborates with the other sixth-grade teachers at her school. Two of them teach the students mathematics and science, while Ms. Valenti and another sixth-grade teacher teach ELA and history/social studies. There are a small number (three to five) of EL students in each sixth-grade class, and each of the sixth-grade teachers teaches his or her own students designated ELD in small groups. Specialists teach the visual and performing arts, as well as physical education.

The interdisciplinary team works together to determine the cross-curricular themes they will teach. Some reading of informational and literary texts occurs in ELA, but much of it is done in the other content areas. For example, during science and history/social studies time, the class reads informational texts related to the topics they are learning about. During ELA time, students read literature or literary non-fiction related to their science and/or history topics.

Lesson Context

The current interdisciplinary theme is *Careers in Action*, and Ms. Valenti has selected a text that she thinks will appeal to students at this age because it focuses on parents' expectations for their children, including how parents teach children important life lessons that will shape their outlook on the world. The text, "The Making of a Scientist," is a memoir by Richard Feynman, a famous American scientist who won the Nobel Prize in Physics and who is often referred to as the best mind since Einstein. In science that day, Ms. Valenti's colleague will engage the students in a demonstration illustrating the law of inertia – a demonstration that is similar to the wagon and ball event that Feynman describes in his memoir.[3]

3 This demonstration is in support of what is happening in the ELA classroom. The law of inertia is not a sixth-grade science standard. However, it is in the grades six through eight band of science standards.

Vignette 6.1. "The Making of a Scientist"
Close Reading of a Memoir in ELA with Integrated ELD in Grade Six (cont.)

Lesson Excerpts

In today's lesson, Ms. Valenti plans to engage her students in the first of a series of close reading lessons on Feynman's memoir, discussing with them how his early experiences sparked a career in science. During this lesson (the first of three on the same text), students analyze the ideas in one portion of the text, while focusing on how the author uses language resources (vocabulary, syntax, and rhetorical devices) to construct the narrative and convey his meaning. In addition, students gain practice in notetaking and summarizing text. The learning target and focus standards for the lesson are as follows:

Learning Target: The students will analyze a short memoir, discuss their interpretations, identify the central idea, and analyze how it is conveyed through details in the text.
CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: *RI.6.2 – Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments; W.6.9 – Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research; SL.6.1 – Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.*
CA ELD Standards Addressed (Expanding): *ELD.PI.6.1 – Contribute to class, group, and partner discussions by following turn-taking rules, asking relevant questions, affirming others, adding relevant information, and paraphrasing key ideas; ELD.PI.6.6b – Express inferences and conclusions drawn based on close reading of grade-level texts and viewing of multimedia using a variety of verbs (e.g., suggests that, leads to).*

Ms. Valenti starts by connecting new learning to what students already know and by providing background information about the text and author.

Ms. Valenti: Today we're going to read an excerpt from a memoir by a famous scientist named Richard Feynman. In the memoir—a memoir is a story of your life that you write yourself – Feynman explains how his father taught him some important life lessons that ultimately shaped his career. This is something that your parents or grandparents or other adults in your life do all the time. For example, they may try to teach you about being responsible by having you do chores around the house, like washing the dishes. Does anyone do that? Or, they may try to teach you compassion by having you take care of your little brother or sister or your grandparents when they're sick. Sometimes you're not aware that they're trying to teach you these life lessons until much later. Very briefly, turn and talk with a partner about some of the life lessons you think the adults in your life are trying to teach you.

The students briefly share with one another. Before they read the text about the principles Feynman's father taught him, Ms. Valenti shows them a short video so they can get a sense of who Feynman was during his career as a scientist. The animated video "Ode to a Flower" was created by Fraser Davidson to accompany Feynman talking about the nature of beauty (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VSG9q_YKZLI).

Vignette 6.1. "The Making of a Scientist"
Close Reading of a Memoir in ELA with Integrated ELD in Grade Six (cont.)

Ms. Valenti asks students, who are seated in groups of four, to briefly discuss at their tables how the video depicts the kind of person Feynman was. After a couple of minutes, she asks two students to share their ideas. She briefly explains some terms students will encounter in the reading that will be critical for understanding the text (such as *Encyclopedia Britannica*, *magnitude*, *translate*). She also briefly reviews what the literary term *theme* means by drawing students' attention to the chart in the room that defines literary terms, and then, as an additional link to their background knowledge, she offers a few additional examples of themes students have encountered in other texts they have read. She tells them that they will be looking for themes in Feynman's text.

Next, she reads the first part of the text aloud as students read along silently with her in their own copies. Ms. Valenti has found that reading complex texts aloud gives her students a feeling for the various voices in the narrative and models the intonation she uses as a proficient reader. Reading aloud also provides an oral introduction to the language in the text and gives her an opportunity to stop at strategic points to explain particular vocabulary and untangle complex syntactic structures (i.e., paraphrase particularly complex sentences) that may be unfamiliar to students.

Next, she asks students to share with a partner what they think the main theme or lesson of the section is. As students share, she listens in while circulating around the room. Her ongoing intent is to support students to interpret texts deliberately, and she needs to know how they are currently interpreting texts so that she can help them develop increasingly sophisticated levels of proficiency and greater autonomy as readers. She notes that there are multiple interpretations of what the main theme or lesson is, and she uses this observational information to shape how she will support students to read the text analytically so that they can refine or revise their initial ideas about what the author is expressing both explicitly and implicitly.

Ms. Valenti then asks students to read the same text excerpt silently while they use a reading guide that contains focus questions. She explains that they will read the text multiple times and that for this ***first*** reading on their own, they will just read for general understanding; she assures them that they do not need to worry about knowing the meaning of every word. (The students will have opportunities to analyze the vocabulary, grammatical structures, and nuanced meanings in the text as the lesson progresses.) The focus questions are displayed on the board, and she reviews each question to ensure that her students understand them. She also provides them with a half-page handout with the focus questions:

Focus Questions for Today's Reading

Write notes under each question *as you read*.

- What is happening in the text?
- Who is in the text and how are they interacting?
- What was Feynman's father trying to teach his son with the tiles?
- What was Feynman's father trying to teach his son with the dinosaurs?
- Which sentence best captures the central idea in this part of the text?

Vignette 6.1. "The Making of a Scientist"
Close Reading of a Memoir in ELA with Integrated ELD in Grade Six (cont.)

Excerpt from the text:

"The Making of a Scientist" by Richard Feynman

Before I was born, my father told my mother, "If it's a boy, he's going to be a scientist." When I was just a little kid, very small in a **highchair**, my father brought home a lot of little bathroom tiles—**seconds**—of different colors. We played with them, my father setting them up **vertically** on my **highchair** like dominoes, and I would push one end so they would all go down.

Then after a while, I'd help set them up. Pretty soon, we're setting them up in a more **complicated** way: two white tiles and a blue tile, two white tiles and a blue tile, and so on. When my mother saw that she said, "Leave the poor child alone. If he wants to put a blue tile, let him put a blue tile."

But my father said, "No, I want to show him what patterns are like and how interesting they are. It's a kind of **elementary** mathematics." So he started very early to tell me about the world and how interesting it is.

We had the ***Encyclopaedia Britannica*** at home. When I was a small boy he used to sit me on his lap and read to me from the *Britannica*. We would be reading, say, about dinosaurs. It would be talking about the *Tyrannosaurus rex*, and it would say something like, "This dinosaur is twenty-five feet high and its head is six feet across."

My father would stop reading and say, "Now, let's see what that means. That would mean that if he stood in our front yard, he would be tall enough to put his head through our window up here." (We were on the second floor.) "But his head would be too wide to fit in the window." Everything he read to me he would **translate** as best he could into some **reality**.

It was very exciting and very, very interesting to think there were animals of such **magnitude**—and that they all died out, and that nobody knew why. I wasn't **frightened** that there would be one coming in my window as a **consequence** of this. But I learned from my father to **translate**: everything I read I try to figure out what it really means, what it's really saying.

Ms. Valenti also encourages students to underline words or phrases they don't understand and to write down any questions or comments they have about the text in the margins. After they read independently, the students work in pairs to discuss their notes and questions while Ms. Valenti circulates around the classroom to listen in, clarify, and assist students with any unsolved questions, providing explanations and probing their thinking as relevant. For example, some students do not understand what the word *seconds* means in reference to bathroom tiles. Other students focus on particular phrases and sentences and work together to disentangle the meanings. Ms. Valenti stops at a table where Jamal and Tatiana, an EL student at the late Expanding level of English language proficiency, are discussing their notes. The pair has already determined that the text mostly involves Feynman, as a child, and his father, and that Feynman's father is showing his son patterns using the tiles and reading to him about dinosaurs from the encyclopedia.

Vignette 6.1. "The Making of a Scientist"
Close Reading of a Memoir in ELA with Integrated ELD in Grade Six (cont.)

Jamal: Okay, so what do we think that his dad, Feynman's dad, was trying to teach him with the tiles?

Tatiana: (Referring to her notes.) I think he was trying to teach him about math, about math patterns, and he was showing him how you can make patterns with tiles.

Jamal: But he was just a baby, so he couldn't teach him with numbers, right? So he used the tiles.

Tatiana: What about the dinosaurs? What do you have?

Jamal: (Referring to his notes.) I think it's the same thing. His dad was trying to show him how big a dinosaur would be if it was standing outside the house, but he was also trying to get him excited about dinosaurs.

Ms. Valenti: Is there something in the text that gave you that idea?

Jamal: (Looking at the text for a moment.) Here it says, "Everything he read to me he would translate as best he could into some reality." I think he means that his father was trying to teach him some things, some real things about math patterns and dinosaurs, but he had to make it real for a kid, even for a baby.

Tatiana: And he was also trying to teach him something about the world.

Ms. Valenti: Can you say more about that, and can you find some examples in the text?

Tatiana: Here, it says that his father said, "No, I want to show him what patterns are like and how interesting they are."

Ms. Valenti: So, what does that mean to you? How can you interpret that, using the focus questions?

Tatiana: I think his dad was really trying to show him how the world has all this . . . stuff . . . how it's interesting. His father was trying to teach him some real things, like math patterns and dinosaurs, and he had to make that real for him as a kid. But I think he was also trying to teach him about how to see the world. That he should see it as interesting and that it has a lot of things to observe.

Jamal: Yeah, like he was trying to help him think differently about the toys he has or things he's doing. Like he was trying to help him think like a scientist.

After the students have had time to delve deeply into the text, Ms. Valenti pulls the whole class together to discuss their notes. Picking up on the themes and questions the students have raised, she leads a loosely structured discussion during which they articulate and elaborate on their ideas. As the conversation progresses, she prompts them to go back into the text for evidence that supports their claims. Lately, Ms. Valenti has noticed that some of the girls in the class have seemed reluctant to share their ideas, so she makes a conscious effort to let them know she wants to hear from them and cares about what they have to say, using the following techniques:

Vignette 6.1. "The Making of a Scientist"
Close Reading of a Memoir in ELA with Integrated ELD in Grade Six (cont.)

- Meeting with individuals before the conversation to make sure they know she cares about their participation in class discussions and to inquire as to why they are not comfortable sharing.
- Pausing before asking a probing question to allow everyone to gather their thoughts and prepare their responses.
- Deliberately calling on individuals during the conversation, those who she heard sharing enthusiastically in their pair conversations, and then validating their ideas.
- Encouraging the whole class to listen respectfully.

Next, she structures the conversation a bit more by helping them *shape* their ideas into concise statements that capture the theme of the section in students' own words. She facilitates a *joint construction* of the statement by first writing "His father wanted to teach his son" in a chart she has prepared, which is displayed using the document camera. She then asks students to help her expand and enrich the sentence to add precision and nuance, guiding students to identify details from the text that support the statement. The jointly constructed central idea and details are shown in the chart below.

Central Idea (in our words)	Details from the Text (paraphrasing and quotes)
Feynman's father wanted to teach his son about the interesting things in the world and how to think like a scientist, so he would *translate* things in ways that his son would understand.	The father . . . • made playing with tiles into a way to learn about patterns and mathematics • said, "No, I want to show him what patterns are like and how interesting they are. It's a kind of elementary mathematics." • read to him from the encyclopedia • helped him visualize the dinosaur outside his house

Ms. Valenti repeats the process the students just engaged in with the next section of the text, in which Feynman describes how his father taught him about the difference between knowing the name of something and knowing something through observation. After the collaborative conversations in pairs and whole class discussion, Ms. Valenti invites students to revise their *central idea* statement and add other thoughts to the chart. The students decide to add a section to the chart that highlights the life lessons, or principles, that Feynman's father taught him. Two of the principles the students jointly construct with Ms. Valenti are the following:

- When you read, try to figure out what it really means, what it is really saying. You have to read between the lines.
- There is a difference between knowing the name of something and really knowing something. You have to look at how something behaves or works, and not just know what it is called.

Vignette 6.1. "The Making of a Scientist"
Close Reading of a Memoir in ELA with Integrated ELD in Grade Six (cont.)

The class finishes the final section of the excerpt, in which Feynman's father teaches him to notice some important principles in physics, using everyday experiences and understandings as a springboard to understanding science concepts. Again, the class revises and adds to the chart.

Ms. Valenti concludes the lesson by showing students the short video "Ode to a Flower" once more. This time, she asks the students to think about how what Feynman's father taught him may have influenced the way he sees the flower. After watching the video, the students share their thoughts in their table groups, and Ms. Valenti then wraps up the lesson by calling on several students to share with the whole class an idea or two from their table conversations.

Next Steps

The next day, Ms. Valenti guides students to read the same text again, but she changes the focus questions so that students can analyze the *craft and structure* of the passage. She encourages them to attend to the author's deliberate language choices, and asks them to consider why he wrote the passage in the way that he did. She designs her questions so the students can focus on literary devices, word choices, structural elements, and author's purpose. For example, she asks the students to consider *how* the author lets us know what his father was trying to accomplish (e.g., which words or literary devices were used). On the third day (the third read, which focuses on *integrating knowledge and ideas*), Ms. Valenti guides students to think about what the text means to them and how it connects to other texts they have read or experiences they have had. For example, one of her focus questions for students to consider as they read the text analytically is "How does the way Feynman's father taught him principles compare to ways that other real or fictional individuals we've read about have been taught?"

At the end of the week, Ms. Valenti has the students work together in their table groups to collaboratively complete and edit the following in-class writing assignment:

> *Pick one of the examples that Feynman uses (the dinosaur, the birds, or the wagon). In one concise paragraph, explain the lesson Feynman's father was trying to teach him with the real example and then explain why that example was useful. Be sure to include evidence from the text in your explanation.*

Ms. Valenti provides the groups with a handout focusing on a select set of elements they need to include in their explanations (e.g., the lesson or principle, evidence from the text, vivid vocabulary, well-constructed sentences). She reminds them about prior lessons and suggests that they first write all of their ideas down and then work together to combine the ideas, select the words and phrases that are the most precise, condense them into sentences, and link the sentences together to make a cohesive paragraph. Each student in the group must have the same paragraph in their notebook, which she will check at the end of the day.

Later in the unit, Ms. Valenti and the students will read another memoir of an important and interesting individual using the same sequence (focusing on key ideas and details on day one, craft and structure on day two, and integration of knowledge and ideas on day three).

Resource

Feynman, Richard. 1995. "The Making of a Scientist," *Cricket*. 23 (2).

Vignette 6.1. "The Making of a Scientist"
Close Reading of a Memoir in ELA with Integrated ELD in Grade Six (cont.)

Source

Adapted from

Student Achievement Partners. 2013a. "Close Reading Model Lessons: 'The Making of a Scientist' by Richard Feynman." *Achieve the Core*.

Additional Information

- To learn more about Richard Feynman, see the BBC (Horizon) documentary, "Richard Feynman—No Ordinary Genius" (http://www.brainpickings.org/index.php/2011/12/14/bbcs-richard-feynman-no-ordinary-genius/) at Brainpickings.org.
- For more ideas on supporting girls to be classroom leaders, see the Ban Bossy Web site (http://banbossy.com/).
- To see a video demonstrating the law of inertia, visit the WonderHowTo Web site (http://science.wonderhowto.com/how-to/experiment-law-inertia-354383).
- To see more ideas for using this text and for many other resources, visit http://achievethecore.org.

For an example of how to guide students to annotate and question the texts they read, see:

Schoenbach, Ruth, Cynthia Greenleaf, and Lynn Murphy. 2012. *Reading for Understanding: How Reading Apprenticeship Improves Disciplinary Learning in Secondary and College Classrooms*. 2nd ed. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Designated ELD Vignette

Vignette 6.1 illustrates good teaching for all students with particular attention to the learning needs of ELs. English learners additionally benefit from intentional and purposeful designated ELD instruction that builds into and from content instruction and focuses on their particular language learning needs. Vignette 6.2 illustrates how designated ELD can build from and into the types of lessons outlined in the vignette 6.1. It also illustrates how a teacher can help her students develop awareness of the language resources in complex texts.

Vignette 6.2. Analyzing Language to Understand Complex Texts
Designated ELD in Grade Six

Background

Ms. Valenti's sixth-grade class of 35 students includes five English learners at the Expanding level of English language proficiency, four who have been in U.S. schools for at least four years and one who arrived to the U.S. a little over a year ago. There are a small number (three to five) of EL students in each sixth-grade class, and each of the sixth-grade teachers teach their own students designated ELD in small groups, working collaboratively as a team to design lessons and adapt them to students' English language proficiency levels and particular learning styles and needs.

Lesson Context

The sixth graders in the school have just started reading Richard Feynman's memoir, "The Making of a Scientist." (See Vignette 6.1.) Designated ELD lessons for the next several days are designed to support EL students' understandings of the text and enhance their ability to convey their understandings through speaking and writing. In planning these lessons, the teachers noticed that the memoir is organized in a way that may not be immediately apparent to their EL students, and Feynman also uses language that may be unfamiliar. The teachers plan to focus lessons in ways that address the particular needs of EL students at different English language proficiency levels.

Vignette 6.2. Analyzing Language to Understand Complex Texts Designated ELD in Grade Six (cont.)

After the first reading of an excerpt from "The Making of a Scientist," Ms. Valenti invites her five EL students to the teaching table while the rest of the class engages in collaborative tasks they are accustomed to doing independently (e.g., writing e-mails to their pen pals in Vietnam and El Salvador or conducting searches for research projects at the *Internet café* station, observing objects through microscopes and then drawing and writing descriptions about them at the *science lab* station). The EL students bring their copies of the text, "The Making of a Scientist," as well as the focus questions handout (see vignette 6.1) with their notes. The learning target and focus standards in Ms. Valenti's lesson plan are as follows:

Learning Target: Students will analyze the language of a familiar complex text to understand how it is organized and how particular language resources are used to convey meanings.
CA ELD Standards (Expanding): *ELD.PI.6.1 – Contribute to class, group, and partner discussions by following turn-taking rules, asking relevant questions, affirming others, adding relevant information, and paraphrasing key ideas; ELD. PI.6.7 – Explain how well writers and speakers use specific language to present ideas or support arguments and provide detailed evidence (e.g., showing the clarity of the phrasing used to present an argument) with moderate support; ELD. PII.6.1 – Apply growing understanding of how different text types are organized to express ideas (e.g., how a narrative is organized sequentially with predictable stages versus how arguments are structured logically around reasons and evidence) to comprehending texts and writing texts with increasing cohesion; ELD.PII.6.2a – Apply growing understanding of language resources for referring the reader back or forward in text (e.g., how pronouns or synonyms refer back to nouns in text) to comprehending texts and writing texts with increasing cohesion.*

Lesson Excerpts

First, Ms. Valenti explains that they will be looking closely at the language Feynman chose to express his ideas and examining how he organized this language to produce a whole text that is both a pleasure to read and interesting to discuss and learn from. She tells them that this *language analysis* will help them to read texts more closely and will also give them ideas about the types of language resources they can use in their own speaking and writing. In order to contextualize the language analysis within the bigger goal of making meaning from texts, she asks students to briefly review their notes from the previous ELA lesson and then share what they thought about the memoir.

Tatiana shares that she liked how, rather than merely stating that his father taught him life lessons or principles, Feynman gave examples showing ways his father made the principles real to him as a child. Sergio shares that he enjoyed discussing the text with others but remarks that, even though some of the language was clarified in small and whole group discussions, there are still some words and phrases he does not quite understand. Other students concur. Ms. Valenti has anticipated this, and she asks each of them to select three words from the text that they are still unsure of but feel are important to know. She charts the words they have selected and briefly explains their meaning (the words will be added to the class's academic word wall later so that students can reference them while speaking and writing).

Vignette 6.2. Analyzing Language to Understand Complex Texts Designated ELD in Grade Six (cont.)

Next, Ms. Valenti facilitates a discussion about the text organization and structure of Feynman's memoir.

Ms. Valenti: Lately, we've been talking a lot about how different types of texts are structured. For example, a couple of weeks ago, we looked at how short stories are usually organized. Would anyone like to briefly remind us of what we learned about how stories are organized?

One student shares that the typical stages of a story are *orientation*, *complication*, and *resolution*, and other students add to the overall structure by sharing what typically happens in each stage. They also share that a story is structured sequentially. In other words, events are presented in order by time.

Ms. Valenti: It sounds like you really understand how a story is structured. A memoir, which is the type of text we read this morning, is structured in similar ways to a story because the author is telling the story of his or her life. So, *usually*, events will be presented sequentially, too. But there are differences. Usually, a memoir will have an orientation—where we find out things like who and where—and then there's a sequence of events, but not necessarily a complication, like a story. And at the end, there's an evaluation, meaning, the author tells you why the events and details they've shared were important or what the impact of these events was on the author's life. We're going to take a look at where these stages are in "The Making of a Scientist," and we're also going to look at some of the language Feynman uses to show when things are happening.

As she explains the stages of a memoir, Ms. Valenti writes the words *orientation*, *events*, and *evaluation* on the small whiteboard at the table with space below each word. She asks the students to take one minute to look at their copies of the memoir to see if they can identify these big stages. She tells them not to try to reread every sentence (they have already read the text twice, and chunks of the text multiple times) but rather, to skim it as they look for the stages and use their pencils to note where they are. Then, she facilitates a discussion about what the students have found.

Azizi: I noticed that he's telling, it's like he's telling little stories inside the memory.

Ms. Valenti: Can you say more about that? What do you mean by "little stories?"

Azizi: Well, here (pointing to where he's marked his text), he's telling a story about the dominoes, how his father taught him about math with the dominoes. And here, he's telling a story about the dinosaurs and the encyclopedia, and then later he's telling a story about the birds.

Tatiana: I have something to add on to what Azizi is saying.

Ms. Valenti: What did you notice, Tatiana?

Tatiana: I noticed that same thing that Azizi is saying, and I also noticed that when he tells the stories, he says something more about the story.

Sergio: Yeah, he . . .

Ms. Valenti: Just a moment Sergio. I don't think Tatiana was finished.

Vignette 6.2. Analyzing Language to Understand Complex Texts Designated ELD in Grade Six (cont.)

