# Literacy Content Block for English-Medium Classrooms

## Grades Six Through Eight




California Department of Education

# Literacy Content Block for Grades Six Through Eight: English-Medium Classrooms

The following Literacy Content Block for English-medium classrooms in grades six through eight is intended to guide literacy instruction based on local context and students' identified assets and assessed needs. The block reflects an intentional approach to literacy and biliteracy that promotes carefully sequenced initial instruction, appropriate practice and reinforcement, additional support as necessary, and meaningful application in English language arts (ELA) and all other disciplines. Guidance here should be considered within the context of the Important Understandings discussed in the Introduction to the Literacy Content Blocks, Transitional Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve.

The Literacy Content Block is organized into four areas of literacy instruction: Language, Foundational Literacy Skills, Integrated Reading and Writing, and Comprehensive English Language Development (ELD). General recommendations are included for the use of instructional time and literacy practices that are applicable across disciplines and aligned with the California Common Core State Standards for ELA and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy), as well as the California ELD Standards. Language arts, as a discipline, develops students' capacity to understand, respond to, and create oral and written texts, and builds knowledge about literary genres, themes, structures, and language choices. Both purposes are important. Literacy development is also central to students' capacity to acquire, process, and communicate content knowledge in history–social science, science, and technical subjects (i.e., arts education, career and technical education, health education, mathematics, physical education, and world languages) in ways unique to each discipline.

Intended to be implemented within a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) that includes universal (tier 1), supplemental (tier 2), and intensified (tier 3) academic supports, evidence-based practices are identified within each literacy area. Suggestions for providing additional instructional support (i.e., acceleration or intervention) are offered in the areas of Foundational Literacy Skills and Integrated Reading and Writing. Most practices are applicable across disciplines. To support content learning, reading and oral and written language development should be incorporated and addressed in all disciplines.

All instruction, regardless of discipline, should include integrated ELD (iELD) when identified English learner (EL) students are involved in learning activities. Strategies that are especially beneficial for EL students are identified with the label iELD. See the section Comprehensive ELD for definitions of integrated and designated ELD (dELD).

## Basic Principles of Instruction

The following Basic Principles of Instruction apply to all areas of the Literacy Content Block. Effective instruction in each area—Language, Foundational Literacy Skills, Integrated Reading and Writing, and Comprehensive ELD—is characterized by these principles.

- Provide systematic and sequential instruction that includes direct and explicit, collaborative, and inquiry-based approaches as appropriate.
- Plan for students' active engagement by incorporating multimodal strategies, digital media, choices of assigned texts, opportunities for collaboration, and debatable topics and questions of interest and relevance to adolescents that prompt students' thinking and honor their perspectives.
- Provide instruction in whole-group and small-group settings and ensure opportunities for individual and paired practice, exploration, and interaction with the content.
- Support and strengthen speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills for all learners in every discipline as well as for purposes beyond school.
- Support students to build reading and writing stamina and patience and use strategies to help students read and analyze challenging texts. Read aloud to students or use audio versions of texts purposely to model specific literary or linguistic features. Use audio alternatives or simplified versions of texts sparingly.
- Recognize, value, and build from students' strengths, interests, cultures, languages, backgrounds, and ways of expressing knowledge and skills (e.g., language, gesturing, drawing, role-playing).
- Motivate students by providing appropriately challenging and culturally and linguistically authentic and relevant materials and tasks. Provide choice and plentiful access to print and digital media representing diverse genres, authors, topics, and languages. Connect content to students' lives and offer opportunities for students to exercise decision-making and autonomy.
- Build student self-efficacy (i.e., belief in one's ability to succeed) and motivation by providing opportunities for successful reading experiences, including peer interaction and collaboration. Provide clear learning intentions and success criteria so that learners understand what is to be learned, why, and how they will know if they are successful.

- Monitor student learning and provide timely feedback, next steps for continued progress, and supplemental or intensified support as needed.
- Provide comprehensive ELD instruction—iELD and dELD—for students identified as EL students that builds on their language and cultural assets and responds to the linguistic demands of ELA and other disciplines.
- Provide supports, accommodations, modifications, and/or supplementary aids and services required by a student's individualized education plan (IEP) or Section 504 plan and collaborate with families and, as appropriate, education specialists and service providers.



### Recommended Time Allocations

Given the departmentalized nature of secondary schools, scheduling variations, and the nature of different content areas, specific time allocations are not recommended for each literacy area or discipline. That said, language development should be integrated within instruction in all disciplines daily, including vocabulary, sentence and text analysis, and structured discussion, based on disciplinary texts and topics. Likewise, class time should be spent in reading and writing instruction and practice to support disciplinary learning in ELA, history–social science, world languages, science, mathematics, the arts, health, physical education, and career and technical education. Students should read, write, and discuss their reading and writing daily. Although disciplines such as ELA will dedicate a significant portion of their class time to reading and writing instruction in addition to language development, all disciplines should provide structured reading and writing instruction for at least a small segment of the class period. Integrated ELD should be provided by all teachers in conjunction with content instruction whenever identified EL students are involved in learning activities. All practices in the Language area are applicable for iELD. Designated ELD should be connected to content area learning and provided for EL students regularly, daily to the extent possible, in addition to ELA. The amount of time for dELD should be based on students' needs and local context.