Tatiana: Here (pointing to her text), it says "But I learned from my father to translate: everything I read I try to figure out what it really means, what it's really saying." First he tells the little stories, and then he tells what his father was teaching him.

Ms. Valenti: Did anyone else notice that about the events, or the little stories of his life?

Sergio: I agree with Tatiana, and I want to add that I noticed that the stories—the events, I mean—are in order. First, he's a baby—no!—(looking at his text) it starts before he's born, and then he's a baby, and then he's a kid.

Ana: I think the orientation is not long. I think the first sentence is the orientation only.

Ms. Valenti: And why do you think that, Ana?

Ana: In the first sentence, he tells us who is going to be in the story. I mean . . . What's it called again?

Sergio: The *memoir*.

Ana: Yeah, he tells us who is going to be in the *memoir*—his father, his mother, him—and his father tells his mother, "If it's a boy, he's going to be a scientist." I think he's telling us what the story is going to be about. But I don't like that. Girls can be scientists, too.

Ms. Valenti: You are so right, Ana. Girls can be scientists, and there are many famous scientists who are women. I think the reason Feynman wrote that is because, at the time, not a lot of women were scientists. Things were different back then, and women did not have as many chances to be scientists, or lawyers, or even the President of the United States. You all are noticing a lot of things in this text. That's really great thinking. Let's take a moment so I can catch up with you and write some of these details down so we don't forget them.

Ms. Valenti charts what the students have said on the whiteboard under the first two stages (orientation and events). She invites the students who haven't yet shared their ideas to suggest what she should write for the evaluation stage, and they note that at the end of the memoir, in the last two paragraphs, Feynman tells the reader how his father taught him and what that meant for his career choices.

Ms. Valenti: Okay, we've established the overall stages of the text and we noticed that it's written mostly sequentially, or in order. That's something that's the same as the way many stories—like the ones we read before—are structured. We've also seen that after each little story—or event—the author tells us what that lesson was that his father was teaching him. That's something that's different from a lot of stories, right? Now, we're going to analyze the language a little more closely. This time, when we look at the text, I want you to hunt for words and phrases that let us know when things are happening.

Vignette 6.2. Analyzing Language to Understand Complex Texts Designated ELD in Grade Six (cont.)

Ms. Valenti: For example, at the very beginning, the first several words tell us when things are happening: "Before I was born . . ." By choosing to use those words, Feynman helps us know where in time we are. So, with a partner, go through and talk about any words or phrases that you think tell the reader when things are happening. Then, go ahead and highlight those words and phrases.

The partners spend a couple of minutes searching for words and phrases that refer to time. Since there are five students at the table, Ms. Valenti is Raúl's partner. Lately, she's noticed that Raúl has been agitated in class. When she asked him if anything was wrong, he told her his uncle had recently died in a car accident. Accordingly, Ms. Valenti has been making a special effort to make Raúl feel connected to her (e.g., checking in frequently with him during the day, letting him know that she genuinely cares about him). They briefly scan the first paragraph of the text together, and then Ms. Valenti asks Raúl if he sees any words or phrases that let them know when events are taking place.

Raúl: I think . . . Here, it says he was a little kid, "When I was just a little kid." That's telling that it's later—after he was a baby.

Ms. Valenti: Let's read that sentence again. (They read the sentence together.)

Raúl: Oh! He's a baby here, I think, because he's in the highchair, so he has to be a baby. So it's . . . It happens after the start, *after* the orientation because there it says, "Before I was born." This is the first story, when he's a baby.

Ms. Valenti: And how does Feynman let us know that?

Raúl: Cuz he's saying things like, before this, when that, then later on he says (searching in the text) "When I was a small boy . . ."

Ms. Valenti: Yes, so Feynman is helping readers along by telling us when events are taking place: before he was born, when he was a baby, when he was a small boy, and so on.

When Ms. Valenti debriefs with the group, partners share that they found other language resources that the author used to sequence events in time. For example, at one point, Feynman uses the term "We used to go," and Ms. Valenti points out that this phrase lets the reader know that it happened a long time ago, but that it happened often. Tatiana points out that another way the memoir is similar to many stories is that the verbs are in the past tense (they had previously noted this when they analyzed the language of stories).

Ms. Valenti concludes the lesson by asking students to be on the lookout for how stories, memoirs, and other text types are structured and to notice the way authors use language differently. She tells them that paying attention to these text features will help them to be better readers and writers.

Vignette 6.2. Analyzing Language to Understand Complex Texts Designated ELD in Grade Six (cont.)

Next Steps

During ELA with the whole class the next day, Ms. Valenti facilitates a similar discussion about how Feynman's memoir is structured, delving deeper into analyzing the language resources he used, and helping students notice how he constructed his paragraphs and sentences as well as his dialogue. During designated ELD, Ms. Valenti uses the CA ELD Standards as a guide to help her focus more intensively on the language learning needs of her ELs and to target challenging language in the texts students are reading during ELA and in other content areas so that they can better comprehend them.

Resource

Feynman, Richard. 1995. "The Making of a Scientist," *Cricket*. 23 (2).

Source

This lesson was adapted from

Student Achievement Partners. 2013a. "Close Reading Model Lessons: 'The Making of a Scientist' by Richard Feynman." *Achieve the Core*.

Additional Information

To read more about engaging students in discussions about language and how it makes meaning, see

Gibbons, Pauline. 2008. "'It Was Taught Good and I Learned a Lot': Intellectual Practices and ESL Learners in the Middle Years." *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy* 31 (2): 155–173.

Schleppegrell, Mary J. 2013. "Language and Meaning in Complex Texts." *Perspectives on Language and Literacy,* Summer: 37-40.

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 dispositions, skills, histories, and circumstances. Teachers need to know their students well through appropriate assessment practices and other methods in order to design effective instruction for them and 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 or adapt the main lesson in particular ways. Information about meeting the needs of diverse learners, scaffolding, and modifying or adapting instruction is provided in chapters 2 and 9. Importantly, students will not receive the excellent education called for in this framework without genuine collaborations among those responsible for educating California' children and youth. (See figure 6.16).

Sixth-grade students are full of beginnings—new schools, new friends, new selves, new books, and new horizons. The next two years prepare them for the adventure of high school. With caring and supportive adults and intellectually stimulating curricula, the eagerness and energy they bring to their new enterprises will sustain them through grades seven, eight, and beyond.

Figure 6.16. 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 regularly 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*.

Grade Seven

Seventh graders may be in their first year of junior high school or in their second year of a sixth- through eighth-grade middle school program; in either case, they are expected to continue advancing in their skills towards the overarching goals of ELA/literacy and ELD instruction: developing the readiness for college, careers, and civic life; attaining the capacities of literate individuals; becoming broadly literate; and acquiring the skills for living and learning in the 21st century. (See chapter 2 in this *ELA/ELD Framework* for a discussion of these goals.) Students continue to engage with ideas, concepts, and knowledge in literature and informational text in what they read in school and independently. In grade seven, students also continue to engage with the standards for literacy in history/social studies, science and technical subjects, strengthening development of reading and writing skills not just in the language arts, but across the content areas. Seventh graders who are entering school as ELs, or who have been in U.S. schools since the elementary years but are still designated as ELs, need particular attention, as their English language and literacy abilities (especially in academic English) need to improve in an *accelerated time frame* for them to be prepared for the rigors of high school in two more years.

This grade-level section provides an overview of the key themes of ELA/literacy and ELD instruction in grade seven. It also offers guidance for ensuring that ELs have access to ELA and content instruction, including integrated and designated ELD instruction. Snapshots and vignettes bring several of the concepts to life.

Key Themes of ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction in Grade Seven

In this section, the key themes of ELA/Literacy and ELD instruction are discussed as they apply to grade seven. These include **Meaning Making**, **Language Development**, **Effective Expression**, **Content Knowledge**, and **Foundational skills**. See figure 6.17. These themes are largely overlapping and consistent with the call for the integration of reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language in the CA CCSS for ELA Literacy and the CA ELD Standards. Inextricably linked to every area of the curriculum, the two sets of standards promote an interdisciplinary approach. Each of the snapshots for grade seven that follow is presented in connection with a theme; however, many snapshots illustrate several themes. The two vignettes at the end of the section for grade seven depict integrated ELA and ELD instruction and designated ELD instruction based on the same topic and/or readings.

Figure 6.17. Circles of Implementation of ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction

Meaning Making

In grade seven, students are expected to work with more rigorous levels of text and use their reading comprehension strategies in ways that empower them to use the information to complete more complex analytical tasks than were expected in grade six. Students continue to develop proficiency in reading, working with more complex texts as they prepare for the rigors of high school. Using evidence from texts, students in grade seven read carefully in order to grasp information, ideas, and details to create their own understanding and arguments in writing and discussions. Students work to answer text-dependent questions using evidence they discover and information they infer from paying close attention to the meaning of a text. Specifically, using informational texts, in grade seven students cite not just one (as in grade six) but several pieces of textual evidence to determine more than one main idea in a text and write an objective summary (RI.7.2). Similarly, increasing the complexity of the task from grade six, seventh graders analyze two or more authors writing on the same topic with different interpretations and show how two different approaches and uses of evidence resulted in very different conclusions and interpretations of facts (RI.7.9).

Students in grade seven are expected to write objective summaries of what they read—a task which becomes more difficult as texts become more complex The following strategy (figure 6.18) engages students with one another to identify the words that signify the most important elements of the text.

Figure 6.18. Five Word Summary Strategy

Step 1—Using words from the reading, create a list of the five most important words. These should all be words that explain and/or clarify the main point of the reading.

Step 2—Choose a partner, and compare your five-word list to a partner's list. The two of you will now have five minutes to create a new list of the five most important words by synthesizing your two original lists. Be sure to choose those terms from your lists that represent the reading's main idea.

Step 3—In pairs, now join another set of partners to form a group of four. Each pair will share its five-word list; then the group of four will once again discuss which words are really most essential to the main idea of the reading. Each group will also have five minutes to create a newly synthesized list of five key words. While you can try to persuade your peers that your word choices are the best, your group must be in agreement about its final list.

Step 4—On your own, use the final list of five key words that your group of four agreed on, and write a summary paragraph of the reading. Use all five words from your final list in your paragraph. Underline each of the five key words in your summary. Be sure that the words you chose support/explain/clarify the main point of the reading.

Source

Excerpted from

California State University. 2013. "Assignment Template, Appendix C: Prereading, Reading, and Postreading Strategies." *Expository Reading and Writing Course: Semester One*. 2nd ed., 43. Long Beach, CA: California State University Press.

Meaning making in grade seven involves helping students understand and use the information they read in meaningful ways. The CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy for reading informational text and literature require students in grade seven to cite several pieces of evidence to support their analysis of a text, determine two or more central ideas, and provide an objective summary of a text (RL/RI.7.1). Students also analyze interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (RI.7.3). Students need to be able to compare and contrast a text to another reading, media item, piece of information, from one author to another, as well as trace the development of an argument in a selection of informational text.

In grade seven, teachers continue to teach and have students practice various reading comprehension strategies to help students make meaning. Teacher think alouds continue to be useful by modeling for students how the teacher sorts through his or her understandings and sources of confusion when reading a text.

In grade seven, teachers continue to teach and have students practice various reading comprehension strategies to help students make meaning. Teacher think alouds continue to be useful by modeling for students how the teacher sorts through his or her understandings and sources of confusion when reading a text. Teachers help students apply the process to their own reading focusing on their understandings and identifying when their understanding is clouded or needs clarification. Teachers can model what they are thinking as they read a paragraph of informational text using phrases such as the following:

- I predict in the next part . . .
- This reminds me of . . .
- I am not sure of . . .
- I got confused when . . .
- I think I will have to reread this part to understand what the author means by . . .
- So what it's saying is . . . (Schoenbach, Greenleaf and Murphy 2012, 106)

Once students are able to distinguish between the conversation inside their heads while they read and the meaning of the text, they are better prepared for checking their understanding and moving on to more rigorous levels of text.

The SQP2RS strategy (Survey Question Predict Read Respond Summarize) goes beyond think alouds by engaging students in a series of text-based examinations of the text before, during, and after reading (Echevarria, Vogt, and Short 2004).

1. Surveying or previewing a selection of text
2. Questioning: listing several questions that the reader thinks will be answered in the reading
3. Predicting: listing a few items the reader thinks will happen in the reading
4. Read the text selected
5. Responding: confirming predictions, answering questions posed earlier, discussing the text in small groups or as a whole class
6. Summarizing either orally or in written form

In snapshot 6.5 students examine a science text and observe a demonstration of chemical reactions to make inferences. They identify information they know from their text and previous lessons and information they infer from the text and their observations.

Snapshot 6.5. Making Inferences Using a Graphic Organizer Integrated ELA/Literacy and Science Lesson in Grade Seven

Mr. Schoen's seventh-grade science students are sitting in pairs, each pair with a science article and a blank graphic organizer. The article has five adhesive tape flags placed strategically throughout it, and the students have already read through the relevant section of the text for today's demonstration once. The graphic organizer, a table, contains six rows with three columns labeled: *The Demonstration Showed*, *I Know*, and *Inference*.

The Demonstration Showed	**I Know** (from texts and background knowledge)	**Inference**

Mr. Schoen explains, "Today, we are going to observe a chemical reaction. You're going to use information from the text you read. You will need to link what you read with your background knowledge of acids and bases to make inferences. Who remembers what an inference is?" He calls on a student who explains that, "It's a conclusion you draw from evidence and reasoning."

Mr. Schoen adds *conclusion drawn from evidence and reasoning* to the third column heading and continues, "Well said. Who knows how you make an inference or what you use to come to your conclusion?" Another student answers, "You use what you read and what you know for the conclusion or inference." "That's right. You use what you read in the text and connect that to information that you already know, or your background knowledge, to make an inference," replies Mr. Schoen. "Who can give me an example of an inference?"

"I infer we will use Bunsen burners today because they're sitting out on the lab bench," noted Arial.

"Great example," says Mr. Schoen. "You've made a conclusion based on an observation. Making inferences is really important when you're reading because sometimes the author does not explicitly state important information. So, making inferences will help you understand what you are reading. But making inferences is also important when investigating scientific phenomena. You need to integrate the evidence based on what you observe, what you read, and what you already know to make an inference."

Mr. Schoen moves to a lab table where the materials for a chemistry demonstration are laid out. After putting on a lab apron and goggles he says, "I want you to watch the demonstration and think about what you can **infer** from what you observe. We have a beaker with 200 ml of distilled water. I need a student volunteer to add 5 ml of bromothymol blue." Mr. Schoen calls a student to don goggles then add the bromothymol blue solution. Mr. Schoen continues: "Bromothymol blue is an indicator. Can anyone tell me how an indicator is used in chemistry?" He chooses a student who responds, "It's used to show when there's a chemical, or when that chemical changes."

Snapshot 6.5. Making Inferences Using a Graphic Organizer Integrated ELA/Literacy and Science Lesson in Grade Seven (cont.)

"That's right. It's used to show the presence of a chemical or a change in that chemical. Bromothymol blue indicates the presence of an acid or a base. I think I remember reading this in the article we read yesterday." On the document reader, Mr. Schoen shows the students where in the text this information can be found. "Now let's add a piece of dry ice to our beaker and solution."

Using tongs he picks up one of several small chunks of dry ice in a bowl and moves to drop it in the solution. Just before placing it in the solution, Mr. Schoen pauses and asks "What do you think will happen? You have thirty seconds to tell your partner." Amid groans of anticipation, he then listens to several responses as he calls on students to share out: "the color will change, there will be no color change, it will make bubbles, nothing will happen" and so on. After thanking them for their responses, Mr. Schoen drops the piece of dry ice into the solution. It immediately begins to bubble as the dry ice sublimates. The bromothymol blue solution turns yellow. After a few moments Mr. Schoen adds some drops of sodium hydroxide, just enough to cause the color to change back to blue.

Mr. Shoen then thinks aloud, "I know that I need to think like a scientist and try to figure out what is happening. I wonder why the color of the water changed? Well, I know from the reading that a color change indicates a chemical reaction." He shows the students where this information is in the text and invites the students to highlight the relevant text before continuing.

"I think something about the dry ice reacted with the water and the sodium hydroxide reversed that reaction. Because I already know from previous lessons we've done that water is usually neutral, I can infer that the color changes are related to turning the water acidic or neutralizing it with a base. The sodium hydroxide returned the water solution to its original color, so it must be a base. I'm going to record this on my graphic organizer."

The Demonstration Showed	**I Know** (from texts and background knowledge)	**Inference** (conclusion drawn from evidence and reasoning)
• Solution bubbled and changed from blue to yellow when dry ice was added. • It changed back to blue when sodium hydroxide was added.	• Color changes indicate chemical reactions. • Water usually has a neutral pH. • The yellow color means it is an acidic solution.	• Adding dry ice to the water resulted in the water turning acidic.

After this modeling, Mr. Schoen describes the next task by saying, "Now it is your turn to make inferences with your partner. I'd like you to make five inferences using three sources: information on acids and bases from the article we've already read, your partner's and your background knowledge, and the demonstration you just observed. Remember to consider what we have read, as well as other labs and activities we have done. I'd also like for you to use science words, such as 'solution' or 'chemical reaction,' as well as some of the phrases I

Snapshot 6.5. Making Inferences Using a Graphic Organizer Integrated ELA/Literacy and Science Lesson in Grade Seven (cont.)

used when I was explaining my thinking. Since you're working with a partner, you'll have to agree on the inferences you make, and the language you use to record the information in your chart needs to be the same."

He points to the steps of the activity listed on the whiteboard at the front of the room and reminds students that they can refer to the phrase bank next to it (Because __, we can infer that ___; The ___, so ___. The ___ resulted in ___.). He says, "First, take turns reading the segments of the article. Stop reading when you get to the first adhesive tape flag. Then, discuss what you have read and use that information along with your background knowledge and what you observed in today's demonstration to make an inference. Use your graphic organizer to write down clues from the text that helped you make your inference under the "I Know" column. Write your inference in the last column. You will have 20 minutes to complete this activity and then we will discuss your inferences as a whole class. Are there any questions?" As the pairs begin to work, Mr. Schoen circulates around the room, monitoring student discussion, asking probing questions to elicit student thinking, and providing specific feedback. After the students have worked together on this task, Mr. Shoen pulls the class back together again and asks students to share the evidence and inferences they found. If the class agrees that the evidence is valid and the inference is solid, he asks the students who shared to add it to the graphic organizer:

The Demonstration Showed	**I Know** (from texts and background knowledge)	**Inference** (conclusion drawn from evidence and reasoning)
• Solution bubbled and changed from blue to yellow when dry ice was added. • It changed back to blue when sodium hydroxide was added.	• Color changes indicate chemical reactions. • Water usually has a neutral pH. • Dry ice makes water acidic. • Sodium hydroxide is a base. • The yellow color means it is an acidic solution.	• Adding dry ice to the water resulted in the water turning acidic. • Because the sodium hydroxide neutralized the solution we can infer that it is a base.

This way, the class has collectively developed a model for making inferences from observations, texts, and background knowledge.

Snapshot 6.5. Making Inferences Using a Graphic Organizer Integrated ELA/Literacy and Science Lesson in Grade Seven (cont.)

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: RST.6–8.1, RI.7.1, SL.7.1, RST.6–8.4

CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI.7.3, 6b, 11a, 12a; ELD.PII.6

Related CA Next Generation Science Standards:

MS-PS1-2 Analyze and interpret data on the properties of substances before and after the substances interact to determine if a chemical reaction has occurred.

Disciplinary Core Ideas

PS1.A Structure and Properties of Matter

PS1.B Chemical Reactions

Science and Engineering Practices

Obtaining, Evaluating, and Communicating Information

Sources

Adapted from

Kosanovich, Marcia L., and Debra H. Miller. 2010. "Scenario E." *Eight Scenarios Illustrating the Adolescent Literacy Walk-Through for Principals,* 16–18. Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation, Center on Instruction.

Shakhashiri, Bassam Z. 1985. "Chemical Behavior of Gasses." *Chemical Demonstrations: A Handbook for Teachers of Chemistry*, *Vol. 2*, 114–120. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

Additional Information

- Sensee, Fred. 2001. "Acid-Base Indicators." *General Chemistry Online!* http://antoine.frostburg.edu/chem/senese/101/acidbase/indicators.shtml.

Language Development

As noted in the overview of this chapter, academic language spans all areas of ELA and ELD: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Knowledge of academic language is crucial for understanding written texts, lectures, and multimedia presentations as well as well as producing written texts and oral presentations. Thus, elements of academic language are addressed in the sections on meaning making, effective expression, and content knowledge for each grade. Students in grade seven are expected to read and write more complex literary and informational texts, expanding their content-area knowledge and actively developing their academic vocabulary in disciplines such as history, science, and other subjects. They make meaning of words and phrases that may be similar but hold different meanings depending upon the academic context.

The Language standards for vocabulary in grade seven echo the standards introduced in grade six. The application of the standards to increasingly complex text advances students vocabulary knowledge and use.

Snapshot 6.6 provides a brief glimpse of designated ELD instruction related to science in which the teacher and students examine the language of a text about earthquakes.

Snapshot 6.6. Analyzing and Discussing the Use of Language in Science Texts
Designated ELD Connected to Science in Grade Seven

Students in grade seven learn about earth science topics such as plate tectonics. Specifically, they have gathered information about how plate tectonics relate to earthquakes in California, and they are now creating a labeled diagram to show the plates' locations and movements. During science instruction, the students engage in collaborative discussions about the informational texts they read and the multimedia they view. These conversations are particularly animated as the school is not far from the epicenter of a recent earthquake.

During designated ELD time, teachers discuss the language resources used in the science texts and tasks to support ELs' use of this language in speaking and writing. They draw students' attention to domain-specific vocabulary (e.g., *mantle, lithosphere*), general academic vocabulary (e.g., *distribution, movement*), and adverbials (e.g., *along breaks in the crust, at the rate of*) that students will need in order to comprehend the content of the texts they read and to effectively express their understandings during discussions, labs, and in writing. Teachers also highlight morphology in the informational texts students read, showing them how shifts in word structure (e.g., suffixes) can change not only a word's part of speech but also where it can be used in a sentence (e.g., *converge/convergent, diverge/divergent*). Instruction about morphology can deepen understanding of syntax.In addition to word level analysis and discussion, teachers strategically select sentences, such as complex sentences or those with long noun phrases, that may be challenging for the students to *unpack* and understand (e.g., "The second type of earthquake associated with plate tectonics is the shallow-focus event unaccompanied by volcanic activity." [http://earthquake.usgs.gov]). When analyzing these sentences with students, teachers first model their thought processes by using strategies, such as think alouds, and then engage students in deciphering the meanings of the sentences before identifying the grammatical boundaries (e.g., which words constitute the noun phrases or dependent clauses in sentences).

Ultimately, the discussion is about how the language of the science texts is used to convey particular meanings about content students are learning. Therefore, during designated ELD, teachers provide structured opportunities for students to practice analyzing and discussing the language in the science texts they are reading and to talk about their ideas using the new language. With such practice, students will be better able to use the language more confidently during science-based speaking and writing tasks, and their awareness of how English works to make meaning in science will be enhanced.

CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI.7.6a, c, 8, 12a-b; ELD.PII.7.4–7
CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: RI.7.3–4; L.7.1, 3, 6
Related CA Next Generation Science Standard:
MS-ESS2-2 History of Earth: Construct an explanation based on evidence for how geoscience processes have changed Earth's surface at varying time and spatial scales.

Effective Expression

Students who have achieved the standards in the previous grades demonstrate the ability to express themselves in writing, discussing, and presenting, and they demonstrate considerable command of language conventions. Expectations and examples of instruction for grade seven in effective expression are discussed in the following sections.

Writing

In grade seven, expectations for students' writing content, skills, and strategies build on those in grade six while expanding in subtle ways. Students continue to write three different text types for particular purposes and to conduct research, while expanding their abilities in key ways. For example, seventh graders now write arguments in which they acknowledge and address alternate or opposing claims; they support claims or counterarguments; and they use words, phrases, clauses, and appropriate transitions to create cohesion (W.7.1–2). They continue to write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events and must now establish a point of view when establishing context (W.7.3). In addition, seventh graders are expected to conduct research and produce written products with increasing independence and attention to audience, purpose, and citation of sources. Specifically, they focus on how well audience and purpose have been addressed in their writing (W.7.5), link to and cite sources (W.7.6), generate additional related, focused questions for further research (W.7.7), use search terms effectively, and follow a standard format for citation (W.7.8).

Figure 6.19 presents a sample of argument writing written by a seventh grader in response to an on-demand assessment. In the piece, the student argues against the use of video cameras in the classroom. The sample is followed by an annotation that analyzes the writing according to the standard (W.7.1). The abbreviated time frame of the assessment and lack of opportunity to perform research and revise may explain the absence of information from sources and occasional errors. Although this sample contains five paragraphs, the number of paragraphs students should write to achieve the standard is not predetermined. (See the grade six and eight sections for narrative and informative/explanatory samples.)

Figure 6.19. Grade Seven Writing Sample

Video Cameras in Classrooms

You are seated in class as your teacher explains and points things out on the whiteboard. You twitch your hand, accidentally nudging your pencil, which rolls off your desk and clatters to the floor. As you lean over to pick up your pencil, your cell phone falls out of your coat pocket! Luckily you catch it without your teacher seeing, but it is in plain view of the video camera's shiny lens that points straight at you. The classroom phone rings, and after a brief conversation, your teacher walks over to your desk and kneels down beside you. "About that cell phone of yours . . ." How did that get you in trouble? How could it possibly be a good idea to put cameras in classrooms?

When students are in their classrooms, teachers are in the classroom, too, usually. But when a teacher goes out of the classroom, what usually happens is either everything goes on as usual, or the students get a little more talkative. Cameras aren't there because people talk a lot. It is the teacher's job to keep people quiet. If something horrible happened, somebody in class would usually report it, or it would just be obvious to the teacher when he came back that something had happened.

If we already have cameras in the halls, why spend the money to get thirty more cameras for all the different classrooms? Our school district already has a low budget, so we would be spending money on something completely unnecessary. There hasn't been camera-worthy trouble in classrooms. Cameraworthy trouble would be bad behavior every time a teacher left the room. There is no reason to install cameras that might just cause trouble, both for the students and for the budget.

Different students react differently when there is a camera in the room. Some students get nervous and flustered, trying hard to stay focused on their work with a camera focused on them. 90% of students claim that they do better work when they are calmer, and cameras are not going to help. Other students look at cameras as a source of entertainment. These students will do things such as wave at the camera, make faces, or say hi to the people watching through the camera. This could be a big distraction for others who are trying to learn and participate in class. Still other students will try to trick the camera. They will find a way to block the lens or do something that the camera will not be likely to catch. All of these different students will be distracted by the cameras in their classrooms.

Instead of solving problems, cameras would cause the problems. That is why I disagree with the idea to put cameras in classrooms. This plan should not be put to action.

Annotation

The writer of this piece

- **Introduces a claim (stated late in the essay)**
  - *. . . I disagree with the idea to put cameras in classrooms. This plan should not be put to action.*
- **Acknowledges alternate or opposing claims**
  - *Instead of solving problems, cameras would cause the problems.*
- **Supports the claim with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, demonstrating an understanding of the topic**
  - [Cameras are not necessary because] [i]*f something horrible happened, somebody in class would usually report it, or it would just be obvious to the teacher when he came back that something had happened.*
  - *. . . we already have cameras in the halls . . .*
  - *Our school district already has a low budget . . .*
- **Uses words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among the claim, reasons, and evidence**
  - *If . . . already . . . why . . . so . . . Some students . . . Other students . . . These students . . . All of these different students . . .*
- **Establishes and maintains a formal style**
  - *When students are in their classrooms, teachers are in the classroom too, usually. But when a teacher goes out of the classroom, what usually happens is either everything goes on as usual, or the students get a little more talkative.*
  - *Different students react differently when there is a camera in the room.*

- **Provides a concluding statement that follows from and supports the argument presented**
  - *Instead of solving problems, cameras would cause the problems. That is why I disagree with the idea to put cameras in classrooms. This plan should not be put to action.*
- **Demonstrates good command of the conventions of standard written English (with occasional errors that do not interfere materially with the underlying message)**

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*, 40-41. National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, Washington DC.

Teachers carefully examine their students' writing to determine the student's achievement of selected objectives, reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching, and inform subsequent instruction. They involve students in reviewing their work, and for EL students, teachers 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

Students continue to engage in collaborative discussions with partners and in small groups and in teacher-led discussions with the entire class. In grade seven, students now pose questions that elicit elaboration and make relevant observations that bring discussions back on topic. Teachers model these conversational moves and encourage their use. Teachers can use sentence starters or frames to scaffold student discussion. Figure 6.20 provides sample questions students can pose during discussion.

Figure 6.20. Sentence Starters

Ask a Question:

1. What do you mean when you say _____?
2. Why do you think that _____?
3. Can you give an example?
4. Why does _____ do _____?
5. I think _____ is confusing because _____.
6. If I could ask _____ one question, this would be my question:
7. Why does the author _____?

Source

Excerpted from

Doing What Works. 2013. "Sentence Starters for Discussions." Submitted by Gateway High School, San Francisco, CA. WestEd.

Presenting

Students in grade seven continue to present claims and findings in argument, narrative, and summary presentations. They now emphasize salient points in a focused, coherent manner (SL.7.4). Specifically in grade seven, students plan and present an argument that mirrors many of the qualities of writing arguments (SL.7.4a). In snapshot 6.7, middle school students create and present spoken word poetry.

Snapshot 6.7. Poets in Society – Spoken Word Poetry and Youth Literacy Integrated ELA and Performing Arts in Grade Seven

As part of an international movement to empower youth through the visual and performing arts, the faculty at Bridges Middle School work with a local community organization to create a thriving arts program that includes spoken word, dance performances, hip-hop and rap music composing, and a mural project. The school frequently holds festivals where the students perform, hold MC battles, and inspire one another. The program's overarching goal is to empower students and their teachers as authors of their own lives and agents of social change. The program helps students see that their teachers view the language and literacy they each bring to the classroom as valid in its own right and as a powerful resource for developing academic English. The program also allows teachers to develop positive relationships with their students and to see them as writers, poets, and performers. Over the years, as the program has been refined, the approach has created trust among students, between teachers and students, among teachers at the school, and between school staff and the community. The key instructional principles of the program are the following:

"Learning how to authentically reach students is a precursor to successful teaching.

Knowing who students are and where they come from allows us to create meaningful and thought-provoking curricula.

Reading, writing, and speaking are the foundations of academic achievement, critical thinking, and social justice within and beyond the walls of school" (Watson, 2013, 393).

All of the teachers work together to nurture the youth literacy through the arts program, and in the English classes, teachers work closely with *poet-mentor educators*, young local spoken-word artists and rappers from the community, to support middle school students writing and performing their own spoken word compositions. After completing a six-month training program, the poet-mentors receive ongoing support from the community organization. Teachers at the school believe that the program has helped them establish more positive and trusting relationships with their students, partly because the students see that their teachers care about what they have to say and think that students' life experiences are valid topics for school conversations and writing. The program has also helped teachers foster students' transfer of what they learn composing spoken word and poetry into their more formal academic writing of informational, narrative, and argumentative texts.

In their English classes, students analyze the lyrics of different types of poetry to understand how the language used creates different effects on the reader. They also compare classical or traditionally-studied poetry (e.g., Shakespeare, Emily Dickenson, or Langston Hughes) to more contemporary forms (e.g., hip-hop lyrics or spoken word). The students view videos of teenagers performing spoken word and discuss how the artists combine language, gestures, facial expressions, intonation, rhythm, and other techniques to create particular rhetorical effects. When the students begin to write their own spoken-word poetry, the teachers post a quotation in the room that the class reads together to set the purpose for learning about and writing spoken word poetry:

Snapshot 6.7. Poets in Society – Spoken Word Poetry and Youth Literacy Integrated ELA and Performing Arts in Grade Seven (cont.)

"Spoken word is a tool to liberate the mind, to illuminate the heart, and allow us to recognize both our common humanity, as well as the challenges that divide us."

Vajra Watson, SAYS Founder and Director, UC Davis School of Education

The poet-mentors and teachers ask the students to channel their own experiences into their writing. For example, the poet-mentor facilitates the following conversation with a class:

Poet-mentor: Can anybody tell me what it means to be *accepted*?

Students: *Respect, self-confidence, smart, honesty, be who you are, loyalty, appearance, do what you're told, friendship, good grades, helping, learning* (as students generate words, the poet-mentor writes them on the board).

Poet-mentor: I want you to do something for me. I want you to write down your five top word choices (students write). Now, circle your three favorite words from that list (students circle the words). Now, I want you to cross out those three words and incorporate the two words that are left into a free write called "I am not who you think I am."

The students' poems are all different, expressing their own life experiences and perspectives. One student shares part of his poem with the class:

Javier: I am not who you think I am. I do not like school. I do like to write.

The teachers and poet-mentors want each student to know that they can make a change, just by using their own literacies. One of the poet-mentors shares his own spoken-word poem with the students, which they then use as a model for writing. His poem, which serves as a mentor text, encourages students to write and perform to communicate their hopes and dreams, disappointments and regrets, fears and angers, and their ambitions. One of the pieces the poet-mentor shares is the following:

I am no illusion of a fantasy
A smart living breathing human being, can it be?
I like to read and write cuz it helps me advantage me
You might have the umbrella, but I got a canopy
See – I made friends, lost some
Some say, "You raw, son"
Hear it so often, I feel like I'm (y'all son)
Wanna do what I want, but it's kinda hard son
Cuz I gotta abide by this thing called the law, one
Two, I gotta prove to you what is real
Cuz fake stuff is apparently a big deal
Poet-Mentor Andre "Dre-T" Tillman

Teachers at the school feel that the community-based poet-mentors are critical to the success of the program because they serve as *translators* and *interpreters* between the students and teachers, not all of whom live in the ethnically and linguistically diverse urban neighborhoods their students call home. The students, teachers, and poet-mentors, feel so

Snapshot 6.7. Poets in Society – Spoken Word Poetry and Youth Literacy Integrated ELA and Performing Arts in Grade Seven (cont.)

strongly about the success of this program that they collaboratively approach foundations and the local city council to seek funding to further deepen community support of and involvement with the project. They speak at city council meetings and write letters to foundations and community organizations inviting them to their annual summit.

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: RL.7.4; RL.7.5; W.7.4; SL.7.6; L.7.3

Related CA Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards:

7.5.1 Use theatrical skills to communicate concepts or ideas from other curriculum areas . . .

7.5.2 Demonstrate projection, vocal variety, diction, gesture, and confidence in an oral presentation.

Sources

Adapted from

Sacramento Area Youth Speaks (SAYS). University of California, Davis.

Watson, Vajra M. 2012. *Learning to Liberate: Community-Based Solutions to the Crisis in Urban Education.* New York: Routledge.

Watson, Vajra M. 2013. "Censoring Freedom: Community-Based Professional Development and the Politics of Profanity." *Equity and Excellence in Education* 46 (3): 387–410.

Additional Information

Duncan-Andrade, Jeffrey M. R. and Ernest Morrell. 2008. *The Art of Critical Pedagogy: Possibilities for Moving from Theory to Practice in Urban Schools.* New York: Peter Lang.

Examples of spoken word poetry performances:

- Knowledge for College 5th Annual SAYS Summit 2013 (http://vimeo.com/73224895)
- Culture and Language Academy of Success (CLAS) School Video (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W3AbBFzIokg)
- Brave *New* Voices (BNV) (http://youthspeaks.org/bravenewvoices) Spoken Word Movement and BNV Festival Videos (http://youthspeaks.org/bravenewvoices/blog/)
- SAYS spoken word poetry on the UC Davis Web site (http://studentaffairs.ucdavis.edu/equity/says/)

Using Language Conventions

As in prior grades, students in grade seven are expected to demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking, and they are expected to demonstrate command of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. New to grade seven are the following standards:

L.7.1a. Explain the function of phrases and clauses in general and their function in specific sentences.

L.7.1b. Choose among simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences to signal differing relationships among ideas.

L.7.1c. Place phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers.

L.7.2a. Use a comma to separate coordinate adjectives (e.g., *It was a fascinating, enjoyable movie* but not *He wore an old[,] green shirt.*).

Content Knowledge

Reading literature and informational texts and engaging in research in English language arts and other subjects help students develop content knowledge and develop understandings of the ways in which reading and writing are employed across the disciplines. Students in grade seven read and write increasingly complex texts and engage in independent reading programs.

Snapshot 6.8 presents a designated ELD lesson in which the phrases and structures useful for making arguments in mathematics are examined.

Snapshot 6.8. Constructing and Critiquing Arguments in Math Designated ELD Connected to Mathematics in Grade Seven

In grade seven, students engage in two mathematical practices that focus on communication: (1) constructing viable arguments and critiquing the reasoning of others and (2) attending to precision. The students are called upon to justify their conclusions, communicate them to others, and respond to the arguments of others. In addition, they listen to or read their peers' arguments, decide whether they make sense, and ask useful questions to help classmates clarify or improve their arguments. Middle school students, who are learning to use key terms carefully and examine claims, try to communicate precisely to others, using clear definitions and reasons in both discussion and in writing.

During designated ELD instruction, teachers work with their English learners to help them gain confidence using the language needed to comprehend, construct and justify arguments, and communicate ideas clearly. Teachers can provide EL students opportunities to practice using words, phrasing, and discourse conventions useful for discussing mathematical content and making sound mathematical arguments. Some of this language includes introductory adverbial phrases (e.g., *In this case, As shown previously*), or cause/effect sentence structures (e.g., *Due to/as a result of _____, I expect/conclude that _____*). Teachers can enhance English learners' ability to engage in dialogue about mathematical ideas by providing structured and meaningful practice using a variety of question openers and extenders (e.g., *Could you clarify what you mean by _____? I'm not sure I agree with you, but let me explain what I mean . . .*). For example, while the rest of the class is working on independent tasks in groups or pairs, teachers might pull a small group of ELs at similar English language proficiency levels to discuss the language resources useful for engaging in conversations about mathematics topics, encouraging ELs to engage in small-group discussion using the mathematical language. This way, teachers can focus strategically on the specific language their EL students need to develop in order to fully engage with the math content and strengthen their ability to use it during whole class and small-group tasks.

During mathematics instruction, teachers monitor students and provide judicious corrective feedback to ensure they are using the language appropriately while also applying the correct mathematical practices and content knowledge.

CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI.7.1, 3, 4, 5, 11a, 12; ELD.PII.7.3–7
Related CA CCSS for Mathematics:
MP.3 Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.

Foundational Skills

Ideally by the time students enter grade seven, their knowledge of foundational skills is well established. They have a large base of sight words, and they rapidly and effectively employ word recognition skills to identify new printed words. Fluency, which includes accuracy, rate, and prosody, continues to develop as students engage in wide and extensive reading. Rate of reading varies, as it should, with the text and the task. Based on an extensive study of oral reading fluency, Hasbrouck and Tindal (2006) recommend that students scoring more than 10 words below the 50th percentile receive additional instruction that targets fluency. See figure 6.21.

Figure 6.21. Mean Oral Reading Rate of Grade Seven Students

Percentile	Fall WCPM*	Winter WCPM*	Spring WCPM*	Avg. Weekly Improvement**
90	180	195	202	0.7
75	156	165	177	0.7
50	**128**	**136**	**150**	**0.7**
25	102	109	123	0.7
10	79	88	98	0.6

*WCPM = Words Correct Per Minute **Average words per week growth

Source

Hasbrouck, Jan, and Gerald A. Tindal. 2006. "Oral Reading Fluency Norms: A Valuable Assessment Tool for Reading Teachers." *The Reading Teacher* 57: 646–655.

Fluency rates should be cautiously interpreted with all students. See the discussion of fluency in the overview of the span in this chapter and the section on supporting students strategically. The primary way to support students' fluency is to ensure accuracy in decoding and engagement in wide, extensive reading of texts that are neither too simple nor too challenging. In addition, students should have authentic reasons to reread text because rereading also supports fluency.

For information on teaching foundational skills to middle school students who need it, see the section on supporting students strategically in the overview of this chapter. See also chapter 9 on access and equity.

English Language Development in Grade Seven

The instructional program for EL students, including designated ELD, should anticipate and prepare students for the linguistic and academic challenges of the grade-seven curricula. An intensive focus on language, in ways that build into and from content instruction, supports students' ability to use English effectively in a range of disciplines, raises their awareness of how English works in those disciplines, and enhances their understanding of content knowledge. In content instruction with integrated ELD, all teachers with ELs in their classrooms use the CA ELD Standards to *augment* the instruction they provide. English learners at the Emerging level of English language proficiency, particularly ELs who are new to the U.S. and to English, engage in the same cognitively and linguistically demanding coursework as their non-EL peers. However, teachers provide support to newcomer ELs that is responsive to their particular needs.

If students are asked to investigate the causes and effects of climate change in science and then write an explanation, teachers support newcomer ELs by guiding the students to read and discuss short science explanation texts on the topic. Teachers also use these science explanations as mentor texts and explicitly show students how they are organized, specific information typically included in science explanations, and particular language useful for this text type (e.g., domain-specific vocabulary, wording for showing cause and effect relationships, phrases for citing evidence). Teachers also provide students with sentence or paragraph frames to use in their explanations and templates for writing to help them structure their texts appropriately. They might also provide bilingual dictionaries and thesauruses, so students can include precise vocabulary and new grammatical structures to convey their knowledge of the topic. Providing opportunities for newcomer ELs to read and discuss texts in their primary language supports their understandings of the content and their ability to write these text types in English.

Students at the Expanding and Bridging levels of English language proficiency likely do not need all of these scaffolding techniques or such an intensive level of support. As they progress in their understandings of English and their abilities to use English to convey meanings, ELs are able to write longer texts independently that meet the expectations of particular text types. However, all EL students need varying levels of scaffolding depending on the task, the text, and their familiarity with the content and the language required to understand and engage in discussion. Figure 6.22 presents a section of the CA ELD Standards that teachers can use, in tandem with the CA CCSS for ELA/literacy and other content standards, to plan instructional support differentiated by proficiency level and need for scaffolding.

Figure 6.22. Using the CA ELD Standards in Integrated ELD

CA ELD Standards, Part I: Interacting in Meaningful Ways		
English Language Development Level Continuum		
→ Emerging →	**Expanding →**	**Bridging →**
6. Reading/viewing closely a. Explain ideas, phenomena, processes, and text relationships (e.g., compare/contrast, cause/ effect, problem/solution) based on close reading of a variety of grade-appropriate texts and viewing of multimedia, with substantial support. b. Express inferences and conclusions drawn based on close reading of grade-appropriate texts and viewing of multimedia using some frequently used verbs (e.g., *shows that, based on*)	***6. Reading/viewing closely*** a. Explain ideas, phenomena, processes, and text relationships (e.g., compare/contrast, cause/ effect, problem/solution) based on close reading of a variety of grade-level texts and viewing of multimedia, with moderate support. b. Express inferences and conclusions drawn based on close reading of grade-appropriate texts and viewing of multimedia using a variety of verbs (e.g., *suggests that, leads to*).	***6. Reading/viewing closely*** a. Explain ideas, phenomena, processes, and text relationships (e.g., compare/contrast, cause/ effect, problem/solution) based on close reading of a variety of grade-level texts and viewing of multimedia, with light support. b. Express inferences and conclusions drawn based on close reading of grade-level texts and viewing of multimedia using a variety of precise academic verbs (e.g., *indicates that, influences*).

Designated ELD is a protected time during the regular school day when qualified teachers work with ELs. Students are grouped by similar English proficiency levels, and teachers focus on critical academic language the students need to develop to be successful in academic subjects. Designated ELD time is an opportunity to delve more deeply into the linguistic resources of English that ELs need to develop to engage with and make meaning from content, express their understanding of content, and create new content 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 ELA and other areas of the curricula. (For more detailed information on integrated and designated ELD, see the grade span section of this chapter and chapter 2 in this *ELA/ELD Framework*.)

ELA/Literacy and ELD in Action in Grade Seven

Both the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards acknowledge the importance of reading complex texts closely and thoughtfully to derive meaning. In addition, reading texts multiple times can reveal layered meanings that may not present themselves to students during a single reading. Accordingly, teachers prepare reading lessons carefully and purposefully before teaching. This preparation includes selecting challenging and interesting texts worth reading and rereading; reading the texts ahead of time to determine why the language might be challenging and for whom; establishing a purpose for reading; and planning a sequence of lessons that build students' abilities to read the text with increasing independence. This process also requires teachers to analyze the cognitive and linguistic demands of the texts, including the sophistication of the ideas or content, students' prior knowledge, and the complexity of the vocabulary, sentences, and organization.

As discussed in the section on meaning making, teachers should model for students the close reading of texts by thinking aloud, highlighting the comprehension questions they ask themselves as readers and pointing out the language and ideas they notice while reading. Teachers guide students to read complex texts frequently and analytically using concrete methods with appropriate levels of scaffolding. Seventh graders need many opportunities to read a wide variety of complex texts and to discuss the texts they read.

Importantly for all students but especially ELs, teachers should explicitly draw attention to particular elements of language (e.g., text structure and organization, text connectives, long noun phrases, types of verbs, verb tenses) that help authors convey particular meanings. These specific elements of language or *language resources* include text connectives to create cohesion (e.g., *for example*, *suddenly*, *in the end*); long noun phrases to expand and enrich the meaning of sentences (e.g., "The moral which I gained from the dialogue was the power of truth over the conscience of even a slaveholder." [NGA/CCSSO 2010a: Appendix B, 91]); and complex sentences which combine ideas and convey meaning in specific ways (e.g., "Because both Patrick and Catherine O'Leary worked, they were able to put a large addition on their cottage despite a lot size of just 25 by 100 feet." [NGA/CCSSO 2010a: Appendix B, 94]). Providing all students, and especially ELs, with opportunities to discuss the language of the complex texts they read enhances their comprehension and develops their awareness of how language is used to make meaning.