## Literacy Area 1: Language

*Language—heard, spoken, signed, read, and written—is the primary means by which humans communicate, and it is the cornerstone of literacy and learning. It is with and through language that students learn, think, and receive and express ideas, information, perspectives, and questions. Attention to language development occurs in all disciplines, both informally and formally. Language is enriched when students have daily opportunities to interact with adults and one another and with texts as speakers, listeners, readers, and writers; when all students are comfortable contributing to conversations and feel heard and respected; and when all languages and language varieties are valued and recognized as assets. Formal instruction includes, but is not limited to, teaching the meaning of words and word parts (e.g., affixes, root words), how phrases and sentences are organized to convey meaning, and oral and written conventions that contribute to meaning (e.g., grammar, punctuation, capitalization). Students learn that language is purposeful and changes according to context, audience, and task.*



**Evidence-Based Practices to Support Language** (Note that all practices in Language are appropriate for integrated ELD.)

- Engage students in daily collaborative conversations in which they share opinions, arguments, experiences, and information; respond to texts and topics; listen to and build on the ideas of others; and prepare to write and make oral presentations. Structure discussions with appropriate scaffolds to ensure that all students participate actively and that discourse is a vehicle for students to develop their voice and consolidate their learning.
- Engage students in reading a wide range of texts and selections of texts that build on familiar words and syntactic structures to introduce a range of new words and concepts across disciplines and literary genres.
- Expose students to rich vocabulary and a variety of language structures (e.g., phrases, sentences, grammar) by providing explicit instruction in the language of complex texts from the discipline. Pause to think aloud when reading sections of complex text aloud, highlighting and supporting students' understanding by discussing key vocabulary and engaging students in breaking apart the ideas in sentences and reassembling them.
- Promote the use of a wide range of vocabulary and sentence structures in context by providing speaking and writing tasks that encourage students to apply new words and language individually and in collaboration with peers

(e.g., generating sentences using frames or stems, writing in response to a text or topic, presentations, reconstructing sections of text, engaging in debate or discourse).

- Use a direct and explicit vocabulary routine (e.g., introduce the word, supply a student-friendly explanation, share examples and non-examples and prompt students to do the same) to teach specific words that are likely to require explicit instruction, especially those that are used in reading selections or are important for a topic under study. Select vocabulary that has broad academic and disciplinary utility. Provide multiple opportunities for students to use those words in meaningful written and oral contexts and varied groupings.
- Teach students strategies to determine the meaning of unknown words, such as the use of morphology and word parts (e.g., affixes, roots) and context, as appropriate, to infer word meanings, similarities across words, and word structure. Ensure that students know how to consult resources, such as dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses, and digital tools, to determine or clarify word meanings.
- Teach how language functions in different contexts (e.g., in a presentation or group discussion), how it is used for different purposes (e.g., to describe, explain, argue), and how to adjust language choices (including sentence patterns, style, and tone) to audience, task, and purpose.
- Help students develop their spoken communication skills, or oracy, focusing on expressing ideas clearly and effectively, listening actively, and engaging in shared discourse. Introduce students to the elements of oracy, including physical voice and body language; appropriate choice of informal and formal registers, including vocabulary, grammar, and linguistic techniques; cognitive aspects, such as content, organization, clarity, focus, and reasoning; and social–emotional aspects, such as turn-taking, responding appropriately, exhibiting confidence, and audience awareness.
- Emphasize crosslinguistic transfer in vocabulary by highlighting cognates (i.e., words that are similar across languages, such as “accident” and “facilitate” in English and “accidente” and “facilitar” in Spanish) as students engage in oral and written tasks.
- Emphasize crosslinguistic transfer and non-transfer in parts of speech and word order (e.g., “red car” in English and “coche rojo” in Spanish), capitalization (e.g., days of the week are capitalized in English, but not

in Spanish), punctuation (e.g., Spanish uses rotated question marks and exclamation marks at the beginning or inside of a sentence whereas English does not), and neutral and gendered nouns and adjectives, (e.g., “black cat” in English and “gato negro” or “gata negra” in Spanish).