Lesson planning should anticipate year-end and unit goals, respond to the current needs of the learners, and incorporate the framing questions in figure 6.23.

Figure 6.23. 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? • What are the learning targets for this lesson, and what should students be able to do at the end of the lesson? • Which clusters of CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy does this lesson address? • What background knowledge, skills, and experiences do my students have related to this lesson? • How complex are the texts and tasks? • How will students make meaning, express themselves effectively, develop language, and learn content? How will they apply or learn foundational skills? • What types of scaffolding, accommodations, or modifications will individual students need for effectively engaging in the lesson tasks? • 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? • Which CA ELD Standards amplify the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy at students' English language proficiency levels? • What language might be new for students and/or present challenges? • 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 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

Vignette 6.3 demonstrates how a teacher might implement the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards during an ELA lesson focused on close reading. Vignette 6.4 provides an example of how designated ELD can build from and into the types of lessons outlined in vignette 6.3.

Vignette 6.3. You Are What You Eat
Close Reading of an Informational Text
Integrated ELA/ Literacy and ELD Instruction in Grade Seven

Background

Mrs. Massimo is an English language arts (ELA) teacher working with an interdisciplinary team that also includes social studies, science, and math teachers. Her team plans lessons throughout the year that include an array of literary genres and informational texts related to a variety of themes. For the "You Are What You Eat" thematic unit on food, nutrition, and agribusiness, Mrs. Massimo is having her seventh-grade students read *The Omnivore's Dilemma: The Secrets Behind What You Eat* (Young Reader's Edition) by Michael Pollan. This nonfiction text examines how food is currently produced in the United States and explores what alternate forms of production are available. Mrs. Massimo's seventh-grade English class of 32 includes two students with mild learning disabilities, ten English learners at the Expanding level of English language proficiency (most of whom have been in the United States since the primary grades of elementary school), and two English learners at the Emerging level of English language proficiency who have been in U.S. schools for just over a year.

Mrs. Massimo and her team know that middle school is a critical time to prepare students for the increasingly complex texts they will encounter across the disciplines as they progress through secondary school. Using the CA ELD Standards to ensure that they are attending to the language learning needs of their English learners, they make strategic decisions about how to address academic literacy.

Lesson Context

This lesson occurs during the second week of this unit. Mrs. Massimo has shown students a documentary about processed foods, and the class has engaged in lively discussions about the types of foods they like and/or should be eating to be healthy. In this lesson, she continues to build students' content knowledge of food and nutrition by focusing on the modern farming industry. She guides them to closely read a short passage from Michael Pollan's text and facilitates a class discussion about it, prompting students to cite textual evidence to support their ideas.

Vignette 6.3. You Are What You Eat
Close Reading of an Informational Text
Integrated ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction in Grade Seven (cont.)

Learning Targets: The students will analyze a short text about agribusiness to determine what it says explicitly as well as what can be inferred, and they will engage in collaborative conversations about the text, building on classmates' ideas.

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: *RI.7.1 - Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text; RI.7.3 - Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events); RI.7.4 - Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone; SL.7.1 - Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.*

CA ELD Standards (Expanding): *ELD.PI.7.1 – Contribute to class, group, and partner discussions; ELD.PI.7.6a – Explain ideas, phenomena, processes, and text relationships based on close reading of a variety of grade-level texts . . . with moderate support; ELD.PI.7.6c – Use knowledge of morphology, context, reference materials, and visual cues to determine the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words on familiar and new topics.*

Lesson Excerpts

Mrs. Massimo builds her students' background knowledge by reading a short passage aloud as students follow along in their own copies of the text. The passage is related to what students will read and contains many of the words they will encounter (e.g., *agribusiness, fertilizer, chemicals, yield*). By reading aloud Mrs. Massimo is intentionally modeling prosody and pronunciation of words that may be unfamiliar. She also models the use of comprehension strategies, asking herself clarifying questions as she reads and stopping every so often to summarize what she has read.

Mrs. Massimo then asks students to read a passage independently and to consider some text-dependent questions as they do. She asks them to jot down their responses in their reading journals as well as note any questions they have about the reading or any unfamiliar vocabulary. (Previously, Mrs. Massimo met separately with the two English learners at the Emerging level to ensure that they understand the meaning of the questions, and to preview the content knowledge embedded in the text they will read.) The questions she asks students to think about as they read the text on their own for the first time are the following:

- What is this text primarily about?
- What are some key events or details that help us understand what the text is about?
- What are some important words needed to discuss the main ideas?

Excerpt from the text (Chapter 3, "From Farm to Factory")

> It may seem that I've given corn too much credit. After all, corn is just a plant. How could a plant take over our food chain and push out almost every other species? Well, it had some help—from the U.S. Government.

Vignette 6.3. You Are What You Eat
Close Reading of an Informational Text
Integrated ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction in Grade Seven (cont.)

At the heart of the industrial food chain are huge businesses, **agribusinesses**. The same businesses that create new seeds provide farmers with the tools and fertilizer they need to grow lots of corn. Agribusinesses also need cheap corn from which they make **processed food** and hundreds of other products. To get the corn flowing and keep it flowing, agribusiness depends on government **regulations** and taxpayer money.

The government started seriously helping corn back in 1947. That was when a huge weapons plant in Muscle Shoals, Alabama switched over to making chemical fertilizer. How can a weapons plant make fertilizer? Because **ammonium nitrate**, the main ingredient in explosives, happens to be an excellent source of **nitrogen**. And nitrogen is one of the main ingredients in **fertilizer**.

After World War II, the government found itself with a tremendous surplus of ammonium nitrate. There was a debate about what the government should do with the leftover bomb material. One idea was to spray it on forests to help out the timber industry. But the scientists in the Department of Agriculture had a better idea: Spread the ammonium nitrate on farmland as fertilizer. And so the government helped launch the chemical fertilizer industry. (It also helped start the **pesticide** industry, since insect killers are based on poison gases developed for the war.)

Chemical fertilizer was needed to grow **hybrid corn** because it is a very hungry crop. The richest acre of Iowa soil could never feed thirty thousand hungry corn plants year after year without added fertilizer. Though hybrids were introduced in the thirties, it wasn't until farmers started using chemical fertilizers in the 1950s that corn yields really exploded.

After students read the text independently, Mrs. Massimo asks them to discuss their notes in triads for five minutes and come to consensus about their responses to the guiding questions. This gives them an opportunity to collaboratively analyze the text's meanings before she hones in on the key ideas she wants them to focus on next. Mrs. Massimo groups students into triads, making sure that participants in each group can work well together and complement one other's strengths and areas for growth (e.g., a student who has an expansive vocabulary paired with one student who is a good facilitator and another who has a deep interest in science). She also ensures that the two English learners at the Emerging level are each in a triad with a *language broker*, that is, another student who can support their understanding by using their primary language.

As a follow up to their small group conversations, Mrs. Massimo conducts a whole class discussion, asking some text-dependent questions, which she prepared ahead of time:

- What is agribusiness?
- How did the U.S. government help launch the chemical fertilizer industry?
- Why are chemical fertilizers so important and necessary to agribusiness?

Vignette 6.3. You Are What You Eat
Close Reading of an Informational Text
Integrated ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction in Grade Seven (cont.)

As students share out, she charts their responses for everyone to see using the document camera.

Julissa: Our group said this text is mostly about the big businesses that make processed food. They used the chemicals from the weapons factory to make fertilizers for the farms.

Mrs. Massimo: I see. And what word was used in the text to refer to those big businesses that grow food?

Julissa: (Looking at her notes.) Agribusinesses?

Mrs. Massimo: (Writes *agribusiness* using the document camera.) Yes, let's make sure everyone writes that down in their notes. That term is critical for understanding the text we're reading. Based on your understandings, how should we define *agribusinesses*?

Mrs. Massimo guides the class to define the term in their own words, prompting them to refer to their notes and to go back into the text to achieve a precise definition. Here is what the class generates:

> ***Agribusinesses:*** *Huge companies that do big farming as their business. They sell the seeds, tools, and fertilizer to farmers, and they also make processed foods.*

Mrs. Massimo continues to facilitate the conversation, prompting students to provide details about the text, using evidence they cited while reading independently and in their collaborative conversations. She also clarifies any vocabulary that was confusing or that students were unable to define in their small groups. She anticipated that certain words might be unfamiliar to students (e.g., bolded words in the text excerpt) and has prepared short explanations for them, which she provides to students.

When students' responses are incomplete or not detailed enough, she prompts them to elaborate.

Mrs. Massimo: Why are chemical fertilizers so important and necessary to agribusiness?

Sandra: They help the food grow.

Mrs. Massimo: Can you say more about that?

Sandra: It has something in it that the crops need to grow. Nitra- (looks at her text) nitrogen. It was in all the ammonium nitrate they had at the weapons factory. And nitrogen helps the plants to grow. So they had all this ammonium nitrate, and they made it into chemical fertilizer, and that helped the corn—the hybrid corn—grow more.

Mrs. Massimo: Okay, so why was it so important for the agribusinesses to have this chemical fertilizer and for the hybrid corn to grow?

Sandra: Because they need a lot of cheap corn to make processed foods.

Vignette 6.3. You Are What You Eat
Close Reading of an Informational Text
Integrated ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction in Grade Seven (cont.)

Most of the meanings of words in this text can be determined from the context. During class discussion of the text-dependent questions, Mrs. Massimo reviews how to learn vocabulary from contextual clues. For example, she shows students the following sentences from the text and explains that the definition of a challenging word can be embedded within the sentence (in an appositive phrase set off by commas), or in a phrase following the challenging word: *Because **ammonium nitrate**, the main ingredient in explosives, happens to be an excellent source of **nitrogen**. And nitrogen is one of the main ingredients in fertilizer*.)

Mrs. Massimo also points out that the connector *because* introduces a dependent clause—that is, a clause that should be combined with a complete sentence—yet here the clause stands alone.

Mrs. Massimo: Why do you think the author chose to do this? Take a look at the text and briefly talk with your group. (Waits for 30 seconds.)

Tom: The sentence that comes before it is a question, "How can a weapons plant make fertilizer?" so he's just answering his question.

Mrs. Massimo: Is that the style we usually see in an academic text we're reading?

Tom: No, it seems like he's trying to make it seem like he's having a conversation with us, like he's being more informal.

Mrs. Massimo: Yes, in everyday conversation, responding to a question and starting with *because* is natural. This passage is helping to define unfamiliar terms and concepts by using a more conversational style. That leaves us with an incomplete sentence, but Pollan is making this choice deliberately. He's really thinking about the audience when he chooses to write like that. He wants to connect with his readers by using a more conversational tone. When you're having a conversation, and even when you write sometimes, you can also make that choice. But you also need to consider your audience and remember that usually, when you're writing for school, you need to use complete sentences.

Next Steps

After the lesson, Mrs. Massimo again pulls aside her two English learners at the Emerging level to ensure that they understood the critical points of the text. She reviews their journal notes and has a brief discussion with them, clarifying as needed and reinforcing the meanings of some of the vocabulary used that day.

Later on in the unit, Mrs. Massimo will guide the students to write arguments about topics related to the "You Are What You Eat" theme. As they write, students will use a rubric to ensure that their arguments support their claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence, maintain a formal style, and use appropriate text structure and organization.

Resources

Pollan, Michael. 2006. *The Omnivore's Dilemma: The Secrets Behind What You Eat.* Young Readers Edition reprinted in 2009. St. Louis, MO: Turtleback Books.

Vignette 6.3. You Are What You Eat
Close Reading of an Informational Text
Integrated ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction in Grade Seven (cont.)

Sources

Adapted from

Student Achievement Partners. 2013b. "Close Reading Model Lessons: 'The Omnivore's Dilemma: The Secrets Behind What You Eat' by Michael Pollan." *Achieve the Core.*

California Department of Education. 2014. "Learning About How English Works." *California English Language Development Standards: Kindergarten Through Grade 12,* 159–176. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Education.

Additional Information

- Achieve the Core has other CCSS-aligned lessons at each grade level as well as student work samples at http://achievethecore.org.

Designated ELD Vignette

Vignette 6.3 illustrates good teaching for all students with particular attention to the learning needs of ELs. English learners additionally benefit from intentional and purposeful designated ELD instruction that builds into and from content instruction and focuses on their particular language learning needs. Vignette 6.4 illustrates how designated ELD can build from and into the types of lessons outlined in vignette 6.3. It also illustrates how teachers can show their students ways to deconstruct, or unpack, the language resources in arguments.

Vignette 6.4. Analyzing Arguments: Text Organization and the Language of Persuasion
Designated ELD in Grade Seven

Background

During designated ELD, Ms. Quincy, the school's English as an additional language specialist, teaches a class of English learners, most of whom are at the Expanding level of English language proficiency. Many are long-term English learners, that is, they have been in U.S. schools since the elementary grades, but have not yet reached academic proficiency in English, according to state assessments. A few English learners in this class are at the Emerging level of English language proficiency. They have been in the country for a little over a year, are progressing well, and are already fairly fluent in everyday English. All of the students experience challenges using academic English when writing academic papers or providing oral presentations. Ms. Quincy uses grade level texts to help students strengthen their use of academic language in both writing and speaking.

Lesson Context

Ms. Quincy collaborates with an interdisciplinary team that includes Mrs. Massimo, the ELA teacher, on a series of lessons where students read informational texts for the cross-disciplinary thematic unit on food, nutrition, and agriculture, "You Are What You Eat." Ms. Quincy and Mrs. Massimo worked together to design a series of designated ELD lessons that build into and from the interdisciplinary unit. They want to ensure their English learners will be successful with the literacy tasks they engage in throughout the unit and will be well prepared for the culminating task: a written argument supported by evidence from the texts and multimedia they used to research the topic.

Vignette 6.4. Analyzing Arguments: Text Organization and the Language of Persuasion
Designated ELD in Grade Seven (cont.)

Both teachers have noticed that many of the English learners in Mrs. Massimo's class are challenged by some of the academic texts they are reading and by the short writing assignments that are leading toward the research project. As the unit progresses, Ms. Quincy adjusts her lessons to ensure that students receive sufficient scaffolding to meet the high expectations she and Mrs. Massimo hold for them. In today's lesson, Ms. Quincy will begin guiding the students to analyze several mentor texts—in this case, arguments written by previous students, as well as newspaper editorials. The class will be looking closely at the language resources the writers used to persuade readers to think a certain way or take specific action. The learning target and CA ELD Standards for today's lesson are the following:

Learning Target: Students will analyze a written argument, focusing on the text structure and organization and language resources strategies used to persuade an audience. They will engage in discussions about the text's structure and language resources.
CA ELD Standards (Expanding): *ELD.PI.7.1 – Contribute to class, group, and partner discussions by following turn-taking rules, asking relevant questions, affirming others, adding relevant information, and paraphrasing key ideas; ELD.PI.7.4 – Adjust language choices according to purpose (e.g., explaining, persuading, entertaining), task, and audience; ELD.PII.7.1 – Apply understanding of the organizational features of different text types (e.g., how narratives are organized by an event sequence that unfolds naturally versus how arguments are organized around reasons and evidence) to comprehending texts and to writing increasingly clear and coherent arguments, informative/explanatory texts and narratives; ELD.PII.7.2b – Apply growing understanding of how ideas, events, or reasons are linked throughout a text using a variety of connecting words or phrases (e.g., for example, as a result, on the other hand) to comprehending texts and writing texts with increasing cohesion.*

Lesson Excerpts

Ms. Quincy begins by activating students' background knowledge about persuasion and argumentation by asking them to discuss the following question with a partner:

> *Have you ever tried to persuade someone to do something? What did you say? How did you say it? Did it work?*

After the students have had a couple of minutes to discuss the questions, she explains the purpose of constructing arguments.

Ms. Quincy: When we make an argument, our purpose is to persuade someone to think a certain way or to do something. You're very familiar with trying to persuade people with good reasons in a conversation. The way we persuade people in a conversation is different from the way we persuade others in writing. When we write to persuade others, there are certain language resources we can use to construct a strong argument. We're going to take a look at those language resources, and we're going to look at how an argument is structured so that you can write arguments later in this unit.

Vignette 6.4. Analyzing Arguments: Text Organization and the Language of Persuasion
Designated ELD in Grade Seven (cont.)

Ms. Quincy distributes copies of an argument written by a student the previous year. She also displays the text using a document camera. She begins by having the students read the text chorally with her. The content of the text is familiar because the class is in the middle of the thematic unit on food, nutrition, and agribusiness. Nevertheless, she ensures that they understand the general idea of the text by telling them that the text is an argument that was written as a school newspaper editorial about serving organic foods in the cafeteria. She tells them that as they analyze the text structure, they will comprehend the text more fully.

Next, she shows them the text structure and organization of the mentor text by breaking the text up into meaningful chunks. She draws a line to separate each large chunk, or *stage*, and in the left-hand column, she explains that they will use the terms *position statement, arguments,* and *reiteration of appeal* to indicate what these stages are. Under each stage, she writes what the *phases* of each stage are and explains that the phases show where the writer is making deliberate choices about how to use language to get her idea across. Knowing where the stages and phases are, she explains, will help them to understand the argument, and it will also give them ideas about how to structure their own arguments. She has the students write the stages and phases on their copy of the text.

Stages (bigger chunks) and *Phases (smaller chunks inside stages)*	**Title:** ***"Our School Should Serve Organic Foods"***
Position Statement *Issue* *Appeal*	All students who come to Rosa Parks Middle School deserve to be served healthy, safe, and delicious food. Organic foods are more nutritious and safer to eat than non-organic foods, which are treated with pesticides. Our school *should* serve only organic foods because it's our basic right to know that we're being taken care of by the adults in our school. Organic foods *might* be more expensive than non-organic foods, but I think we can all work together to make sure that we eat only the healthiest foods, and that means organic.
Arguments *Point A* *Elaboration*	**Eating organic foods is safer for you because the crops aren't treated with chemical pesticides like non-organic crops are. According to** a recent study by Stanford University, 38% of non-organic produce had pesticides on them compared with only 7% of organic produce. Some scientists say that exposure to pesticides in food is related to neurobehavioral problems in children, like ADHD. Other studies show that even low levels of pesticide exposure can hurt us. I definitely don't want to take the risk of poisoning myself every time I eat lunch.

Vignette 6.4. Analyzing Arguments: Text Organization and the Language of Persuasion
Designated ELD in Grade Seven (cont.)

Point B Elaboration	**Organic food is more nutritious and healthier for your body.** The Stanford University study also reported that organic milk and chicken contain more omega-3 fatty acids than non-organic milk and chicken. Omega-3 fatty acids are important for brain health and also might help reduce heart disease, so we should be eating foods that contain them. **According to** Michael Pollan and other experts, fruits and vegetables grown in organic soils have more nutrients in them. They also say that eating the fruits and vegetables close to the time they were picked preserves more nutrients. This is a good reason to get our school food from local organic farms. Eating local organic foods helps keep us healthier, and it also supports the local economy. We *might* even be able to get organic crops cheaper if we work more with local farms.
Point C Elaboration	**Organic foods are better for the environment and for the people who grow the food.** Farmers who grow organic produce don't use chemicals to fertilize the soil or pesticides to keep away insects or weeds. **Instead,** they use other methods like beneficial insects and crop rotation. This means that chemicals won't run off the farm and into streams and our water supply. This helps to protect the environment and our health. **In addition,** on organic farms, the farmworkers who pick the food aren't exposed to dangerous chemicals that *could* damage their health. This isn't just good for our school. It's something good we *should* do for ourselves, other human beings, and the planet.
Reiteration of Appeal	**To put it simply,** organic foods are more nutritious, safer for our bodies, and better for the environment. But there's another reason we *should* go organic. It tastes better. Non-organic food can sometimes taste like cardboard, but organic food is always delicious. When I bite into an apple or a strawberry, I want it to taste good, and I don't want a mouthful of pesticides. Some people *might* say that organic is too expensive. I say that we can't afford to risk the health of students at this school by not serving organic foods. **Therefore,** we *must* find a way to make organic foods part of our school lunches.

Source

California Department of Education. 2014. "Table 5.2 Example of Argument Text Structure." *California English Language Development Standards: Kindergarten Through Grade 12,* 166. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Education.

Once the students have the stages of their arguments delineated, Ms. Quincy models how she locates key sentences, which she highlights:

Vignette 6.4. Analyzing Arguments: Text Organization and the Language of Persuasion
Designated ELD in Grade Seven (cont.)

- **The position statement:** All students who come to Rosa Parks Middle School deserve to be served healthy, safe, and delicious food.
- **The issue:** Organic foods are more nutritious and safer to eat than non-organic foods, which are treated with pesticides.
- **The appeal:** Our school should serve only organic foods because it's our basic right to know that we're being taken care of by the adults in our school.

She underlines the arguments and briefly notes that the rest of the paragraphs elaborate on the arguments.

Ms. Quincy: We're going to be looking at text structure and organization a lot over the next couple of weeks, so if things aren't clear right now, don't worry. What I want to spend most of our time on today is all the different kinds of language resources you can use when you write an argument. We'll be looking several arguments that some students your age wrote, as well as some newspaper articles that are arguments so that you can see that there are a lot of language resources to choose from.

Thyda: What do you mean by "language resources?"

Ms. Quincy: A *resource* is something you can use to do something. Language resources are words or groups of words that help you make meaning and accomplish particular goals with language. Some language resources help you put ideas together in sentences, like when you use the words *and* or *but* or *because*. Other resources help you to be precise, for example, when you use specific vocabulary words. Because we're focusing on argumentative texts, we're going to explore which kinds of language resources are used in arguments to make a text more persuasive.

Ms. Quincy models how she identifies language resources by reading the first paragraph. She stops at the word *should*. She highlights the word and points out that it is a modal verb that expresses the point of view of the author. The word *should*, she points out, makes the statement much stronger than if the author had used the words *could* or *can*. The modal *should* tells us what the author thinks is right or best; the modals *could* and *can* simply tell us what the author thinks is possible.

She writes this observation in the margin. Next, she asks the students to work together in pairs to explore the rest of the text, paragraph by paragraph, and to work collaboratively to identify other language resources that make the text persuasive. She asks them to underline important terms or moves the writer makes, agree on how and why the language is persuasive, and write their ideas in the margin. (She has each student at the Emerging level of English language proficiency work with two other students at the Expanding level whom she knows will support and include them in the task.) As the students are exploring the text, she walks around the classroom to provide support when needed and observe which language features and resources they notice.

Vignette 6.4. Analyzing Arguments: Text Organization and the Language of Persuasion
Designated ELD in Grade Seven (cont.)

Samuel: "According to a recent study by Stanford University"—it seems like they're using that to show there's proof.

Mai: It seems like they're using what?

Samuel: The words at the beginning, "according to."

Mai: Yeah, because after that they have some numbers about pesticides, "38% of non-organic produce had pesticides on them compared with only 7% of organic produce." If they just said that, without *according to*, then it sounds less important or official.

Samuel: Let's underline that and say it makes it sound important and official.

Ms. Quincy: Can you say a little more about that? What do you mean by "important and official"?

Mai: It's like, he can say the numbers, but when you say "according to a study," then that means there's evidence.

Samuel: Or if you say "according to a scientist," that means someone important thinks it's true.

Ms. Quincy: Like an expert?

Samuel: Yeah, a scientist is like an expert on things, and a study is like evidence, so if you say "according to" that expert or that evidence, that makes your argument stronger.

Ms. Quincy carefully observes students at the Emerging level of proficiency and steps in when extra scaffolding is needed. She will also check in with these students at the end of class to ensure that they understood the purpose of the task and the ideas discussed.

After ten minutes of exploration, Ms. Quincy pulls the class together and asks them to share their observations. She writes their observations on chart paper so that the students can continue to add their ideas over the next two weeks and can refer to the chart when they begin to construct their own arguments.

Vignette 6.4. Analyzing Arguments: Text Organization and the Language of Persuasion
Designated ELD in Grade Seven (cont.)

Language Resources Useful for Writing Arguments		
Language resource and examples	**Example from the text**	**What it does**
According to + (noun or pronoun), statement.	**According to** Michael Pollan and other experts, fruits and vegetables grown in organic soils have more nutrients in them.	Lets you cite evidence or an expert; makes it sound more official
Modal verbs: should, would, could, might, may, must	Our school *should* serve only organic foods . . . Organic foods *might* be more expensive . . .	Makes statements stronger or softer; lets the reader know that you believe something or doubt it's true
Judging words: deserve, basic right, more nutritious, safer	. . . it's our *basic right* to know that we're being taken care of by the adults in our school.	Shows how the author is judging or evaluating things
Precise words and academic words: nutritious, organic produce	Some scientists say that *exposure* to *pesticides* in food is *related to neurobehavioral problems* in children, like ADHD.	Makes the reader think you know what you're talking about and gets at the meaning you want

Ms. Quincy points out that there's an important reason for using terms like *according to*.

Ms. Quincy: I agree that it does make the writing seem more *official*. But there's an important reason why we use terms like *according to*. We have to attribute facts to their source. That means that we have to say where the facts came from, and *according to* is one way to do that. Facts aren't always just facts. They come from somewhere or from someone, and we have to make judgments about where they came from – the source. We have to decide if the source is *credible*, or rather, if the source knows enough to be able to give us these facts. There are lots of ways to do this. For example, we could also say something like, "Scientists at Stanford found that . . ."

The students have also noted that there are some words that help to connect ideas (create cohesion or flow) within the text. In their planning, Mrs. Massimo and Ms. Quincy had anticipated this, so they created a chart that they would each use in their classrooms to support students' use of cohesive devices. Ms. Quincy records the *text connectives* that

Vignette 6.4. Analyzing Arguments: Text Organization and the Language of Persuasion
Designated ELD in Grade Seven (cont.)

students identify *(in addition, instead, to put it simply, therefore)* and provides them with other text connectives that are useful for creating cohesion. (The class will add additional terms to the chart over time.)

Why use?	Which text connectives to use (to help create cohesion)
adding ideas	*in addition, also, furthermore*
sequence	*first of all, finally, next, then, to begin with, lastly*
example	*for example, to illustrate, for instance, to be specific, in the same way*
results	*as a result, as a consequence, consequently, therefore, for this reason, because of this*
purpose	*to this end, for this purpose, with this in mind, for this reason(s)*
comparison	*like, in the same manner (way), as so, similarly*
contrast	*instead, in contrast, conversely, however, still, nevertheless, yet, on the other hand, on the contrary, in spite of this, actually, in fact*
summarize	*to put it simply, in summary, to sum up, in short, finally, therefore, as you can see*

Next Steps

Over the next two weeks, Ms. Quincy will continue to work with students to analyze other mentor texts, deconstruct some of the sentences in them, and discuss the language resources used by the authors of these texts. Once the students have had many opportunities to analyze these texts, she will guide them to help her co-construct an argument on the theme, employing the text structure and organization of arguments as well as some of the language resources they have identified.

When Ms. Quincy and Mrs. Massimo meet for collaborative planning later that week, they discuss how the lesson went. Ms. Quincy shares that the students responded well but that there were some questions that were difficult to answer. Mrs. Massimo invites Ms. Quincy to come into her ELA class the following week to co-teach a lesson on language resources in arguments so that she can learn how to show all of her students ways to identify and use the language of persuasion. With both of them working on this area of language development, Mrs. Massimo suggests, perhaps some of the students' questions will become easier to answer.

Resource

Pollan, Michael. 2006. *The Omnivore's Dilemma: The Secrets Behind What You Eat.* Young Readers Edition reprinted in 2009. St. Louis, MO: Turtleback Books.

Vignette 6.4. Analyzing Arguments: Text Organization and the Language of Persuasion
Designated ELD in Grade Seven (cont.)

Sources

Adapted from

California Department of Education. 2014. "Learning About How English Works." *California English Language Development Standards: Kindergarten Through Grade 12,* 159–176. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Education.

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

Additional Information

For further reading on teaching students about the language resources of different text types, see

Gibbons, Pauline. 2009. *English Learners, Academic Literacy, and Thinking: Learning in the Challenge Zone.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

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 dispositions, skills, histories, and circumstances. Teachers need to know their students well through appropriate assessment practices and other methods in order to design effective instruction for them and 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 or adapt the main lesson in particular ways. Information about meeting the needs of diverse learners, scaffolding, and modifying or adapting instruction is provided in chapters 2 and 9. Importantly, students will not receive the excellent education called for in this *ELA/ELD Framework* without genuine collaborations among those responsible for educating California' children and youth. (See figure 6.24).

Seventh-grade students are in the midst of their early adolescence, and their desire for novelty and human connection has made the year exciting and challenging. They have examined inspiring literature, explored ancient worlds in history, and exercised their intellects in many disciplines. Looking to the last year of middle school, they are ready to engage with new ideas and build new knowledge.

Figure 6.24. 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 regularly 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*.

Grade Eight

Eighth graders are in their last year of junior high school or middle school and need to be prepared during this year to meet the rigors of a high school program designed to help them develop the readiness for college, careers, and civic life; attain the capacities of a literate individual; become broadly literate; and acquire 21st century skills. They continue to engage with ideas, concepts, knowledge, and stories in literature and informational text both in what they read in school and independently. In eighth grade, students continue to engage with the standards for literacy in history/social studies, science and technical subjects, strengthening development of reading and writing skills not just in language arts, but across the content areas. Eighth graders who are entering school as ELs, or who have been in U.S. schools since the elementary years but are still designated as ELs, need particular attention, as their English language and literacy abilities (especially in academic English) must improve in an *accelerated time frame* in order for them to be prepared for the rigors of high school in one year.

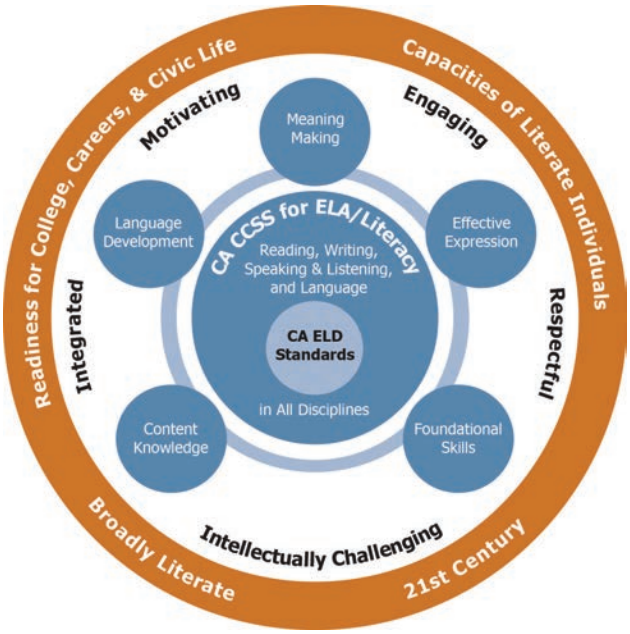
Eighth graders are in their last year of junior high school or middle school and need to be prepared during this year to meet the rigors of a high school program designed to help them develop the readiness for college, careers, and civic life; attain the capacities of a literate individual; become broadly literate; and acquire 21st century skills.

This grade-level section provides an overview of the key themes of ELA/Literacy and ELD instruction in grade eight. It offers guidance for ensuring ELs have access to ELA and content instruction, including integrated and designated ELD instruction. Snapshots and vignettes bring several of the concepts to life.

Key Themes of ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction in Grade Eight

In this section, the key themes of ELA/Literacy and ELD instruction are discussed as they apply to grade eight. These include **Meaning Making**, **Language Development**, **Effective Expression**, **Content Knowledge**, and **Foundational Skills**. See figure 6.25. These themes are largely overlapping and consistent with the call for the integration of reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language in the CA CCSS for ELA Literacy and the CA ELD Standards. Inextricably linked to every area of the curriculum, the two sets of standards promote an interdisciplinary approach. Each of the snapshots for grade eight that follow is presented in connection with a theme; however, many snapshots illustrate several themes. The two vignettes at the end of the section for grade eight depict integrated ELA and ELD instruction and designated ELD instruction based on the same topic and/or readings.

Figure 6.25. Circles of Implementation of ELA/Literacy and ELD Instruction



Meaning Making

In grade eight, the level of rigor and text complexity continues to increase from earlier grades as students also increase in their ability to generate meaningful analysis and demonstrate understanding. Eighth graders make meaning by analyzing and presenting relationships and connections among ideas and information in reading, writing, and speaking. Specifically they analyze the relationship of a theme to characters, setting, and plot (RL.8.2) and analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (RI.8.3). They delineate and evaluate arguments and claims in a text (RI.8.8) and distinguish the claims they make in their own writing from alternate or opposing claims (W.8.1a). They explore and present relationships among experiences, events, information, and ideas as they write (W.8.3c, W.8.6) and pose questions during discussions that connect the ideas of several speakers (SL.8.1c).

As in previous grades, students engage in meaning making as they read closely to understand what a text says explicitly and to draw inferences from a text. Developing summaries, students sort through the ideas of a text to identify those that are central, distilling their understandings to the essence of a piece. For example, teachers might employ the activity in figure 6.26, This Is About/ This Is *Really* About, for this purpose. This activity guides students to be more precise when writing summaries because it leads them to infer the main idea when it refers to an unstated theme or big idea.

Figure 6.26. Procedure for Identifying Main Ideas and Developing a Summary

This Is About/ This Is *Really* About

Purpose:

Students work in the whole class, individually, and in groups to identify main ideas and use them to synthesize or infer a summary.

Procedure:

- Ask students to silently read a passage and be ready to tell *what the passage is about*.
- Record all student ideas, details and main ideas alike.
- Have the class compare the ideas on the list to distinguish main ideas and details. Highlight those identified as main ideas. Some texts may require you to prompt students to make inferences about what the main idea may be.
- Have students individually decide which statements from the list capture all or part of the main idea.
- Have students work in pairs or trios to compare their ideas and agree on which to include or synthesize.
- Record groups' ideas and facilitate another class discussion about why some ideas are or are not main ideas. Edit the list accordingly.
- Depending on the affordances of the text, challenge students to capture big ideas or themes by continuing to ask, "This is about that, but what is it really about?"
- Have students return to their groups and write a summary of the passage.

Using the procedure described above for synthesizing main ideas into a summary, students reading the young adult novel *Julie and the Wolves* by Jean Craighead George might come up with ideas like those that follow.

Process:

1. List, winnow, and combine their most important ideas.
2. Step back to decide what those ideas are really about.
3. Write a summary that incorporates the text's big ideas and most salient details.

Class List:

Chapter 1 is about . . .

- a girl who runs away
- a girl who is lost in the tundra.
- an Eskimo girl.
- a girl who tries to escape a traditional arranged marriage.
- surviving the elements in an Alaskan winter.
- a girl who is unhappy about decisions being made for her.

Group Work:

Chapter 1 is about . . .

- a girl who runs away and is lost on the Alaskan tundra over a winter.
- an Eskimo girl who tries to escape a traditional arranged marriage.

Chapter 1 is *really* about . . .

- a girl struggling with cultural identity.
- a girl learning to confront difficult choices.
- a girl struggling with gender roles.

Summary of Chapter 1:

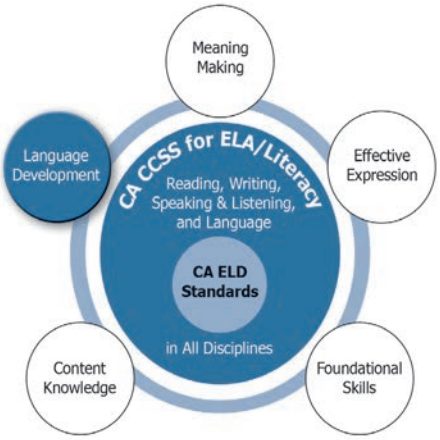
Julie is a girl of Eskimo ancestry who is learning to confront difficult cultural choices. To avoid the Eskimos tradition of an arranged marriage, she runs away into the vast Alaskan tundra.

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: RL.8.2; RI.8.2; W.8.5; SL.8.1

Source

Schoenbach, Ruth, Cynthia Greenleaf, and Lynn Murphy. 2012. *Reading for Understanding: How Reading Apprenticeship Improves Disciplinary Learning in Secondary and College Classrooms*. 2nd ed., 222. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Language Development



As noted in the overview of this chapter, academic language spans all areas of ELA and ELD: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Knowledge of academic language is crucial for understanding written texts, lectures, and multimedia presentations as well as producing written texts and oral presentations. Thus, elements of academic language are addressed in the sections on meaning making, effective expression, and content knowledge for each grade. Students in grade eight are expected to read and write more complex literary and informational texts, expanding their content-area knowledge and actively developing their academic vocabulary in disciplines such as history, science, and other subjects. They make meaning of words and phrases that may be similar but hold different meanings depending upon the academic context. Students in grade eight are expected to understand and use sentence patterns and verbs in active and passive voice and the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects in listening, speaking, reading, and writing (L.8.3a).

Students in grade eight are expected to understand and use sentence patterns and verbs in active and passive voice and the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

An example of a classroom activity that builds metalinguistic awareness of language and its conventions follows in figure 6.27.

Figure 6.27. Sentence Detective Practice

Procedure:

Invite students to nominate a sentence or brief passage that is confusing for reasons other than vocabulary. For example, a sentence may be grammatically complex or the passage may use figurative language that is unfamiliar to students.

On a display that all can see, write the sentence or passage and alternate with students identifying punctuation, transition or other signal words, referents, and phrases that are either a source of confusion or that help illuminate the meaning of the sentence or passage.

Facilitate a discussion so that students can think aloud and talk about the strategies they are using to clarify the meaning of the sentence or passage. In other words, support the students to be aware of how they are making deductions about meaning using metacognitive strategies (thinking aloud about how one is thinking) and metalinguistic strategies (thinking aloud about how one is using language).

Have the students work in partners, and give them an opportunity to continue to practice being sentence detectives with other sentences or passages.

Bring the class back together to discuss the students' ideas, confirm their deductions, and identify their processes for figuring out the meanings of the challenging sentences or passages.

Sample text:

Preamble to the Declaration of Independence

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

Source

Adapted from

Schoenbach, Ruth, Cynthia Greenleaf, and Lynn Murphy. 2012. *Reading for Understanding: How Reading Apprenticeship Improves Disciplinary Learning in Secondary and College Classrooms*. 2nd ed., 272. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

In snapshot 6.9, students examine the vocabulary and syntax of a text as they consider issues of cyberbullying.

Snapshot 6.9. Developing and Defending an Argument
Integrated ELA/Literacy and Civic Learning Instruction in Grade Eight

At the beginning of class one day, Ms. Okonjo asks her students the following question, which she has also posted on the SMART board:

Should our democracy allow schools to punish students for off-campus cyberbullying?

She has her students briefly discuss their initial reactions to the question in their table groups and explains that today they will read an article on cyberbullying that includes two arguments: one in favor and one against allowing schools to punish students for off-campus cyberbullying.

Snapshot 6.9. Developing and Defending an Argument Integrated ELA/Literacy and Civic Learning Instruction in Grade Eight (cont.)

Ms. Okonjo writes three key words from the question: *democracy*, *off-campus,* and *cyberbullying* on the board and asks the students to discuss what they know about each of these terms and then jot down a list of words associated with each term. After asking a few students to report out on what their groups generated, she acknowledges students' understandings and tells them that they are going to learn more about the terms in an article they will read.

First, Ms. Okonjo asks the students to read the short article individually, circling any words or phrases they find are unclear. She also asks students to place a question mark next to longer passages that they need clarification about. After the first reading, she asks students to work together in table groups to help one another clarify the terms and ideas. Next, she guides the whole class in creating a list of unfamiliar terms with explanations for each, using an online collaborative document program (projected via the document camera). Students will be able to refer to this online word bank later and will also be able to collectively refine various terms' explanations over time.

Once they have discussed unfamiliar terms and phrases, the class collaboratively deconstructs a few complicated sentences selected by the students. For example, students analyze the first sentence:

"Although schools have a duty to protect the safety and well-being of their students, much of this *cyberbullying* takes place off-campus, outside of school hours."

Structure: Type of Clause? How I know?	Text Excerpt: Broken Into Clauses	Meaning: What It Means in My Own Words
Dependent, it starts with *although*, so it depends on the other part of the sentence	*Although* schools have a duty to protect the safety and well-being of their students	Schools are supposed to take care of their students. But . . . The word *although* lets us know that cyberbullying might still be happening.
Independent, even if I take the other part of the sentence away it is still a complete sentence.	much of this cyberbullying takes place off-campus, outside of school hours.	Students use texting, Facebook, and other technology to bully others, but they do it afterschool. So, cyberbullying is still happening.

Ms. Okonjo then asks the students to go back into the text and to work in their table groups to identify the arguments for and against schools punishing students for off-campus cyberbullying. She tells them to take turns reading the paragraphs and to discuss whether they detect any arguments for or against whether the school should take action. She also tells them that they must come to a consensus on these statements. Once they have, each group

Snapshot 6.9. Developing and Defending an Argument Integrated ELA/Literacy and Civic Learning Instruction in Grade Eight (cont.)

member should write the same thing in his or her notetaking sheet. This, she reminds them, requires them to discuss their ideas extensively first so that they can be concise and precise when they record their ideas in their notes. Ms. Okonjo provides a notetaking guide for students to record their evidence.

Should our democracy allow schools to punish students for off-campus cyberbullying?	
Reasons and Evidence For	Reasons and Evidence Against

As the students work in their groups, Ms. Okonjo circulates around the room so that she can listen in on the conversations, answer questions, provide *just-in-time* scaffolding, and more generally observe how the students are working together.

After giving students time to locate arguments for and against punishing students for off-campus cyberbullying, Ms. Okonjo refocuses the students on the deliberation question and explains that the students will be assigned to one of two teams: Team A, which will be in favor of the school exacting punishment, and Team B, which will be against such punishment. Each team will be responsible for selecting the most compelling reasons and evidence for its assigned position. Next, she provides time for the students to reread the article and identify the most compelling reasons to support the school taking action, along with powerful quotes to enhance these reasons. To ensure maximum participation, she asks everyone on each team to prepare a presentation of at least one reason.

As each member presents a compelling reason to his or her team, the other team members listen and record notes. Although the team members who are listening can ask questions if they do not understand, they cannot argue. Once all team members have shared amongst themselves, then each team presents its argument. To ensure understanding, the teams then switch roles, and defend the other team's most compelling reasons, adding at least one additional reason to support the other team's position. Then Ms. Okonjo asks students to move from their assigned team roles and deliberate as a group, using their notes. Afterwards, each student selects the position he or she now agrees with and, using evidence from the text for support, writes a brief paragraph to explain why. As the students discuss their paragraphs in small groups, Ms. Okonjo circulates around the room, checking students' paragraphs and providing support to those who need it. Following the class discussion, the students reflect on their oral contributions to group discussions in their journals.

On another day, the students co-construct a letter to school board to express their varied opinions. To support their positions, they include the compelling reasons they identified, evidence from the text they read, and any relevant personal experiences.

Resources

Adapted from

Constitutional Rights Foundation. 2007. "Should Our Democracy Allow Schools to Punish Students for Off-Campus Cyberbullying? Cyberbullying Reading" *Deliberating in a Democracy*.

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: RI.8.1–2; W.8.1; SL.8.1, 3

Effective Expression

Students who have achieved the standards in the previous grades demonstrate the ability to express themselves in writing, discussing, and presenting, and they demonstrate considerable command of language conventions. Expectations and examples of instruction for grade eight in effective expression are discussed in the following sections.

Writing

In grade eight, expectations for students' writing content, skills, and strategies build on those in grade seven while expanding in subtle ways. Students continue to write three different text types for particular purposes and to conduct research, while expanding their abilities. For example, eighth graders continue to write arguments and support claims but now distinguish them from alternate or opposing claims and use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify relationships among counterclaims in addition to claims, reasons, and evidence (W.8.1). They continue to write informative/explanatory texts, now including career development documents, to examine a topic and use appropriate *and varied* transitions to create cohesion (W.8.2). They also continue to write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events, and their use of transition words, phrases, and clauses shows the relationship among experiences and events (W.8.3).

In addition, eighth graders are expected to conduct research and produce written products with increasing independence and attention to audience, purpose, and citation of sources. Specifically, they are expected to use technology and the Internet to present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently (W.8.6) and continue to conduct short research projects to answer a question, now generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration (W.8.7). Students continue to write for many purposes and time frames and use a recursive process to plan, compose, revise, and edit their writing. Examples of these include:

- Writing an argument in response to a prompt in a 30-minute time frame (e.g., as a formative assessment before beginning a unit on argumentative writing or as a stand-alone assessment of on-demand writing)
- Writing two accounts of an experience in gathering research, over a one-or two-day period: one a narrative account for a peer-group audience, the other an informative essay for an adult, academic audience
- Writing a variety of texts for a semester-long research project, including summaries of resources, text accompanying multimedia support, and an explanatory essay
- Writing an in-class response to literature (one or more readings, e.g., a short story and a poem), followed by a homework assignment to write a creative narrative piece on the same theme

. . . they [eighth graders] are expected to use technology and the Internet to present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently and continue to conduct short research projects to answer a question, now generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

The speaking and listening standards for eighth grade require students to actively engage in discussions, make oral presentations, and provide explanations of materials they have read. In the eighth grade, students are expected to contribute actively to class discussions, ask questions, respond to classmates, and give constructive

feedback. Content knowledge is to be demonstrated through a variety of means including oral presentations, writing, discussions, and multimedia. Effective expression is also a key component of the CA ELD Standards for eighth grade as students are asked to interact in meaningful ways, including "exchanging information and ideas with others through collaborative discussions on a range of social and academic topics, offering and justifying opinions, negotiating with and persuading others in communicative exchanges, and listening actively to spoken English in a range of social and academic context."