- Support the use of strategic translanguaging, which is purposeful and planned use of students’ full linguistic repertoires to support learning, language development, and identity affirmation. Integrate students’ languages into instruction in ways that maximize comprehension and build crosslinguistic connections. Students may, for example, use resources, such as bilingual dictionaries and personal glossaries, and brainstorm topics in their own language even when an assignment will be written in English.
- Drawing on topics and texts under study, explicitly teach grammatical and syntactic structures and have students practice using them in discussions with temporary supports (e.g., using sentence frames and graphic organizers that focus on proper pronoun usage, function and use of phrases and clauses, and using verbs in the active and passive voice).
- Reinforce, scaffold, and highlight in texts that students read and write the conventions of General American English grammar and usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling as appropriate during instruction. Highlight language varieties that students may be familiar with and use strategic translanguaging to support students’ learning while also drawing connections to General American English grammar.
- Maintain a learning environment in which students feel safe and supported to express their ideas and contribute to discussions. Include a range of temporary learning supports (e.g., images, realia, digital picture dictionary, graphic organizers, semantic maps, sentence frames and stems, word ladders) to promote language learning. Engage students in formative assessment processes in which they receive feedback and self-assess their own communicative effectiveness.
- Model daily an interest in and enthusiasm for the power and beauty of different uses of language. Teach students to examine how word choice and varying grammatical structures influence meaning and impact the listener or reader.

## Literacy Area 2: Foundational Literacy Skills

*The development of Foundational Literacy Skills is a high priority in the years prior to middle school, and although the related standards culminate in grade five, attention to Foundational Literacy Skills continues to be warranted through middle school and beyond as text becomes increasingly complex and structurally diverse. The purpose of Foundational Literacy Skills instruction is to ensure students can identify printed words (decode) in meaningful connected text and translate oral language into written language (encode). The ultimate goal is for students to develop automaticity—recognizing and writing words nearly effortlessly so that cognitive resources can be devoted to meaning making and critical thinking. This is important in all grades and disciplines.*

*The Foundational Literacy Skills in the Literacy Content Blocks for transitional kindergarten through grade five include print concepts (recognizing letters and other symbols, directionality of print, purpose of print), phonological awareness (ability to attend to and orally manipulate the sound units of speech), phonics and word recognition (ability to apply knowledge of sound–symbol correspondences and word parts to identify words), and reading fluency (ability to nearly automatically access written text accurately and read with expression, intonation, phrasing). Also integrated within foundational literacy skills is the ability to nearly effortlessly print and use cursive to transfer spoken language into written language and to accurately spell.*

*Presented here are selected Foundational Literacy Skills that should be addressed through middle school and applied in increasingly complex texts and tasks as students demonstrate proficiency. Additional practices are also presented for students who need supplemental or intensified support in Foundational Literacy Skills. Refer to the CA CCSS for ELA and the Literacy Content Blocks for transitional kindergarten through grade five as needed.*

*Notably, EL students should be provided foundational literacy skills instruction that is adapted for the variety of student profiles, such as oral proficiency in English, native language literacy (both oral and written), similarity of the student's native spoken and written language to English, and the student's previous schooling experiences.*



### Evidence-Based Practices to Extend Instruction in Foundational Literacy Skills

- Explicitly teach text features (e.g., captions, headers, navigation bars, graphics, citations) and specialized symbols (e.g., v represents velocity; c. represents circa, that is, approximate date; ∠ represents angle; ♪ represents

a musical note) used in texts, documents, and other written material relevant to the class, and guide students' understanding of the features' contributions to readers' comprehension.

- Explicitly identify differences and similarities between the writing systems (e.g., organization of text, symbols, punctuation) of English and the languages of multilingual learners. iELD
- Reinforce students' prior learning of how to decode and encode multisyllabic words using instructional routines (e.g., first look for affixes, then find vowels, determine syllable types, and decode chunk by chunk and blend together). Model and provide students with practice tackling unfamiliar, complex, discipline-specific multisyllabic words. Ensure that routines are applied to authentic reading tasks and students understand word meanings, employing scaffolds (e.g., images, demonstrations) as needed. iELD
- Link instruction in orthography (spelling), morphology (prefixes, roots, suffixes), and etymology (word origins), including Latin and Greek roots and affixes, and both regular and irregular spellings, to support multisyllabic word decoding and understanding. Encourage students to be flexible when trying different sounds and syllable divisions until a word makes sense.
- Have all students read a variety of texts, both silently and aloud, especially grade-level and discipline-specific texts (with ample support as needed), in a variety of settings (whole group, small group, partner, and independent). Students must have daily opportunities to read in order to develop fluency with increasingly complex texts. Extensive and wide reading are key for advancing proficiency with written text.
- Model reading aloud sections of text smoothly with appropriate expression and pacing, so students can hear fluent reading of texts that contain long and/or sophisticated sentences. Emphasize meaning making and thinking aloud with syntactically complex sentences, including where to pause and vary pitch. Identify the function of phrases, clauses, conjunctions, and advanced punctuation, as well as pronouns that replace nouns and refer back to earlier references, to support comprehension. Check that students understand the meaning of the words and phrases and provide explanations as needed. iELD
- Engage students in repeated reading for authentic reasons, such as preparing for an oral performance (e.g., echo reading, choral reading, readers' theater, poetry presentations, author's chair) and different purposes

(e.g., identifying unknown words, finding the answer to a teacher-posed question, preparing to summarize with a partner).

- Ensure that students understand texts they are reading, not just rapidly decoding the prose. Discuss the meaning of words and phrases as students build automaticity and appropriate expression, intonation, and phrasing. iELD
- Integrate instruction with other areas of literacy instruction, such as writing, spelling, and comprehension.

**Additional Practices for Students Needing Supplemental or Intensified Support in Foundational Literacy Skills**

- Use formative assessment processes and summative assessments to identify existing skills and areas of need (e.g., decoding multisyllabic words) and provide systematic, accelerated, and explicit supplemental instruction using evidence-based practices from above and from earlier grades. Provide supplemental support as part of classroom instruction; collaborate with specialists to provide intensified support in the classroom and/or in specialized settings as needed. Ensure that supplemental and intensified support is aligned with core curriculum and instructional approaches and that students have additional practice and support needed to access grade-level texts.
- Provide immediate and specific feedback and follow-up instruction as needed. Allow multiple opportunities for practice and highlight successes to promote confidence and perseverance.
- For multilingual students needing support with phonological awareness and decoding, prioritize instruction in skills that transfer between languages, explicitly noting sounds that exist in both English and a student's primary language and those that are unique to each language (e.g., the sound /s/ exists in both spoken English and Spanish whereas /sh/ is heard in spoken English but not in Spanish; /p/ is an English sound that does not exist in Arabic). Incorporate additional articulation practice for sounds that are not used in both languages.
- As needed, provide practice with reading and writing in cursive and keyboarding.
- Focus instruction on patterns and generalizations in decoding words, not rote memorization. Provide practice opportunities to support students' development of nearly effortless application of word recognition skills so attention can be devoted to meaning.

- Reinforce and support students' application of morphological knowledge (i.e., affixes, roots) to recognize words by using a variety of strategies, such as word sorts and semantic maps. Ensure that students discern the meaningful relationship among words that share word parts (e.g., biology, biosphere, biography; interrupt, disrupt, rupture; intersect, dissect, section).
- Provide multiple opportunities for students to reread text to build automaticity with the print. Capitalize on the social nature of adolescents by pairing students to practice reading and rereading a selection of their choice from a text.
- Model, discuss, and have students practice reading with expression small selections of text to build fluency. Draw attention to punctuation and meaning and discuss how they impact pacing and intonation.
- Before having individuals read aloud in a group, ensure that ample support (e.g., rehearsing with artificial intelligence (AI) voice-input and feedback tools, purposeful choral reading) has been provided and that it occurs in a setting in which adolescents are comfortable taking risks.

## Literacy Area 3: Integrated Reading and Writing

*Reading and writing practices are complementary and, when taught in conjunction, support and strengthen one another. Students' comprehension of text is improved when they discuss and write about what they read. Likewise, students' writing is improved when they read, listen to, and discuss an author's language or organizational choices in high-quality texts. Students also benefit when teachers model the writing process and teach specific writing skills, such as sentence construction skills. Integrating reading and writing provides important opportunities to build knowledge, enhance language, and develop effective communication in ELA and all disciplines.*

### Reading: Engaging with Text

*Engaging with text meaningfully opens worlds for learners. By understanding, analyzing, and responding to texts (orally and in writing)—with the help of appropriate scaffolding—students enhance their ability to make meaning, think critically, build knowledge in all disciplines, develop receptive and expressive language, and reinforce foundational literacy skills. Students experience increasingly complex text by listening to selected sections read aloud and reading with the teacher and peers and independently. Reading a variety of texts provides models of creative expression and author's craft, allows students to pursue interests, and builds an appreciation of diverse perspectives and cultures.*

### Evidence-Based Practices to Support Reading: Engaging with Text

- Integrate reading, writing, and discussion to enhance comprehension of text and build knowledge and language.
- Promote reading volume by ensuring that students read every day as a part of instruction as well as independently to expand their worlds and language, develop empathy, pursue their interests, and foster reading for pleasure. Offer choice; ignite curiosity by sharing excerpts from texts they may find appealing, provocative, or relatable to their lives to inspire students to read the full texts; and provide time for students to talk with their peers about what they are reading.
- Engage students in activities that prepare them to read a text by building background knowledge and activating their interest in the text. For example, pose questions that elicit their knowledge about or experiences with the topic (e.g., Has anyone here played a soccer game on a really hot day? What happened to your body?), share images related to the topic (e.g., young adolescents practicing soccer, taking a break to drink water) and ask for their reactions, tell them something they will be learning (e.g., physiological responses to heat and exercise). iELD
- Model thinking aloud about a text, demonstrating inference making and drawing attention to language use and text organization. Engage students in guided, paired, and individual practice in inference making and observations of the author's craft with different text types. iELD
- Make available and engage students with texts that reflect students' interests and identities as well as the curricula. Teach students how to assess texts and support them in identifying and choosing texts.
- Ensure all students have regular opportunities to read grade-level text with scaffolding, such as modeling how to navigate unfamiliar concepts, vocabulary, and language structures; prompting students to apply word analysis skills; prompting purposeful rereading; and asking questions and facilitating discussion to ensure meaning making and reasoning. iELD
- Engage students with a range of texts relevant to the discipline (e.g., historical documents, scientific reports, mathematical graphs, pop culture opinion pieces, poetry shared via multimedia), including multiple texts on the same topic. Highlight the organizational structures of the texts (e.g.,

sequence, cause and effect, compare and contrast, description), including supports such as story maps and graphic organizers as needed.