Figure 6.28 presents a sample informative/explanatory essay written by an eighth grader on the topic of the book *The Old Man and the Sea* as a homework assignment for an English class. It is followed by an annotation that analyzes the piece according to the standard (W.8.2). The essay should be viewed as having been written after multiple rounds of revising and editing and intentional instruction about how to use particular rhetorical devices and language resources. Although this sample essay contains five paragraphs, no specific number of paragraphs is recommended. Essays should contain as many paragraphs as are necessary to develop a writer's ideas and accomplish the purpose of the writing task. (See the grades six and seven sections for narrative and argument writing samples).

Figure 6.28. Grade Eight Writing Sample

The Old Man and the Sea

In the book *The Old Man and the Sea*, Ernest Hemingway tells the story of an old Cuban fisherman named Santiago who, considered by the villagers to be the worst type of unlucky, is still determined to win a battle against a giant Marlin off the coast of Cuba. Santiago succeeds, but his successes do not come without great hardship and struggle. He spends three days being dragged in his skiff by the enormous marlin with minimal food and water, all the while enduring acute physical pain, tiredness, and an unending loneliness due to the absence of his young friend, Manolin. It is only after Santiago's prize fish is completely devoured by sharks that he returns home to the village scorners and the safety of Manolin's trust. As his suffering and loss compound, we can see that Hemingway's quote "a man can be destroyed but not defeated" offers a key insight into Santiago's life.

As the story begins, we learn that Santiago has gone eighty-four days straight without catching a fish. Young Manolin's parents will no longer allow the two to fish together, for they do not want their son being exposed any more to this type of failure. Santiago and Manolin are deeply saddened by this news, but Santiago does not let the loss of his friend or the defeat that others see him suffering keep him off the sea. Rather, with bright and shining eyes he thinks "maybe today. Every day is a new day" (pg. 32), and prepares to catch the biggest fish of his life. This shows that even though almost all of Santiago's acquaintances feel that his fishing career is over, he sees it about to reach its all time high. Though he knows he is physically older and weaker than most of his fellow fisherman, he refuses to let their opinions and stereotypes destroy his confidence and determination.

As the story progresses, Hemingway presents an even more vivid picture of Santiago refusing to be destroyed by the forces that threaten to defeat him. Even after he accomplishes the difficult task of hooking the giant Marlin, he finds his skiff being dragged by the fish for over two days. Living in the small boat is no easy task for Santiago, and soon injury and suffering seem to take over his entire body. His back is sore from sitting so long against the stiff wood, his face is cut from fishing hooks, his shoulders ache, and his eyes have trouble focusing. Most difficult to endure though is the terrible condition in which he finds his hands. The left one is weakened from a period of being tightly cramped, and both are extremely

mutilated from the burn of the moving fishing line. It would have been so much easier for Santiago to simply give up and release the fish, yet he knows that if he endures a little longer, victory will be his. Even when it seems he has no effort left, Santiago promises himself "I'll try it again." (pg. 93) This is Santiago's real inner determination coming through. He has encountered so many obstacles during the past few days, yet he will not let them defeat his dream of killing the fish. There is no outside force promising a splendid reward if he succeeds, only those that threaten to ridicule him if he is destroyed. Santiago is working solely on his own desire to fulfill his dream and prove to himself that, although his struggles may cost him his life, he can accomplish even the seemingly impossible.

After three long days and nights, Santiago's determination pays off, and at last he manages to catch and kill the Marlin. It is only a very short time that he has to relish in his triumph though, for a few hours later vicious sharks begin to destroy the carcass of the great fish. For hours, Santiago manages to ward them off, but this time it is not he who wins the final battle. Spirits low and pain at an all time high, Santiago returns to the village, towing behind him only the bare skeleton of a treasure that once was. It seems as though Santiago is ready to just curl up and die, and indeed he has reason to feel this way. Yet as he rests alone and talk with Manolin, we see a hint of Santiago's determination, that has characterized his personality throughout the entire story, begin to shine through. Upon reaching home, he begins to make plans with Manolin about future adventures they will have together. Hemingway tells us that Santiago, in his youth, had loved to watch the majestic lions along his home on a white sand beach in Africa, and he still returns to those dreams when searching for contentment. That night, as Santiago drifts off to sleep, Hemingway tells that he was indeed "dreaming about the lions." (pg. 127) This is perhaps the truest test of how much courage and determination a person has. If even when they have suffered the biggest defeat of their life, they are able to look to the future and realize the wonderful things they still posses. Though the forces of nature and time destroyed Santiago's prize fish, he refuses to let that fact ruin the rest of his life. No one can take away his love for Manolin or memories of what once was, and because of this, no one can ever truly defeat Santiago.

In conclusion, throughout the entire story *The Old Man and the Sea*, Santiago refuses to surrender to the forces working against him. He ignores the comments of those who think he is unlucky, endures great physical pain, and rises up from the depths of sorrow over the lost Marlin to find happiness in what he does possess. Hemingway's quote "a man can be destroyed but not defeated" truly does display the amount of determination that Santiago shows throughout his life.

Annotation

The writer of this piece accomplishes the following:

- **Introduces the topic clearly, previewing what is to follow**
  - The writer provides a brief summary of the plot in the introduction and then uses a quotation to advance the thesis of the essay and preview what is to follow: *As his suffering and loss compound, we can see that Hemingway's quote "a man can be destroyed but not defeated" offers a key insight into Santiago's life.*
- **Organizes ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories**
  - Two key elements of the quotation (*destroyed but not defeated*) help establish the overall structure of the piece.

- The second, third, and fourth paragraphs each recount extended examples of Santiago's struggle and determination (e.g., *. . . Santiago has gone eighty-four days straight without catching a fish. Young Manolin's parents will no longer allow the two to fish together, for they do not want their son being exposed any more to this type of failure . . . but Santiago does not let the loss of his friend or the defeat that others see him suffering keep him off the sea. Rather, with bright and shining eyes he thinks "maybe today. Every day is a new day". . .*).

- **Develops the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples**
  - Concrete details: *. . . eighty-four days straight without catching a fish . . .* [hands] *extremely mutilated from the burn of the moving fishing line . . . towing behind him only the bare skeleton of a treasure that once was.*
  - Quotations: *That night, as Santiago drifts off to sleep, Hemingway tells that he was indeed "dreaming about the lions." (pg. 127)*
  - Examples*: . . . injury and suffering . . . His back is sore . . . his face is cut . . . his shoulders ache . . .*
- **Uses appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts**
  - *As his suffering and loss compound . . . As the story progresses . . . Even after . . . After three long days and nights . . . In conclusion, throughout the entire story,* The Old Man and the Sea *. . .*
- **Uses precise language to inform about or explain the topic**
  - *. . . minimal food and water . . . acute physical pain . . . eighty-four days straight without catching a fish . . . only the bare skeleton . . .*
- **Establishes and maintains a formal style**
  - *In the book* The Old Man and the Sea*, Ernest Hemingway tells the story of an old Cuban fisherman named Santiago who, considered by the villagers to be the worst type of unlucky, is still determined to win a battle against a giant Marlin off the coast of Cuba.*
  - *As the story begins, we learn . . . In conclusion . . .*
- **Provides a concluding section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (and returns to the quotation used in the thesis statement)**
  - *In conclusion, throughout the entire story,* The Old Man and the Sea*, Santiago refuses to surrender to the forces working against him. He ignores the comments of those who think he is unlucky, endures great physical pain, and rises up from the depths of sorrow over the lost Marlin to find happiness in what he does possess. Hemingway's quote "a man can be destroyed but not defeated" truly does display the amount of determination that Santiago shows throughout his life.*
- **Demonstrates good command of the conventions of standard written English (with occasional errors that do not interfere materially with the underlying message)**

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*, 49–51. National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, Washington DC.

Teachers carefully examine their students' writing to determine the student's achievement of selected objectives, reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching, and inform subsequent instruction. They involve students in reviewing their work, and for EL students, teachers 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

Students in grade eight continue to engage in collaborative discussions with partners and in small groups and in teacher-led discussions with the entire class. Students now pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers. They also qualify or justify their views when warranted in light of evidence presented.

Students in grade eight continue to engage in collaborative discussions with partners and in small groups and in teacher-led discussions with the entire class. Students now pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers. They also qualify or justify their views when warranted in light of evidence presented.

When teaching students to engage in metacognitive conversations with a piece of text, it is helpful to model talking to the text before having students work in pairs to practice. Learning to annotate a text with their thinking and sharing their annotations and strategies with their classmates provides an opportunity to engage in problem solving. Use of strategies such as Socratic seminar (Filkins 2013) invite student inquiry and deeper understanding of a text by requiring students to read, understand, and engage in discussion by continually referring to evidence from the text to support their points in conversation. Students respond to open-ended questions from the leader and listen carefully to peers, think critically about the questions, pull together evidence and articulate their own responses to the questions posed, and respond to the comments of others in the seminar.

In snapshot 6.10, two teachers plan and co-teach a lesson on Frederick Douglass. They help their students analyze the language of the text in preparation for a class discussion about Frederick Douglass and abolition of slavery.

Snapshot 6.10. Analysis of Primary Texts by Frederick Douglass Designated ELD Connected to History/Social Science in Grade Eight

In history class, students are learning about the origins of slavery in the U.S., its consequences, and its abolition. They learn how Frederick Douglass, an African American writer and political activist who was born a slave in 1818, escaped to freedom and began to promote the anti-slavery cause in the nineteenth century. Throughout the 1840s and 1850s he traveled across the north delivering abolitionist lectures, writing anti-slavery articles, and publishing his autobiography about his time in slavery and his journey to freedom.

In 1855, Douglass gave a speech to the Rochester Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society. Mrs. Wilson, the history teacher, has carefully excerpted significant selections from Douglass's speech as well as other relevant primary sources in order to help her students understand the abolitionist argument in the years leading up to the Civil War and to answer the following focus question: ***Why did Frederick Douglass believe the United States should abolish slavery?*** Mr. Gato, the school's ELD specialist, has consulted with Mrs. Wilson to help students understand Douglass's writing, which contains challenging vocabulary, complicated organization, and abstract ideas. The following quotation from Douglass's speech in Rochester is characteristic of the language students will encounter:

Snapshot 6.10. Analysis of Primary Texts by Frederick Douglass Designated ELD Connected to History/Social Science in Grade Eight (cont.)

> *The slave is bound to mankind, by the powerful and inextricable network of human brotherhood. His voice is the voice of a man, and his cry is the cry of a man in distress, and a man must cease to be a man before he can become insensible to that cry. It is the righteousness of the cause—the humanity of the cause—which constitutes its potency.*

Recognizing that EL students, who are all at the Bridging level of English language proficiency, need support understanding this complex language in order to develop sophisticated understandings of the content, for designated ELD time, Mrs. Wilson and Mr. Gato collaboratively design lessons to meet these needs. They also recognize that the other students in the history class, many of whom are former ELs and standard English learners, would benefit from strategic attention to language analysis. The teachers decide to co-teach a series of designated ELD lessons to the whole class. They distribute copies of the quoted passage and read the excerpt aloud while students read along.

Next, Mr. Gato asks students to work in pairs to identify words or phrases in the short passage that are unfamiliar, abstract, or confusing. He has anticipated what some of these words will be (e.g., *inextricable*, *potency*) and has prepared student-friendly explanations in advance. After a couple of minutes, he pulls the class together, charts the words the class has identified, and offers brief explanations, which the students note in the margins of their individual copies. Since some of the words are cognates in Spanish, and many of the students are Spanish-English bilinguals, he calls their attention to those words and provides the Spanish cognate. He also clarifies that the male nouns *man* and *men* in the excerpt are meant to represent all of humanity, not just males.

Mrs. Wilson and Mr. Gato then guide the students through a detailed *sentence deconstruction* activity, in which they model how to code words and phrases according to how they function to make meaning in the sentences. In particular, the teachers encourage students to clearly identify words that serve as reference devices—substitutes and pronouns that refer to people, concepts, and events in other parts of the excerpt or in their previous discussions about the Antebellum era. After modeling and explaining how to conduct this type of analysis on a different chunk of text, the teachers ask students to work in pairs to practice doing the same type of analysis on the excerpt from Douglass's speech at Rochester. The table provides an example of the whole group debrief following this pair work.

Snapshot 6.10. Analysis of Primary Texts by Frederick Douglass Designated ELD Connected to History/Social Science in Grade Eight (cont.)

Text:	Analysis: What do the bolded terms in the text refer to?
The slave is bound to **mankind**, by the powerful and inextricable network of human brotherhood.	– men and women in slavery – all people, humanity
His voice is the voice of **a man**,	– the slave's voice – all people, humanity
and **his cry** is the cry of **a man in distress**,	– the slave's cry or call for help – man and mankind—all people, humanity in distress
and **a man** must cease to be **a man** before he can become insensible to **that cry**	– slave owners or people who support/don't fight against slavery – the cry of the slave in distress, but also all people in distress
It is the righteousness of the cause—the humanity of the cause—	– linking the righteousness and humanity of the cause with how powerful it is (potency) – the cause is the abolition of slavery – the righteousness and humanity of the cause is what makes it or causes it to be powerful
which constitutes **its potency**.	– the power or potency of the cause (abolition of slavery)

As Mr. Gato leads the class to complete the chart together, drawing from the similar charts they completed in pairs, he asks students to suggest where he should draw arrows to connect the referring words to their antecedents. Throughout this discussion, there is considerable negotiating as students grapple with the meanings in the text and attempt to persuade their peers about their interpretations of those meanings. During the discussion about the text, Mr. Gato prompts students to provide evidence to support their claims. In addition to unpacking the literal meanings of words and phrases, Mr. Gato asks students to discuss in triads the following question:

"*Why did Douglass repeatedly use the word 'man' to describe slave men and women?*"

After lively small group discussions and then a whole group debrief, students are encouraged to develop their own interpretations using evidence from the text as well as their previous study of the Antebellum era. Some students believe that Douglass wanted to remind the white ruling class that men and women in bondage were human and hoped to connect the suffering of slaves to humanity's struggles. Others suggest that Douglass was using the same

Snapshot 6.10. Analysis of Primary Texts by Frederick Douglass Designated ELD Connected to History/Social Science in Grade Eight (cont.)

rhetorical tool as the founding fathers, who often used the term *man* to encompass everyone. Other students argue that since women did not have the same rights as men in 1855, Douglass focused his appeal on male citizens – those who could vote and make laws.

During the whole group discussion, Mrs. Wilson and Mr. Gato poses questions to help students fully grasp Douglass's use of imagery (e.g., *a man in distress, his cry*) as a tool for persuading his listeners. The class then deconstructs other sections of the text in order to develop even more nuanced understandings of Douglass's writing and ideas. After examining a few other excerpts from the speech, the teachers ask students to discuss and then write about the focus question:

Why did Frederick Douglass believe the United States should abolish slavery?

Mr. Gato and Mrs. Wilson find that having students grapple simultaneously with basic comprehension of short excerpts and larger questions about Douglass's intent supports deeper understandings about the social significance of Douglass's speech and provides students with strategies for approaching other complex informational and historical texts.

Resource

Douglass, Frederick. 1855. "The Anti-Slavery Movement." Rochester, NY: Lee, Mann and Co. From Library of Congress, "Frederick Douglass Papers at the Library of Congress." http://www.loc.gov/item/mfd000384

CA ELD Standards (Bridging): ELD.PI.8.1, 6a, 8, 11a; ELD.PII.8.2a

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: RH.6–8.1, 2, 4, 6, 8–10

Related CA History–Social Science Standards:

8.7.2 Trace the origins and development of slavery; its effects on black Americans and on the region's political, social, religious, economic, and cultural development; and identify the strategies that were tried to both overturned and preserve it (e.g., through the writings and historical documents on Nat Turner, Denmark Vesey).

8.9 Students analyze the early and study attempts to abolish slavery and to realize the ideals of the Declaration of Independence.

8.9.1 Describe the leaders of the movement (e.g., John Quincy Adams and his proposed constitutional amendment, John Brown and the armed resistance, Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad, Benjamin Franklin, Theodore Weld, William Lloyd Garrison, Frederick Douglass).

8.9.2 Discuss the abolition of slavery in early state constitutions.

8.9.4 Discuss the importance of the slavery issue as raised by the annexation of Texas and California's admission to the union as a free state under the Compromise of 1850.

8.9.6 Describe the lives of free blacks and the laws that limited their freedom and economic opportunities.

Presenting

Students in grade eight continue to present claims and findings in argument, narrative, and response to literature presentations. Specifically in grade eight, students plan and deliver a narrative that mirrors many of the qualities of writing narratives (SL.8.4a). They integrate multimedia and visual displays into their presentations to strengthen claims and evidence and add interest (SL.8.5).

Using Language Conventions

As in prior grades, students in grade eight are expected to demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking, and they are expected to demonstrate command of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. New to grade eight are the following standards:

L.8.1a. Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.

L.8.1b. Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.

L.8.1c. Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.

L.8.1d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.

L.8.2a. Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.

L.8.2b. Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.

The new standards at grade eight represent the last time students are expected to learn significant new content in language conventions. At this point students begin to consolidate their knowledge and use of language conventions in preparation for high school.

Content Knowledge

Reading literature and informational texts and engaging in research in English language arts and other subjects help students develop content knowledge and develop understandings of the ways in which reading and writing are employed across the disciplines. Students in grade eight read and write increasingly complex texts and engage in independent reading programs. Snapshot 6.11 illustrates how teachers collaborate in the area of disciplinary literacy.

Snapshot 6.11. Debating About the Effects of Human Activity on the Health of the Earth
Integrated ELA, ELD, and Science Disciplinary Literacy Lesson in Grade Eight

The eighth-grade teaching team at Fred Korematsu Middle School has worked hard at collaborating across disciplines over the past several years. Initially, it was challenging for the teachers to find ways to contribute to the team's efforts as experts from particular areas, such as content knowledge, academic literacy development, and English language development. However, over the years, the team has strengthened its collaborative processes so that now, they engage more easily in discussions about content, pedagogy, and approaches to teaching disciplinary literacy.

In science, the teachers work together to help students develop deep content understandings and the disciplinary literacy knowledge and skills necessary to confidently and successfully engage with disciplinary texts using scientific habits of mind. For example, the ELA, ELD, and science teachers recently worked together to develop a biography unit on various scientists. The students worked in small interest groups to read biographies of scientists of their choice and then collaboratively wrote a vignette of an important event in the scientist's life. They also created a multimedia presentation based on the vignette, which they presented to their classmates.

Snapshot 6.11. Debating About the Effects of Human Activity on the Health of the Earth
Integrated ELA, ELD, and Science Disciplinary Literacy Lesson in Grade Eight (cont.)

From the science teacher's perspective, the ELA and ELD teachers have helped her to be more explicit about the language in science texts when she facilitates discussions. From the ELA and ELD teachers' perspectives, the science teacher has familiarized them with the core science principles and conceptual understandings that are important for students to understand and given them insights into how scientists think. As the three teachers analyze the texts they use in their various disciplines and discuss the types of writing they expect their students to do, they discover that each discipline has its own *culture* or ways of reading, writing, speaking, thinking, and reasoning.

For example, they notice that arguments look different in ELA than they do in science or social studies and that these differences go beyond vocabulary knowledge. In ELA, students learn to respond to literature by analyzing and evaluating novels, short stories, and other literary texts. In literary responses, students are expected to present and justify arguments having to do with themes and abstract ideas about the human condition, explain figurative devices (e.g., metaphor, symbolism, irony), and interpret characters' actions and dialogue and using evidence from the text to support their claims. In science, students learn to reason and argue scientifically, composing arguments supported by evidence that is presented in ways that reflect scientific knowledge and thinking. The language used to shape arguments reflects differences in the purposes of argumentation in each discipline. To support their students, the teachers plan ways to more explicitly teach the language of argument in general and to help students attend to some of the differences in argumentative writing that occur across content areas.

Currently, the teachers are collaborating on a unit where their students will research the effects of human activity on the health of the world. Among the tasks students will complete is an argument for how increases in human population and per capita consumption of natural resources impact Earth's systems and people's lives. Together, the teachers design meaningful and engaging tasks that will support all students in achieving the performance task. These tasks include overt attention to how arguments in science are constructed with much discussion about the language resources used. Some discussions are facilitated in a whole class format, while others are conducted in small collaborative groups. Likewise, some tasks are facilitated in the science classroom, while others are facilitated in the ELA and ELD classrooms. Teachers engage their students in the following in order to enhance their skills in reading and writing arguments in science:

Building Students' Skill in Reading and Writing Arguments in Science

- Reading many texts, viewing media, and multiple discussions to develop deep knowledge about the topic
- Conducting collaborative research investigating the topic and gathering evidence in notebooks for possible use in written arguments and debates
- Using *mentor* science argumentative texts to identify and discuss *claims, position statements, counterarguments, supporting evidence,* and *persuasive language*

Snapshot 6.11. Debating About the Effects of Human Activity on the Health of the Earth
Integrated ELA, ELD, and Science Disciplinary Literacy Lesson in Grade Eight (cont.)

- Unpacking *claims* to determine what types of evidence and warrants are expected
- Unpacking paragraphs and sentences in mentor science argumentative texts to identify language resources used and discuss why the writer used them
- Weighing competing positions and discussing what makes arguments or counterarguments more credible
- Identifying and discussing audiences (their beliefs, attitudes, and experiences) for particular arguments and how to convince them to accept different positions
- Orally debating positions, using supporting evidence from research, to practice formulating claims and counterarguments, engage in rebuttals, and define partners' claims in order to undermine them
- Using templates to organize ideas and jointly construct short arguments for different audiences
- Role playing to rehearse making arguments for intended audiences, providing feedback to peers on language they use and evidence they present, and adjusting language and content, based on feedback received

When the students write their arguments about the impact of human activity on the Earth, they do so collaboratively in interest groups. They write for a peer audience, adopting an academic stance while also envisioning a clear purpose for their writing. That is, they attempt to persuade their peers to think a certain way (e.g., climate change is affecting food supply) or do a certain thing (e.g., recycle to conserve natural resources) based on their sound arguments that include credible and convincing evidence. Each group's argument will be evaluated by two other groups as well as the teacher, using criteria that the class generates over the course of the unit as they learn more about what makes an effective science argument.

As the unit progresses, the science, ELA, and ELD teachers meet frequently to discuss how the learning tasks are going and to make adjustments based on their observations of student discussions and writing tasks. At the end of the unit, they agree that the intensive cross-disciplinary approach they have employed has helped students understand the structure of different types of arguments they read and to produce their own arguments in different disciplines. The combined activities have also supported them to take a more critical stance to reading and writing tasks more generally.

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: RI.8.1–3, 5, 8; W.8.1, 7; SL.8.1, 3, 4, 6; RST.8.1, 5, 8; WHST.8.1, 7, 9
CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI.8.1–4, 6a, 7–9, 10a, 11a; ELD.PII.8.1–2
Related CA Next Generation Science Standard:
MS-ESS3-4 Construct an argument supported by evidence for how increases in human population and per capita consumption of natural resources impact Earth's systems.