- Identify and teach vocabulary and language structures critical to students' understanding of texts they read by providing friendly definitions, rich examples, and visuals, props, or actions as applicable. iELD
- Ask literal and inferential text-dependent questions to guide and build comprehension and verbal reasoning, and prompt students to generate questions about a text. To support engagement and motivation, include and invite questions about the text or topic that students find interesting and can wrestle with and that likely evoke multiple perspectives. Include referential questions that elicit new and varied thinking and information from students and prompt analysis and metacognitive reflection.
- Regularly provide brief and extended opportunities for students to discuss texts and topics in pairs or small groups. Teach equitable and effective discussion practices (e.g., coming prepared, taking on different roles, setting goals, building on others' ideas, sharing "airtime").
- Incorporate routines and procedures that increase thinking about and discussing a text (e.g., using collegial rules of discussion; citing textual evidence; elaborating on topics, texts, or issues; posing questions; and using goals to track the progress and outcomes of discussions), and encourage multiple and extended exchanges among students. In addition, teach students to respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives.
- Model and teach students to use comprehension strategies individually and in collaboration with peers before, during, and after reading a text selection. Strategies may include activating prior knowledge, scanning a text to make predictions, annotating a text, monitoring comprehension, pausing to retell or summarize a section with a peer, creating a visual display of how information or a story is organized, and writing in response to the text.
- Teach students to monitor their comprehension. Model reflecting on meaning making while reading and have students pause periodically as they read to ask themselves questions about the text and to summarize text passages. Teach "fix-up" strategies, such as identifying unknown words, breaking sentences apart, and rereading. iELD

- Teach students to follow the logic of a text, including identifying evidence an author uses to support a point, by outlining, using a variety of graphic organizers, and emulating an author's structure in their own writing. Provide scaffolds, such as sentence and paragraph frames, as needed.
- Teach students to use graphic organizers and outlines to analyze sections of text to determine what the section is saying and how it is functioning, (e.g., introducing an argument, detailing claims and evidence, eliciting sympathy, describing a setting). Help students analyze the structure of a text and the choices an author has made to develop their ideas.
- Use think-alouds to model text deconstruction (i.e., examining and discussing parts of sentences, passages, or texts) to increase comprehension by helping students understand how words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs function in a text. iELD
- Teach, model, and provide time for students to write in response to texts to promote analysis and comprehension. Provide differentiated language supports for multilingual learners, including strategic translanguaging. Students at emerging levels of English may begin with oral language responses, draw and label in response to text, or use scaffolded sentences before composing more elaborate sentences or paragraphs. iELD
- Teach and provide students opportunities to interpret information presented in diverse media, including responses generated by AI, and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study. Engage students in evaluating the credibility of digital media, including AI.
- Engage students in project-based or thematic units within the discipline that spark students' interest, integrate literacy and content instruction, involve research, and culminate in written products or oral presentations to extend learning, build world knowledge, and promote collaboration and inquiry. Include the use of digital tools as appropriate.

**Additional Practices for Students Needing Supplemental or Intensified Support in Reading: Engaging with Text**

- Use formative assessment processes and summative assessments to identify existing skills and areas of need (e.g., summarizing, inference making) and provide systematic, accelerated, and explicit classroom instruction using evidence-based practices above and from earlier grades.

- Provide immediate and specific feedback and follow-up instruction as needed. Highlight successes to promote confidence and perseverance.
- Ensure accuracy in word recognition and intervene when appropriate (e.g., in the moment or after engaging with the text). Introduce and support students in decoding several challenging words, particularly multisyllabic words, prior to encountering them in the text.
- As needed, provide additional support for students to develop world and word knowledge related to the topics of a text before reading it. For example, briefly provide background on the topic, ask questions on the topic to assess and have students share knowledge, provide simpler texts on the topic for students to read prior to reading the more complex text, or have students explore the topic using digital tools.
- As needed, identify words that are likely to be difficult for students and explicitly and briefly teach a few essential words before reading and define others as students read. Review instruction on using word parts and context to determine meanings of unknown words. Reinforce students' understanding of the words in a variety of contexts over time.
- As needed, increase explicit instruction, modeling, and scaffolding of routines for summarizing sections of complex texts and call students' attention to text structure. Provide opportunities for students to collaboratively generate gist statements once they learn the routines.
- As needed, engage students in explicit instruction and practice monitoring their own comprehension, including answering and asking questions about a text selection while reading independently and collaboratively.
- As needed, have students practice making sense of challenging text with teacher scaffolding to expose students to complex ideas and information.
- Build on students' successes in reading and discussing texts to increase confidence and persistence. Acknowledge that some texts may be difficult and reassure students that teacher support will be provided.
- Include frequent opportunities for writing in preparation for and in response to text.
- Integrate reading instruction with other areas or components of literacy, such as word recognition, spelling, and writing.

## Writing

*The ability to write is an essential and empowering literacy skill. Writing enhances students' understanding of texts and learning experiences. Moreover, writing helps students clarify their thinking and enables them to express themselves for purposes of communicating with others and for their own satisfaction. Writing takes many forms; it may be formal or informal, brief or lengthy, and dictated or composed independently or collaboratively. Writing is taught and practiced daily and is integrated in all disciplines and includes writing over both extended and shorter time frames for varied audiences and purposes.*



### Evidence-Based Practices to Support Writing

- Integrate reading, writing, and discussion to enhance comprehension of text, build knowledge and language, and prepare students to write and make oral presentations.
- Ensure that students write daily in all disciplines for different audiences and purposes. Provide opportunities for formal and informal writing (e.g., summaries, blogs, journals, quickwrites, exit tickets) of different types appropriate for the discipline (e.g., argumentative writing in history–social science, explanatory writing in mathematics and science, narrative writing in ELA), including research projects using several resources.
- Engage students in thinking and writing about the text and topics under study as they prepare to read (e.g., What do I already know about the setting of the story or topic? What am I curious about? How might this topic be relevant in my life?). Similarly, engage students in reflecting on their reading as they prepare to respond to the writing task(s) (e.g., What did I learn from the text, topic, and my peers? What did I find confusing, annoying, exciting? How did I feel reading the text, and what did the author do to elicit those feelings in me?).
- Review and engage students in all phases of the writing process (i.e., planning, drafting, sharing, revising, editing, and publishing) as appropriate for the task. Highlight the recursive nature of these processes and model returning to different phases as thinking, language, and knowledge of the topic continue to develop. Provide opportunities for students to collaborate in all phases and to reflect on their writing. iELD

- Emphasize writing as a vehicle to process and consolidate learning, express personal ideas, develop student agency and voice, and accomplish authentic purposes. Provide choices, as appropriate, in writing assignments to connect with students' interests and lived experiences, while still focusing on the intended writing skills and strategies to be learned and practiced.
- Teach specific writing skills, including conventions, word choice, and organization relevant to the discipline and task. Encourage students to write on their own and support their application of different skills (e.g., use of punctuation for clarity) and processes (e.g., experimenting with different word choices, sentence structures, or text organization beyond what may be suggested by AI tools) for different purposes and audiences.
- Have students discuss and write about texts and media with which they engage, topics they study, and personal experiences and interests. Provide regular opportunities for students to share their ideas in both writing and discussion and to collaborate with varied groups of peers.
- Provide opportunities for students to study and emulate effective features of exemplar texts (e.g., imitating how an author supports a claim, provides arguments and counterarguments, uses language to persuade). Highlight effective text structures and features of different text types and genres.
- Teach students to elaborate on ideas in their written work by adding quotations, paraphrasing details, and drawing conclusions from the text to support main ideas or themes. Share and discuss detailed sentences from familiar texts and have students collaborate to add relevant detail to sentences in their own work.
- Teach students to write complex sentences by analyzing examples of different sentence types and using strategies, such as sentence combining.
- Teach students how to cite textual evidence to support explicit analysis of a text, including inferences drawn from a text. Provide scaffolds using frames, such as "The author creates the impression that ____ by ____." "In the part of the text where it says ____, we can infer that ____." iELD
- Incorporate instructional scaffolds and learning supports, as needed, such as graphic organizers, sentence stems and frames, templates, and protocols to help students organize their thoughts and learn ways to express them. iELD

- Provide students with opportunities to give and receive verbal and written feedback and strengthen their writing as needed by revising and editing throughout the writing process. Co-create with students or provide and discuss rubrics, forms, checklists, or open-ended prompts to make the success criteria for the assignment visible, to promote self-reflection and self-assessment, and facilitate peer feedback and collaboration.
- Have students rehearse, present, and share their writing with an audience (e.g., peers, families, other adults) and evaluate the impact of their work on others.
- Emphasize crosslinguistic transfer and non-transfer, such as sentence structure and cognates. Promote strategic translanguaging in discussion as multilingual students prepare to write or plan presentations. iELD
- Engage students in project-based or thematic units, as described in the section Reading: Engaging with Text.

**Additional Practices for Students Needing Supplemental or Intensified Support in Writing**

Use formative assessment processes and summative assessments to identify existing skills and areas of need (e.g., supporting claims, using precise language, applying conventions) and provide systematic, accelerated, and explicit instruction using evidence-based practices above and from earlier grades.