Snapshot 6.11. Debating About the Effects of Human Activity on the Health of the Earth
Integrated ELA, ELD, and Science Disciplinary Literacy Lesson in Grade Eight (cont.)

Additional Information

Fang, Zhihui. 2010. *Language and Literacy in Inquiry-Based Science Classrooms, Grades 3–8.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin

To find quality science trade books, visit the following sites:

- The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS): AAAS/Subaru SB&F Prize for Excellence in Science Books (http://www.sbfonline.com/Subaru/Pages/CurrentWinners.aspx)
- The National Science Teachers Association (NSTA): Outstanding Science Trade Books for Students K–12 (http://www.nsta.org/publications/ostb/)

Foundational Skills

Ideally by the time students enter grade eight, their knowledge of foundational skills is well established. They have a large base of sight words, and they rapidly and effectively employ word recognition skills to identify new printed words. Fluency, which includes accuracy, rate, and prosody, continues to develop as students engage in wide and extensive reading. Rate of reading varies, as it should, with the text and the task. Based on an extensive study of oral reading fluency, Hasbrouck and Tindal (2006) recommend that students scoring more than 10 words below the 50th percentile receive additional instruction that targets fluency. (See figure 6.29.)

Figure 6.29. Mean Oral Reading Rate of Grade Eight Students

Percentile	Fall WCPM*	Winter WCPM*	Spring WCPM*	Avg. Weekly Improvement**
90	185	199	199	0.4
75	161	177	177	0.5
50	**133**	**151**	**151**	**0.6**
25	106	124	124	0.6
10	77	97	97	0.6

*WCPM = Words Correct Per Minute **Average words per week growth

Source

Hasbrouck, Jan, and Gerald A. Tindal. 2006. "Oral Reading Fluency Norms: A Valuable Assessment Tool for Reading Teachers." *The Reading Teacher* 57: 646–655.

Fluency rates must be cautiously interpreted with all students. See the discussion of fluency in the overview of the span in this chapter and the section on supporting students strategically. The primary way to support students' fluency is to ensure accuracy in decoding and engagement in wide, extensive reading of texts that are neither too simple nor too challenging. In addition, students should have authentic reasons to reread text because rereading also supports fluency.

For information on teaching foundational skills to middle school students who need it, see the overview of this chapter, especially the section on supporting students strategically. See also chapter 9 on access and equity in this *ELA/ELD Framework*.

English Language Development in Grade Eight

The instructional program for EL students, including designated ELD, should anticipate and prepare students for the linguistic and academic challenges of the grade-eight curricula. An intensive focus on language, in ways that build into and from content instruction, supports students' ability to use English effectively in a range of disciplines, raises their awareness of how English works in those disciplines, and enhances their understanding of content knowledge. In content instruction with integrated ELD, all teachers with ELs in their classrooms use the CA ELD Standards to *augment* the instruction they provide. English learners at the Emerging level of English language proficiency, particularly ELs who are new to the U.S. and to English, engage in the same cognitively and linguistically demanding coursework as their non-EL peers. However, teachers provide support to newcomer ELs that is responsive to their particular needs.

An intensive focus on language, in ways that build into and from content instruction, supports students' ability to use English effectively in a range of disciplines, raises their awareness of how English works in those disciplines, and enhances their understanding of content knowledge.

If students are asked to write an argument in history, teachers support ELs at the Emerging level by providing many opportunities for them to read and discuss texts containing the evidence they will need to cite in their arguments. Some of this reading can occur in the students' primary language, if possible. In addition, teachers appropriately scaffold reading in English to facilitate students' ability to interpret the texts and engage in meaningful conversations about them. Teachers also use some of these texts as *mentor texts* and explicitly show students how they are organized, specific information typically included in arguments (e.g., evidence from credible sources), and particular language useful for this text type (e.g., particular persuasive wording, modal verbs and adverbs for tempering statements). Teachers also provide students with sentence or paragraph frames to use in their arguments and templates for writing to help them structure their texts appropriately. They might also provide bilingual dictionaries and thesauruses, so students can include precise vocabulary and new grammatical structures to convey their knowledge of the topic.

Students at the Expanding and Bridging levels of English language proficiency likely do not need all of these scaffolding techniques or such an intensive level of support. As they progress in their understandings of English and their abilities to use English to convey meanings, ELs are able to write longer texts independently that meet the expectations of particular text types. However, all EL students need varying levels of scaffolding depending on the task, the text, and their familiarity with the content and the language required to understand and engage in discussion. Figure 6.30 presents a section of the CA ELD Standards that teachers can use, in tandem with the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and other content standards, to plan instructional support differentiated by proficiency level and need for scaffolding.

Figure 6.30. Using the CA ELD Standards in Integrated ELD

CA ELD Standards, Part I: Interacting in Meaningful Ways		
English Language Development Level Continuum		
→ Emerging →	Expanding →	Bridging →
11. Justifying/arguing a. Justify opinions by providing some textual evidence or relevant background knowledge, with substantial support. b. Express attitude and opinions or temper statements with familiar modal expressions (e.g., *can, may*).	***11. Justifying/arguing*** a. Justify opinions or persuade others by providing relevant textual evidence or relevant background knowledge, with moderate support. b. Express attitude and opinions or temper statements with a variety of familiar modal expressions (e.g., *possibly/likely, could/would*)	***11. Justifying/arguing*** a. Justify opinions or persuade others by providing detailed and relevant textual evidence or relevant background knowledge with, light support. b. Express attitude and opinions or temper statements with nuanced modal expressions (e.g., *potentially/certainly/absolutely, should/might*).

Designated ELD is a protected time during the regular school day when qualified teachers work with ELs. Students are grouped by similar English proficiency levels, and teachers focus on critical academic language the students need to develop to be successful in academic subjects. Designated ELD time is an opportunity to delve more deeply into the linguistic resources of English that ELs need to develop to engage with and make meaning from content, express their understanding of content, and create new content 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 ELA and other areas of the curricula. (For more detailed information on integrated and designated ELD, see the grade span section of this chapter and chapter 2 in this *ELA/ELD Framework*.)

ELA/Literacy and ELD in Action in Grade Eight

Both the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards acknowledge the importance of reading complex texts closely and thoughtfully to derive meaning. In addition, reading texts multiple times can reveal layered meanings that may not present themselves to students during a single reading. Accordingly, teachers prepare reading lessons carefully and purposefully before teaching. This preparation includes selecting challenging and interesting texts worth reading and rereading; reading the texts ahead of time to determine why the language might be challenging and for whom; establishing a purpose for reading; and planning a sequence of lessons that build students' abilities to read the text with increasing independence. This process also requires teachers to analyze the cognitive and linguistic demands of the texts, including the sophistication of the ideas or content, students' prior knowledge, and the complexity of the vocabulary, sentences, and organization.

. . . teachers should model for students the close reading of texts by thinking aloud, highlighting the comprehension questions they ask themselves as readers and pointing out the language and ideas they notice while reading.

As discussed in the section on meaning making, teachers should model for students the close reading of texts by

thinking aloud, highlighting the comprehension questions they ask themselves as readers and pointing out the language and ideas they notice while reading. Teachers guide students to read complex texts frequently and analytically using concrete methods with appropriate levels of scaffolding. Eighth graders need many opportunities to read a wide variety of complex texts and to discuss the texts they read.

Providing all students, and especially ELs, with opportunities to discuss the language of the complex texts they read enhances their comprehension and develops their awareness of how language is used to make meaning.

Importantly for all students but especially ELs, teachers should explicitly draw attention to particular elements of language (e.g., text structure and organization, complex sentences, vocabulary) that help authors convey particular meanings. These specific elements of language or *language resources* include text connectives to create cohesion (e.g., *for example*, *suddenly*, *in the end*); long noun phrases to expand and enrich the meaning of sentences (e.g., "the whole strange-familial world, glistening white" [NGA/CCSSO 2010a: Appendix B, 80]); and complex sentences to combine ideas and create relationships between them (e.g., "Now that we no longer belonged to the Company, we somehow had to acquire a thousand dollars worth of property, a faraway figure when you can only save nickels and dimes." [NGA/CCSSO 2010a: Appendix B, 80]). Providing all students, and especially ELs, with opportunities to discuss the language of the complex texts they read enhances their comprehension and develops their awareness of how language is used to make meaning.

Lesson planning should anticipate unit and year-end goals, respond to the current needs of learners, and incorporate the framing questions in figure 6.31.

Figure 6.31. 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? • What are the learning targets for this lesson, and what should students be able to do at the end of the lesson? • Which clusters of CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy does this lesson address? • What background knowledge, skills, and experiences do my students have related to this lesson? • How complex are the texts and tasks? • How will students make meaning, express themselves effectively, develop language, and learn content? How will they apply or learn foundational skills? • What types of scaffolding, accommodations, or modifications will individual students need for effectively engaging in the lesson tasks? • 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? • Which CA ELD Standards amplify the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy at students' English language proficiency levels? • What language might be new for students and/or present challenges? • 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 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

Vignette 6.5 demonstrates how teachers might implement the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the CA ELD Standards during an ELA lesson focused on close reading. Vignette 6.6 provides an example of how designated ELD can build from and into the types of lessons outlined in vignette 6.5.

Vignette 6.5. Freedom of Speech: Collaboratively Analyzing Complex Texts Integrated ELA/ Literacy, ELD, and History/ Social Studies Instruction in Grade Eight

Background

Mr. Franklin, an eighth-grade English teacher, Ms. Austin, his social studies colleague, and Mrs. García, the school's English language development specialist, frequently collaborate on interdisciplinary projects. Mrs. García frequently plans with the teachers and coteaches some lessons in order to support the students who are ELs, most of whom are at the Bridging level of English language proficiency, as well as students who are newly reclassified as English Proficient. Recently, the teachers decided to work together to address an issue that came up in their classes. Two weeks ago, the school principal asked a student to change her T-shirt because, according to the principal, it displayed an inflammatory message. Some students were upset by the principal's request and felt that their right to freedom of speech had been violated, citing the U.S. Constitution. Their position was that the T-shirt was an expression of their youth culture and that they had a right to display such sentiments.

Eager to use this *teachable moment* to promote critical thinking, content understandings, and disciplinary literacy, the teachers worked together to create a series of lessons on the First Amendment so that their students would be better equipped to first determine whether or not their First Amendment rights had, in fact, been violated, and, if so, engage in civil discourse in order to attempt to persuade the principal that he should reconsider his decision. While the teachers plan to discuss how the First Amendment establishes five key freedoms of expression for Americans—freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of press, freedom to assemble peacefully, and freedom to petition the government—they will delve most deeply into what is most relevant to the students at the moment: freedom of speech.

Lesson Context

The two-week long unit that the teachers designed includes reading and discussing primary and secondary sources, viewing multimedia, writing short texts, and engaging in a debate. The culminating writing task is a jointly constructed letter to the principal advocating for particular decisions and actions regarding students' free speech, an idea that the teachers and principal feel is a purposeful goal for student learning. Mr. Franklin and Ms. Austin have selected three documents for close reading and analysis.

Vignette 6.5. Freedom of Speech: Collaboratively Analyzing Complex Texts Integrated ELA/ Literacy, ELD, and History/ Social Studies Instruction in Grade Eight (cont.)

They agree that in her social studies class, Ms. Austin will review the events leading up to the writing of the Constitution and facilitate students' reading of the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights. She will also engage them in learning about the role of the Supreme Court in cases related to the First Amendment. In English class, Mr. Franklin will facilitate students' reading and discussion of four Supreme Court decisions: *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District, Bethel School Dist. No. 403 v. Fraser, Morse v. Frederick,* and *Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeyer*. Each text is about one page long and is at a text complexity level suitable for students at this grade level. Mr. Franklin will guide students in a highly structured reading of *Tinker v. Des Moines* and then facilitate an expert group jigsaw for reading the three other cases. The close reading tasks in conjunction with additional research they will conduct will prepare the students to engage in a classroom debate about the topic.

The teachers' goal is to help students begin to formulate a position about the rights and restrictions of free speech in public schools and convey this position through spoken and written language using textual evidence to support their ideas. In preparation for the lessons, the teachers will analyze the texts in order to clarify their understandings. The school's English language development specialist, Mrs. García, helps her colleagues identify language and concepts that may be particularly challenging for some of their EL students, as well as for other culturally and linguistically diverse students. She also has an opportunity to learn more about the content the teachers are teaching so that she can help her students make connections to it during designated ELD. Excerpts from the four texts the teachers examine follow.

- **First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution of the United States (1791)**

  "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

- **Tinker v. Des Moines (1969)**

  Court Ruling: Student expression may not be suppressed unless it substantially disrupts the learning environment.

  In December 1965, John and Mary Beth Tinker of Des Moines, Iowa, wore black armbands to their public school as a symbol of protest against American involvement in the Vietnam War. When school authorities asked the students to remove their armbands, they refused and were subsequently suspended. The Supreme Court decided that the Tinkers had the right to wear the armbands, with Justice Abe Fortas stating that students do not "shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate."

- **Bethel School Dist. No. 403 v. Fraser (1987)**

  Court Ruling: Schools may sanction students for using indecent speech in educational settings.

  A student who gave a sexually suggestive speech at a high school assembly was suspended. The Supreme Court ruled that offensively vulgar, lewd, and indecent

Vignette 6.5. Freedom of Speech: Collaboratively Analyzing Complex Texts Integrated ELA/ Literacy, ELD, and History/ Social Studies Instruction in Grade Eight (cont.)

speech is not protected by the First Amendment and that school officials could sanction students for this type of speech since they need to have the authority to determine appropriate speech for educational environments, stating that the "constitutional rights of students in public school are not automatically coextensive with the rights of adults in other settings."

- **Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier (1988)**

  Court Ruling: Administrators may edit the content of school newspapers.

  In May 1983, Hazelwood East High School Principal Robert Reynolds removed pages from the school newspaper because of the sensitive content in two of the articles. The articles covered teenage pregnancy at the school and the effects of divorce on students. The Supreme Court decided that Principal Reynolds had the right to such editorial decisions, as he had "legitimate pedagogical concerns."

- **Morse v. Frederick (2007)**

  Court Ruling: School officials can prohibit students from displaying messages or engaging in symbolic speech that promotes illegal drug use.

  At a school-supervised event, student Joseph Frederick displayed a banner that read "Bong Hits 4 Jesus," a slang reference to smoking marijuana. Deborah Morse, the school's principal, confiscated Frederick's banner and suspended him from school for ten days, citing a school policy that bans the display of material advocating illegal drug use. Frederick sued, and the Supreme Court ruled that school officials can prohibit students from displaying messages that promote illegal drug use.

The learning target for the first few days of lessons and the focal standards follow.

Learning Target: Students will analyze four landmark court cases about students' First Amendment rights to free speech to determine to what extent these rights are protected.
CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: *RI.8.1 – Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text; RI.8.2 – Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text; SL.8.1c – Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion; L.8.4c – Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.*

Vignette 6.5. Freedom of Speech: Collaboratively Analyzing Complex Texts Integrated ELA/ Literacy, ELD, and History/ Social Studies Instruction in Grade Eight (cont.)

CA ELD Standards (Bridging): *ELD.PI.1 – Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion; ELD.PI.2 – Adjust language choices according to task (e.g., facilitating a science experiment, providing peer feedback on a writing assignment), purpose, and audience; ELD.PI.6a – Explain ideas, phenomena, processes, and text relationships (e.g., compare/contrast, cause/effect, problem/solution) based on close reading of a variety of grade-level texts and viewing of multimedia with light support.*

Related CA History–Social Science Standards:
8.2 Students analyze the political principles underlying the U.S. Constitution and compare the enumerated and implied powers of the federal government.

Lesson Excerpts

Mr. Franklin provides an overview of the unit, telling them that, over the next two weeks, they will engage in a variety of reading, writing, discussing, and viewing tasks in order to learn more about their freedom of speech rights, so they can articulate an informed civil response to the principal's decision. He explains that, today, they will begin reading about one of several court cases that provide information about freedom of expression in public schools. The *big question* they will be considering is the following:

> ***Should students be allowed to express any message or point of view while they are at school?***

He posts this big question on the wall, in a section that he has prepared for posting terms and photographs related to the unit, as well as current news articles related to free speech. He previews several terms (such as *symbolic act, prohibit, majority opinion, minority opinion, exercise rights, in favor of*) from the texts, which he suspects will be challenging or new for them, and he also highlights some words for which they may know other meanings than those that are in the text (e.g., *exercise*). He provides the students with a First Amendment Cases *terms sheet*, which contains the words, their definitions, and an example of each term in use.

Mr. Franklin briefly previews the content of the short Tinker v. Des Moines text, and he provides a quick overview of the historical context for the case (the Vietnam War, the 1960s). He shows the students photographs of anti-war protests in the U.S. and a short video (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SqQvygBVSxA) about the case made by a high school student. He asks the students to discuss their initial impressions about the case so far in their table groups.

He then asks the students to follow along as he reads the *Tinker v. Des Moines* text aloud, referring to their terms sheet as needed. Before reading, he asks them to try to get the big ideas in the text and not to worry too much about the details, and he lets them know that they will be reading the text two more times. As he reads, he stops at strategic points to explain terms and model good reading behaviors, such as stopping to summarize what he has read or to figure out what challenging words mean. After he reads, he asks students to turn to a partner and briefly discuss what they think the text is about. He acknowledges that the text is challenging, both in terms of content and the structure.

Vignette 6.5. Freedom of Speech: Collaboratively Analyzing Complex Texts Integrated ELA/ Literacy, ELD, and History/ Social Studies Instruction in Grade Eight (cont.)

Mr. Franklin: This is a pretty complex text, and you might not know every single word or understand everything perfectly the first time you listen to or read it. With texts like this one, you need—even I need—to read it several times because there are lots of layers to it. That's the kind of reading we're going to be doing: layered reading. I like to call it that because each time you go back to the text and read it again; you peel away additional layers of meaning, just like you can pull away the layers of an artichoke.

As he explains, he pulls out a real artichoke. He tells them that in order to get to the heart of the artichoke, he has to work at it, peeling away the outer layers and then the inner layers, and then, when he gets to the center, he has to do some additional peeling to get to the heart. He shows them a photo of a peeled artichoke with all of the leaves piled high on a plate.

Mr. Franklin: What's interesting to me is that once I've peeled away the layers, there's more on my plate than when I started peeling. That's how it is when you read a text very closely, in a layered way: you end up understanding more about the text each time you read it, with more on you plate than when you started.

He provides his students with a handout of *focus questions*, and he discusses the questions with them to make sure they understand what to look for. The focus questions for the Tinker v. Des Moines text are provided below:

Tinker v. Des Moines Focus Questions
1. What was the case about?
2. How did the three students involved in this case participate in expressing "symbolic speech?"
3. How did the school try to justify *prohibiting* the students' rights to free speech?
4. Why did the Supreme Court rule in favor of the students and say that the school did **not** have just cause (fair reasons) for banning the armbands?

He asks students to read the short text independently, writing their comments in the margins of the text as well as taking notes on the focus questions handout. Each student has a dictionary to look up unfamiliar words as they read independently, including bilingual dictionaries for students who choose to use them. (Earlier that morning during designated ELD, Mrs. García previewed the text and the focus questions for the EL students at the late Emerging and early Expanding levels of English language proficiency.)

Next, Mr. Franklin asks them to read the text again with a partner, taking turns reading chunks of the text and adding notes to their focus questions handout. Mr. Franklin then asks each pair of students to join one or two other pairs to discuss their notes. As they engage in discussions, he listens in to determine how they are interpreting the information and where they might need assistance. Julissa, Caitlin, Sirtaj, and Liam are discussing the text at their table.

Vignette 6.5. Freedom of Speech: Collaboratively Analyzing Complex Texts Integrated ELA/ Literacy, ELD, and History/ Social Studies Instruction in Grade Eight (cont.)

Julissa: Caitlin and me said that the Supreme Court ruled for the students because they were quiet and not making any problems when they were wearing the armbands. They weren't – what did it say (looking at her notes) – they weren't disrupting the school activities.

Caitlin: Yeah, can I add something? There's something here about that, about them not disrupting what was happening in school. The judges said, "There is no indication that the work of the schools or any class was disrupted . . . there were no threats or acts of violence on school premises." So, the Supreme Court ruled in their favor because they weren't really interfering with the other students' rights.

Sirtaj: I think that's why the school was wrong. The Supreme Court said that they had to protect the free speech at school, for the students' free speech. Here it says, ". . . students are entitled to freedom of expression of their views . . ." and here, it says that what the school did "is not constitutionally permissible."

Caitlin: What does that mean? *Constitutionally permissible*?

Julissa: It sounds like permission. Like they don't have permission to do that.

Caitlin: So, they don't have the permission to do that in the Constitution?

Liam: Yeah, I think that's what that means. So schools can't tell students not to wear something unless they have evidence that it's disrupting what's happening in the school or that it's interfering with the rights of other students. If they don't have evidence, then it's not permitted in the Constitution.

Mr. Franklin: Can you say a bit more about why the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the students?

Julissa: The judges said that the students weren't hurting anyone at the school when they were wearing the armbands. They were just expressing their beliefs about the Vietnam War in a peaceful way. They weren't saying it, but they were showing it in a (looking at her notes), in a *symbolic way*.

Mr. Franklin: And what was guiding the Supreme Court's decision?

Julissa: It just wasn't fair. It wasn't . . . it wasn't fair in the First Amendment, and the judges had to look at the First Amendment when they decided if it was fair.

The groups continue to discuss the focus questions, going back into the text to find evidence and clarify their thinking. To wrap up the day's lesson, Mr. Franklin asks his students to spend time discussing and responding to the following question at their table groups:

How might a school justify *protecting* its students' rights to free speech?

Now that Mr. Franklin's students have had an opportunity to use the *layered reading* process on one text, the next day, he has them follow the same reading process with three other texts. This time, however, he splits the class into three groups. Each group reads only one of three cases (*Bethel School Dist. No. 403 v. Fraser*, *Morse v. Frederick*, or *Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeyer*). They have an opportunity to discuss the focus questions and the

Vignette 6.5. Freedom of Speech: Collaboratively Analyzing Complex Texts Integrated ELA/ Literacy, ELD, and History/ Social Studies Instruction in Grade Eight (cont.)

text with an *expert partner* (another student who has read the same text), and then a second time with an *expert group* composed of four to six students who likewise have read the same text. The following day, they meet in *jigsaw groups* composed of six students. Each jigsaw group includes two students who read each text; each pair shares what they learned from their particular text and also listens and learns from the other dyads about the two texts that they did not read.

Once the students have had a chance to delve deeply into the four texts by reading them closely and discussing them in depth, they apply this knowledge in a variety of ways in collaboration with others: conducting additional research on the case that interests them the most, writing a script for and recording a newscast on the case, engaging in a debate about the big question, writing a letter to the principal and discussing it with him. The outline for this two-week mini-unit follows.

Freedom of Speech Mini-Unit		
Day 1 *Whole group and small group reading: Tinker v. Des Moines* • Preview the two-week unit, discuss new terms • Read aloud • Students read independently and take notes on focus questions handout • Students read the text a second time with a partner • Students discuss notes in their table groups • Facilitate whole group discussion	**Day 2** *Expert group jigsaw: the three other court cases* • Students read one text independently with handout of focus questions • Students read the text a second time with an expert group partner • Students meet in expert groups (four to six students) to discuss the text • Students reread the text a third time for homework, highlighting any ideas or phrases that are still confusing • Students do a quickwrite summary of the text • Teach vocabulary in depth: *justify, prohibit, protection*	**Day 3** *Expert group jigsaw (continued)* • Students meet in their expert groups and agree on specific information that they will all share in their jigsaw groups • Students meet in jigsaw groups (six students) to discuss three texts • Students go back to their expert groups to compare their jigsaw group notes • Debrief with whole class to clarify understandings • Students do a quickwrite summary of the three texts

Vignette 6.5. Freedom of Speech: Collaboratively Analyzing Complex Texts Integrated ELA/ Literacy, ELD, and History/ Social Studies Instruction in Grade Eight (cont.)

Freedom of Speech Mini-Unit		
Day 4 *Research* • Students choose the court case that they are most interested in to research further in groups. • Students conduct Internet research to gather additional information about the case (teacher has bookmarked sites as a start) • Students take notes using a notetaking handout	**Days 5–6** *Newscasts* • Show a model newscast about a court case • Facilitate a discussion about the structure of a newscast and what type of language is used • Students meet in their interest groups and write a short newscast on the court case with required elements • Check in with groups to review the newscast • Students practice their scripts and record their newscasts	**Day 7** *Newscasts (continued)* • Students watch all the newscasts made by members of the class and take notes using a handout on the content and language used • Facilitate discussion about how well the issues were addressed and how persuasive the language was in each of the newscasts
Day 8 *Debate* • Students work in small teams (three for and three against in each team), and use the texts and their notes to support their position regarding the following: "Should students be allowed to express any message or point of view while at school?" • Whole group debate	**Day 9** *Write letter collaboratively* • Students discuss and chart words and phrases important to include in a letter • Facilitate a whole class, jointly constructed letter to the principal • Students rehearse in small groups and discuss letter, referring back to evidence gathered. • Students write a first draft of their own letters to the editor about free speech • Debrief with whole class	**Day 10** *Present letter and write independently* • Students invite the principal in to discuss the letter and engage in dialogue. • Students finish their individual letters in peer editing groups (letters will be posted, and students can choose to send in a copy to the local newspaper)

Vignette 6.5. Freedom of Speech: Collaboratively Analyzing Complex Texts Integrated ELA/ Literacy, ELD, and History/ Social Studies Instruction in Grade Eight (cont.)

When the students engage in the newscast scriptwriting, Mr. Franklin provides the guidelines. Each script must contain the following:

- A brief overview of the freedoms established by the First Amendment
- A summary of the case
- An explanation of the main points made in the Court's majority opinion
- An explanation of the main points made in the Court's dissenting opinion
- Interviews with key people involved in the case (such as the students involved, parents, school staff, attorneys, but not the Supreme Court justices since they have little or no direct contact with the press)

At the end of the two-week unit, Mr. Franklin facilitates a text jointly written by the whole class: a letter to the principal persuading him to *refine* his approach to limiting students' First Amendment free speech rights. The excerpt below includes evidence from an article the students found during their Internet search:

> We learned that, according to legal scholar Nathan M. Roberts, "administrators when confronted with a student speech issue should now categorize the speech into one of the following four categories: (1) constitutes a substantial disruption; (2) is offensive; (3) is school sponsored or carries the imprimatur of the school; or (4) could be reasonably interpreted as advocating for illegal drug use. Once the speech is categorized, administrators must analyze it under the appropriate standard to determine if it is permissible student expression." We agree with this suggestion, and we invite you to include it in our school's policy.

After the students jointly construct the letter to the principal, Mr. Franklin asks them to write their own letter to either the school or city newspaper. He shows them two recent examples of letters to the editor from the local newspaper that were written by teenagers, and he briefly discusses what the purpose of each letter seems to be, how many words each letter has, and the tone conveyed by each letter. He encourages students to use the letters as models for writing their own. The students have an opportunity to edit their writing with peers, and Mr. Franklin offers to provide further editorial support if they choose to submit their letters to a newspaper.

Next Steps

Mr. Franklin, Ms. Austin, and Mrs. García meet to reflect on the unit and review the individual letters students wrote. They look for patterns in understandings and misunderstandings, so they can clarify as needed in their own classes. For example, Mr. Franklin will address misunderstandings having to do with the readings on court cases, while Ms. Austin will clarify understandings about the First Amendment and the role of the Supreme Court. Mrs. García will work with both teachers to address literacy challenges that students exhibit in their letters (e.g., cohesion, sentence structure, vocabulary), and she will also continue to teach argumentative writing with a focus on language during designated ELD.

Vignette 6.5. Freedom of Speech: Collaboratively Analyzing Complex Texts Integrated ELA/ Literacy, ELD, and History/ Social Studies Instruction in Grade Eight (cont.)

The teachers observe that students have started noticing many current events related to free speech. For example, one student brought in a newspaper article about a legal resident in the U.S. who was deported to his home country for speaking to the press. The students are eager to delve more deeply into the topic of free speech, and the teachers decide to extend the unit for another week. After surveying the classes, the teachers develop guidelines for a multimedia project (using Prezi or iMovie, for example) that students will create collaboratively in small groups to demonstrate understandings gleaned from the unit and connect those understandings with current events, as well as their own experiences.

Resources

National Constitution Center. n.d. "Free to Be You." *National Constitution Center.* http://constitutioncenter.org/learn/educational-resources/lesson-plans/free-to-be-you

Roberts, Nathan M. 2008. "'Bong Hits 4 Jesus': Have Students' First Amendment Rights to Free Speech Been Changed after *Morse v. Frederick*?" *Journal of Educational Controversy* 3 (1). http://www.wce.wwu.edu/Resources/CEP/eJournal/v003n001/a014.shtml

Additional Information

Hirvela, Alan. 2013. "Preparing English Language Learners for Argumentative Writing." In *L2 Writing in Secondary Classrooms*, edited by Luciana C. de Oliveira and Tony Silva. Routledge: New York.

Lesson plans and units for engaging students in debatable issues, along with videos of the lessons in action, can be found at the Word Generation Web site.

Primary and secondary source documents and other teaching materials can be found at the following:

- National Constitution Center (http://constitutioncenter.org/learn/educational-resources)
- Landmark Cases of the U.S. Supreme Court (http://www.streetlaw.org/en/landmark/home)
- American Bar Association Division for Public Education (http://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_education.html)
- Constitutional Rights Foundation (http://www.crf-usa.org/)
- Center for Civic Education (http://www.civiced.org/)
- Student Press Law Center (http://www.splc.org/knowyourrights/legalresearch.asp?id=4)
- Legal Information Institute, Cornell University Law School (http://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/484/260)
- FindLaw for Legal Professionals (http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/scripts/getcase.pl?court=US&navby=case&vol=393&invol=503)

Designated ELD Vignette

Vignette 6.5 illustrates good teaching for all students with particular attention to the learning needs of ELs. English learners additionally benefit from intentional and purposeful designated ELD instruction that builds into and from content instruction and focuses on their particular language learning needs. Vignette 6.6 illustrates how designated ELD can build from and into the types of lessons outlined in vignette 6.5. It also illustrates how teachers can support their ELs to engage in debates and provide a bridge to successful argument writing.

Vignette 6.6. Becoming Skillful Debaters
Designated ELD Instruction in Grade Eight

Background

Mrs. García teaches designated ELD to sixteen eighth graders in her school who are at the late Emerging and early Expanding levels of English language proficiency. Mrs. García also meets with a select group of *long-term English learners* (EL students who have been in U.S. schools for more than six years) during seventh period for a disciplinary literacy class. This class includes the involvement of community mentors, positive role models who have committed to building strong relationships with these students through high school graduation with the explicit goal of helping their mentees make deliberate decisions that will eventually enable them to attend college and/or pursue the career of their choice. All EL students have a zero period during which they take an elective; this schedule extends their school day to ensure that they are receiving targeted language instruction without missing out on content classes or electives, such as art and music.

Lesson Context

Mrs. García collaborates with the eighth-grade English and other content area teachers at the school to ensure that the designated ELD instruction students receive is directly aligned with the expectations their teachers have for their students' language use. During their planning, the teachers agree that, due to the fact that they integrate ELD into content instruction, their ELs at the late Emerging and early Expanding levels of English language proficiency who have been in U.S. schools for two to three years, will be able to fully participate in most of the tasks. However, they anticipate that there are some tasks that these students will need additional support for given their particular language learning needs.

The eighth graders are learning about students' First Amendment rights and will be engaging in a variety of literacy tasks to develop and convey their understandings of the topic (see vignette 6.5). One of the tasks students will engage in is a debate about the big question:

> ***Should students be allowed to express any message or point of view while at school?***

The eighth-grade teaching team members determine that their EL students at the late Emerging and early Expanding levels of proficiency would benefit from additional support when engaging in the literacy tasks for the First Amendment unit. In preparation for the series of lessons she will teach, Mrs. García has gathered several short articles about debatable topics. The students will read the articles, discuss them, learn about the language in the articles, learn about language that is useful for debating, and apply their knowledge of the content and language to engage in several debates. Mrs. García's ultimate goal is for her students to be able to engage in debates and persuasive writing tasks in Mr. Franklin's English class, as well as in other content areas. The learning target and focus standards in Mrs. García's lesson plans follow.

Vignette 6.6. Becoming Skillful Debaters
Designated ELD Instruction in Grade Eight (cont.)

Learning Target: Students will read about debating, practice engaging in debates, and discuss language powerful for debates.

CA ELD Standards (Expanding): *ELD.P1.8.3 – Negotiate with or persuade others in conversations (e.g., to provide counterarguments) using learned phrases (I agree with X, but . . .) and open responses; ELD.PI.8.4 – Adjust language choices according to purpose (e.g., explaining, persuading, entertaining), task, and audience; ELD.P1.8.5 – Demonstrate active listening in oral presentation activities by asking and answering detailed questions with occasional prompting and moderate support; ELD.PI.8.11 – a) Justify opinions or persuade others by providing relevant textual evidence or relevant background knowledge with moderate support; b) Express attitude and opinions or temper statements with a variety of familiar modal expressions (e.g., possibly/likely, could/would); ELD.PI.8.12a – Use a growing set of academic words . . . ; ELD.PII.8.1 – Apply understanding of the organizational features of different text types . . . (debate here is seen as a text type; application of other Part II standards, as well).*

Lesson Excerpts

Mrs. García begins by explaining that for the next couple of weeks, they are going to be reading about topics that are *debatable*, that is, people typically have strong opinions about the topic and good reasons to support these opinions. Often, they will write arguments to express their opinions and try to persuade others to do something or at least to think about the topic in different ways. They may also engage in a debate, which can be informal or formal. She tells them that they are going to learn how to engage in more formal debates, which they will be doing a lot of in their content classes. She gives them a brief explanation of what *justify* means in English and provides cognates for the word (where they exist) in students' primary languages (e.g., *justificar* in Spanish) and translations in students' primary languages for those that don't have cognates for the word (e.g., palawang-sala in Filipino).

She gives them examples of times when she has debated with others in everyday life, and then she asks them if they have ever debated an issue with anyone and, if so, how they approached it. She gives them a few moments to think about this, jot down their ideas, and then share with a partner. She also provides sentence frames to support the use of words *debate* and *justify* in their short conversations (I debated about _____ with _____. My opinion was ____, and I justified it by saying ____.)

Mrs. García: Okay, so you can see that in real life, you're engaging in debate, trying to persuade other people to see things from your point of view all the time. So you already know something about debate. Now we're going to discuss how we debate in an academic environment, like school, and we're going to learn how to debate like scholars.

Mrs. García poses the question that is the topic of lessons for the week, and she also writes it on the white board:

Should school be a place for debate?

Vignette 6.6. Becoming Skillful Debaters
Designated ELD Instruction in Grade Eight (cont.)

She clarifies the meaning of the question and then asks students to think about it for a moment and rate the degree to which they agree with the question on a continuum (completely agree, agree, don't have an opinion, disagree, completely disagree) and to jot down a few notes explaining their rating. As they are discussing their responses at their table groups, she reminds them to refer to a chart of *Scholarly Discourse Phrases* in the classroom as they converse. All of the eighth-grade classes have been using and adding to the chart since the beginning of the school year, and Mrs. García notices that her EL students frequently refer to it while conversing with classmates.

Scholarly Discourse Phrases	
To ask for clarification: Can you say more about ___? What do you mean by ____? Can you show me evidence in the text that ___?	*To affirm or agree:* That's an excellent point because ___. What you said about ___ resonated with me because ___.
To build or add on: I'd like to add on to what you said. Also, ___. Another thing I noticed was that ___.	*To disagree respectfully:* I agree with you, but ____. You make a good point, but have you considered ____? I can see your point. However, _____.

After she debriefs with the whole class, she previews the text students will read. The short article contains some content that may be unfamiliar to students (e.g., civil rights movement, boycott), so she explains the ideas. The text also contains many general academic words, and she previews the meaning of some of them. (She will teach eight of the words/terms more intensively over the next two weeks: justify, protest, avoid, bias, perspective, controversy, defined by, issue. She also asks the other eighth grade teachers to use the words as much as they can so that students experience them in different contexts.)

The process she uses to facilitate students' reading of the short text is the following:

- The teacher reads the text aloud as students follow along in their texts.
- Students discuss the big ideas in the text in pairs and then debrief with teacher.
- Students partner read the text.
  - Each partner reads a section.
  - The other partner uses a *Careful Reading Tips* bookmark to clarify understandings of the section.
  - The two briefly discuss their ideas, write questions and notes in the margins, and highlight or circle terms that are unclear.
  - The students swap roles and read the next chunk, continuing this exchange of roles until the whole text has been read.
  - Each pair discusses the questions at the end of the text and goes back to clarify terms and understandings.
- The teacher debriefs with the whole class.

Vignette 6.6. Becoming Skillful Debaters
Designated ELD Instruction in Grade Eight (cont.)

The text and the Careful Reading Tips bookmark follow.

Should School Be a Place for Debate?

In room 207, Mr. Smith is teaching his students about the civil rights movement. He asks the students questions such as, "Who were the freedom riders?" or "What year was the Montgomery bus boycott?" It is easy for students to find the answers in their textbooks. Mr. Smith tells the students whether they are right or wrong. On Friday, they will have a quiz about these facts.

In room 209, Ms. Miles is also teaching about the civil rights movement. She asks her students, "Is peaceful protest the best way to make things change for the better?" The students have a **debate**. Some think Martin Luther King was right to tell **protesters** to **avoid** violence. Others believe that sometimes violence is necessary when people will not listen to reason. They ask Ms. Miles for the right answer, but she says there is no right answer.

Some people believe that kids in school should only learn about facts. These people think students should get information from their textbooks or teacher and memorize it. That way, some argue, everybody will learn the same things and they can all do well on tests.

Other people think **debates** can be hard because there are no right answers. Sometimes everybody learns different things from a **debate**. This makes it hard for teachers to give a test to find out what students have learned. **Debates** also take a lot of time. Teachers who have debates may not be able to cover as many topics in class. Then, students may not learn all of the facts in the textbook.

However, **debates** may help students understand why the facts they learn in school are important. We live in a democracy, where everyone needs to know how to form and **justify** opinions in order to make decisions. Students will not always have a teacher or a textbook to give the right answers, so young people need to learn to think for themselves. Each person has a unique **perspective defined by** his or her knowledge, experience, and attitudes. Even teachers and textbook authors have their own **perspectives**.

Through a classroom **debate**, students hear their classmates' opinions. Students **justify** their opinions with evidence from texts and their own experiences. Sometimes, hearing from classmates who disagree with them makes students learn about their own **biases** and understand a problem in a new way. Hearing classmates' **perspectives** during a debate can help students understand the complexity of many important **issues**. Whether it is better to have teachers teach from the text or to have students engage in **debates** is a continuing **controversy** in education.

What do you think? Should students learn only facts in school? Or should **debates** be an important part of their education?

Vignette 6.6. Becoming Skillful Debaters
Designated ELD Instruction in Grade Eight (cont.)

Careful Reading Tips	
Do	**Say**
Think about what the section means	I'm not completely clear about what this part is about, but I think it might mean . . .
	I think this section might mean __ because __.
Summarize what the section says	What I understand about this section so far is _____.
	The main ideas/events in this section are ___.

After their partner reading, Mrs. García debriefs with the students to clarify understandings and terms. To close the lesson, she asks them to write a paragraph in response to the questions at the end of the reading, and she asks them to read the text again for homework, using an English dictionary or bilingual dictionary to look up words they still do not understand.

The next day, Mrs. García asks students to briefly share what they wrote in table groups and then collects the students' writing. She will analyze it using a framework she has developed based on the CA ELD Standards to determine language areas she needs to focus more intensively on (e.g., combining ideas in sentences, expanding and enriching ideas using adjectives or prepositional phrases).

Mrs. García: Now that you've had a chance to read and think about debates and whether or not debates should happen in school, we're going to debate that issue. In high schools in our district, there's a debate league where teams of students from each school debate controversial issues. In order to be on the debate team, you have to learn how to be a skillful debater. A skillful debater is someone who can justify more than one perspective. For example, a debater might start by arguing that students should study hip-hop lyrics because it's really like poetry. Then, she can change positions and argue that students should not study the lyrics because they make people violent. The skillful debater has to put personal opinions and biases aside and debate the issues using good reasons and evidence to justify the position. The teams that win are the ones that can justify each perspective. That's what you're going to be doing: learning how to be a skillful debater.

She splits the class into two groups and establishes guidelines for debates based on their reading (she fills in what the students do not yet know about debates). Next, she randomly assigns each group a position:

- Debates do not belong in schools. They take too much time and students need to learn a great deal of material.
- Debates belong in schools. Reading from textbooks and listening to lectures is boring for students, so they do not learn the material. Debates would get students interested, so they would learn more.

Vignette 6.6. Becoming Skillful Debaters
Designated ELD Instruction in Grade Eight (cont.)

The process she uses to engage students in the debates is the following:

Debate Process
1. Half of the class discusses their positions while the other half observes and takes notes (fishbowl approach), using two guiding questions to critique the debate: • Are the debaters providing reasoning and evidence? • Are important words from the reading used? 2. The two groups of students switch roles so that the observers (now debaters) get a chance to discuss the issue. The observing group then critiques the debate. 3. The teacher debriefs with the whole class on their use of reasoning and evidence, argumentation, and precise words, as well as their use of scholarly discourse.
Once the students become used to debating, Mrs. García will insert two additional steps after step 2 (so that step 3 above will become step 5): 3. The two groups resume their original roles. This time, they try to apply counterarguments to the positions of the other students. The observing group then critiques the debate. 4. The two groups switch roles so the second group also has an opportunity to try using counterarguments. The observing group then critiques the debate.

Part of the conversation that takes place during the debate is the following:

Dante: I have two things to say. First, I think debates should be used in school because they're more fun for the students.

Phuong: That's an excellent point because it's a lot more fun to talk about things than to just read and write all the time. When you talk about things, you learn more, too.

Celia: I have something to add. In the article, it says that when you debate, you get to hear what other people in your class think, so you get to learn from what they know. You get to hear their perspectives that you might not know.

Dante: Another thing I noticed is that you don't just hear what they say. They have to justify what they think. So for example, in a debate, you really have to pay attention to what people are saying so you can agree or disagree. And you have to be able to say what you really think because you have to justify yourself. I mean, you have to justify your opinion.

Roxana: Also, in some other classes, we just have to sit and listen and be quiet all the time. That's really boring, and sometimes I fall asleep. I think that's a good reason to have debates.

Once the students have practiced debating the issue using steps 1–3, they go back to the guidelines for debating and add to and revise them so they can use the guidelines as a resource for the next debate they will have.

Vignette 6.6. Becoming Skillful Debaters
Designated ELD Instruction in Grade Eight (cont.)

Next Steps

Mrs. García observed her students as they were debating and noticed that they were very engaged in the conversation—whether they were debating or observing—and that they were applying both their understanding of the content as well as their knowledge of English. However, while the issue of debating in schools was a good foundation for discussing debate, she felt that the issue was not that controversial. She plans to provide more frequent opportunities for her students to debate more controversial topics (e.g., Should English be the official language of the United States? How should schools prevent bullying?).

At the end of the week, Mrs. García asks her students to write a response to the question, "Should school be a place for debate?" Using the framework for analyzing writing she developed based on the CA ELD Standards, she compares this response to the one students wrote at the beginning of the week. In her analysis, she finds that not only do most of the students have more to say about the topic, but they are also integrating their knowledge of the language used in the text and debates into their writing. For example, all of the students use the words *justify, debate,* and *perspective*. In addition, in the second writing piece, most students write sentences that are more grammatically complex (e.g., complex sentence, use of prepositional phrases, long noun phrases) than their first writing sample.

Mrs. García meets with the eighth-grade teaching team to share the students' writing and her observations from their debates, and the team uses this information to shape and refine upcoming lessons and projects.

Resources

Should School Be a Place for Debate? (Unit 3.01) http://wordgen.serpmedia.org/s_weekly2014.html

Should Doctors Be Allowed to Assist Seriously Ill Patients to Commit Suicide? (Unit 2.13) http://wordgen.serpmedia.org/s_weekly2014.html and http://wordgen.serpmedia.org/

Should Secret Wire-Tapping Be Legal? (Unit 3.05) http://wordgen.serpmedia.org/ s_weekly2014.html

Sources

Adapted from

Strategic Education Research Partnership. "Original Word Generation Program, Interdisciplinary Grades 6–8: Units 2.13, 3.01, and 3.05." *Word Generation.* http://wordgen.serpmedia.org/original/

Quality Teaching for English Learners (QTEL). n.d. "Careful Reading Tips Bookmark." WestEd. http://qtel.wested.org/

Additional Information

- For many more ideas on how to engage middle school students in reading, writing, and discussing debatable issues, including lesson and unit plans and videos of the lessons in action, see the Word Generation Project (http://wg.serpmedia.org/).

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 needs, histories, and circumstances. Teachers need to know their students well through appropriate assessment practices and other methods in order to design effective instruction for them and 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 or adapt the main lesson in particular ways. Information about meeting the needs of diverse learners, scaffolding, and modifying or adapting instruction is provided in chapters 2 and 9. Importantly, students will not receive the excellent education called for in this *ELA/ELD Framework* without genuine collaborations among those responsible for educating California' children and youth. (See figure 6.32).

Eighth-grade students are poised to make the last transition before leaving elementary and secondary education. Moving to high school is a big step for all students and one full of new challenges and new interests. The goal is that the preparation they have done in language and literacy in middle school will serve them well as they enter the next phase of their education.

Figure 6.32. 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 regularly 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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