- Explicitly teach strategies for planning and goal setting, drafting, evaluating, revising, and editing. Instruct students on how to choose and apply strategies appropriate for the audience, task, and purpose.
- Explicitly teach organizational structures, spelling, and sentence and paragraph construction skills. Increase how much students write both informally and formally (e.g., exit tickets, annotations, outlines, journal entries, short responses to prompts, essays).
- Use an exemplar or mentor text to provide a model of a particular feature (e.g., voice, sentence complexity, conventions) of effective writing. Identify and discuss how the feature impacts the effectiveness of the text, and have students practice using it in their own writing individually or in collaboration with a peer.
- Analyze student writing to tailor instruction and target feedback. Provide clear, immediate, and specific feedback directly related to the instructional goal (e.g., varying verbs, using sensory language, incorporating dialogue).

Highlight successes to promote confidence and perseverance. Teach, model, and provide practice in using graphic organizers and outlines to organize writing.

- Emphasize the importance of writing daily in every discipline using quickwrites, exit tickets, and short responses to classroom prompts, as well as longer essays and research projects, including opportunities for collaborative writing. Teach students strategies, such as descriptive outlining and step-by-step summarizing, to help support their reading comprehension and idea generation for their own writing.
- Ensure that students have an audience, especially peers, for their writing. Have students discuss, reflect on, and evaluate their writing choices with one another.

## Literacy Area 4: Comprehensive ELD

*Comprehensive ELD includes both integrated and designated ELD and constitutes part of core instruction for those identified as EL students. English language development instruction is integrated into ELA and all disciplines and builds on students' cultural and linguistic assets. Through comprehensive ELD, EL students learn to use English purposefully, interact in meaningful ways, understand how English works, and advance their level of English proficiency. The CA ELD Standards describe the knowledge, skills, and abilities that EL students need to access, engage with, and achieve in grade level academic content. The standards include two major parts: Interacting in Meaningful Ways (organized by modes of communication: Collaborative, Interpretative, and Productive) and Learning About How English Works (organized by key language processes: Structuring Cohesive Texts, Expanding and Enriching Ideas, and Connecting and Condensing Ideas). The strategies below support the implementation of these standards.*

### Integrated ELD

*Integrated ELD is provided throughout the school day in every discipline to ensure that EL students are able to understand and use English to access new content and instruction. Integrated ELD means that all teachers address specific ELD standards while they address literacy or other content standards. Through iELD students strengthen their abilities to use academic English as they simultaneously learn content. Truly integrated into daily instruction, iELD involves careful planning, intentional scaffolding, and close observation of EL students during lessons.*

**Evidence-Based Practices to Support Integrated ELD**

- Examine planned texts and tasks to identify language that may be unfamiliar or challenging to students and identify opportunities to highlight and discuss vocabulary and language features both before (i.e., front-loading) and during lessons. Consider and intentionally build the background knowledge needed to understand complex texts and tasks, providing necessary scaffolds while avoiding oversimplification. Observe how students use the new language and adjust whole-group instruction or work with small groups to provide adequate and appropriate support.
- Analyze the language features and structure of a text (e.g., textbook, biography, drama, poem, song lyrics, science article) and plan instruction to deepen students' awareness, comprehension, and use of target vocabulary or language structures through teacher modeling, interactive read-alouds, guided discussions, and collaborative writing. For example, teach how an author uses idiomatic expressions and figurative language to create mental pictures (e.g., hot as a furnace, the leaves danced in the wind).
- Help students use target vocabulary and language structures by providing planned and just-in-time scaffolds (e.g., student-friendly explanations or definitions, graphic organizers, pictures, sketches, realia, sentence starters or frames, word banks).
- Promote the use of vocabulary and phrases in context by encouraging students to apply new language in speaking (e.g., discussing, presenting) and writing (e.g., summaries, questions, connections) activities individually and with others.
- Scaffold and guide students' engagement in extended peer conversations about texts or topics in which they ask and answer questions; build on one another's ideas; make personal observations; share relevant experiences; dramatize, reconstruct, or retell a text; or create oral or written responses.
- Highlight crosslinguistic connections to build language awareness and enhance comprehension of text structures and language features (e.g., placing periods at the end of sentences in Spanish and English; tracking print right to left in Farsi and left to right in English; placing adjectives after a noun in Arabic and before a noun in English; ensuring agreement of articles, nouns, and adjectives for gender and number in Spanish, "las sillas pequeñas," and not doing so in English, "the little chairs").

- Support the use of strategic translanguaging, which is purposeful and planned use of students' full linguistic repertoires to support learning, language development, and identity affirmation. Integrate students' languages into instruction in ways that maximize comprehension and build crosslinguistic connections. Students may, for example, use resources, such as bilingual dictionaries and personal glossaries, and brainstorm topics in their own language even when an assignment will be written in English.
- Call attention to how a text that students are reading or listening to is organized (e.g., by story sequence or informational topic and details) and the different formats included (e.g., illustrations, charts, data displays). Model how to organize writing accordingly using graphic organizers and visuals and how to present information in different formats as appropriate for the topic.
- Provide flexibility in pacing to attend to students' processing time in English and to build vocabulary and background knowledge that native speakers of English likely already possess and that are essential to comprehension and production.
- Provide clear criteria for success that students can articulate and check frequently for comprehension. Use formative assessment processes and summative assessments to monitor student learning. Engage students in reflecting on their learning and building metacognitive awareness of their progress using rubrics and other self-assessment tools.
- Help students understand complex sentences in the discipline by modeling how to unpack them into shorter sentences or phrases. An example drawn from science is the sentence, "The slow movement of tectonic plates, large pieces of Earth's crust, toward one another causes the formation of mountain ranges." The sentence can be broken into shorter sentences and displayed on sentence strips (e.g., "Tectonic plates are large pieces of Earth's crust."; "Tectonic plates move."; "Mountain ranges are formed when tectonic plates move toward one another."). Discuss the shorter sentences, clarify word meanings along the way (e.g., crust, formation, ranges), and note any special words or phrases that connect ideas within the original sentence (e.g., the word "causes" tells us that one thing makes another thing happen).

## Designated ELD

*Designated ELD is a protected time during the regular school day in addition to the literacy block. In dELD, teachers focus on specific ELD standards in ways that directly connect to and support content learning, including learning that happens during the literacy block. In addition to addressing the CA ELD Standards for Interacting in Meaningful Ways, dELD focuses particularly on the standards for Learning About How English Works. The purpose is to help EL students develop the critical English language skills, knowledge, and abilities needed for learning in all disciplines and navigating increasingly complex texts and tasks in English. Instruction in dELD should combine and build on the evidence-based practices identified for iELD, while providing opportunities to engage students with language more deeply, with more support and scaffolding, and in more detail based on their level of English language proficiency.*



### Evidence-Based Practices to Support Designated ELD

- Group EL students for dELD, to the degree practicable, according to their level of English language proficiency and, if possible, their grade level in order to draw on subject matter, varying grouping as needed. Offer focused instruction designed to strengthen and expand existing language skills through collaborative and individualized activities followed by guided and independent practice. Ensure that dELD instruction also incorporates the strategies identified in iELD.
- Analyze the language demands of texts and tasks students are using in their classes to the extent possible. Incorporate specific vocabulary and language structures that will be encountered in the discipline. Assess prior knowledge and activate, focus on, or build background information, key vocabulary, and language structures.
- Provide explicit instruction and practice with a range of language features identified in the ELD standards in connection with content instruction and ensure opportunities to revisit and apply these features with increasingly complex texts and tasks.
- Call students' attention to specific language related to grade-level content that expands and enriches ideas, such as verb tenses, to provide details. Encourage its use through rephrasing and prompts (e.g., "Yes, the wind blows. Because it happened yesterday, we say the wind blew. Can you tell us about something else that happened yesterday? Turn to your partner and work together to come up with a sentence.").

- Incorporate activities that help students discover and understand how English works (e.g., word sorts, deconstructing and reconstructing text, teaching word parts and word families). For example, teach how the letter(s) “s” or “es” are used at the end of many English nouns as a suffix to create a plural form. Have students examine texts they are using to find and share examples with peers.
- Use dELD time to front-load or revisit the content and language demands students will or have experienced in their classes, deepening integrated ELD instruction. For example, if they are studying the Civil War in their social studies class, introduce or review essential vocabulary, use visuals and graphic organizers, and provide students support for collaborative discussion about new content.
- Teach students to unpack complex sentences into shorter sentences or phrases to support comprehension. An example from history–social science is the sentence, “Shipbuilding and mapmaking, along with new navigational tools, contributed to an Age of Exploration, a time during which explorers traveled long distances to establish new trade routes, spread Christianity, and colonize.” The sentence can be broken into shorter sentences and displayed on sentence strips (e.g., “There was an Age of Exploration.”; “Shipbuilding, mapmaking, and navigational tools contributed to it.”; “Explorers could travel long distances.”; “One reason for exploring was to establish new trade routes.”; “Another reason was to spread Christianity.”; “Another reason was to colonize.”). Discuss the shorter sentences, clarify word meanings (e.g., navigational, establish, colonize), and note any special words or phrases that connect ideas within the original sentence (e.g., the words “along with” here mean “in addition to”).
- Model and engage students in guided practice connecting and condensing ideas in shared language activities, drawing on middle school texts to the extent possible. Focus on commonly used phrases as well as connecting words or phrases (e.g., previously, for example, to conclude) to link ideas, events, or reasons and combine clauses.
- Model and engage students in guided practice expanding and enriching ideas in shared language activities by adding different types and tenses of verbs (e.g., walk or prance, does or did), adding new adjectives to nouns (e.g., large or enormous, good or terrific), and adding details with prepositional phrases (e.g., after the sun set, alongside the boulder).