

COMPARISON AT A GLANCE:

How do the English/Language Arts and Literacy CCSS compare to the former state standards?

Topic	Previous Standards	CCSS
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 areas of instruction: reading, writing, listening/speaking, and written and oral language conventions • Most grade-levels have more informational-text standards than literature standards. (This does not necessarily match the predominance of literature selections over informational text in most English/Language Arts programs.) • The California Standards Test (CST) blueprints indicate a heavier emphasis on reading comprehension of informational text than of literature (e.g., 6th grade: 23% info text vs. 16% literature). http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/blueprints.asp • Focus of reading instruction tends to be about <i>what</i> is being said rather than looking at the rhetoric (i.e., <i>how</i> it is being said). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 areas of instruction: reading, writing, speaking/listening, and language. (Virtually all of California’s former ELA standards are embedded within the CCSS.) • An equal balance between informational texts (defined as “literary non-fiction”) and literature is specified for ELA. • Teaching literacy is identified as the responsibility of all educators via the 7th -12th Literacy standards for social science, science, and technical subjects which increases the total amount of informational text used for instruction throughout a student’s day. <p>Specific CCSS curricular emphases not found in former standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidenced-based reasoning • Frequent and multiple opportunities to research and gather information • Student understanding of rhetoric in reading, writing, and speaking (e.g., analyzing <i>how</i> something is communicated) • Student ability to analyze, compare, and integrate multiple sources • Speaking/listening standards deeply tied to instructional practices and student expectations for reading and writing • Increase in text complexity 3rd-12th grade
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The numbering and outcome of the standards have no consistency from one grade to the next. For example, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3rd grade reading standard #3.4 asks students to identify the theme/author’s message ○ 4th grade has no such expectation ○ 5th grade reading standard #3.4 requires identification of theme ○ 6th grade reading standard #3.6 expects students to “identify and analyze features of theme...” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards are devised to remain consistently numbered K-12 (e.g., writing standard 1 deals with opinion/argument from kindergarten to twelfth grade). • They progressively increase in level of sophistication. • Standards are “divided” K-5th/6th-12th where one might see some shifts in terminology used, although the intent of the standard remains (e.g., “opinion” is used K-5th and then shifts to “argument” 6th -12th). • Standards were written to start with the student expectations for College and Career Readiness (CCR) and build a K-12 series of skills/conceptual understanding to get there.
Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical components of exemplary instruction include: an explicit, communicated learning objective, instruction of academic language, student engagement, checks for understanding, scaffolded instruction, teacher modeling, guided student practice, independent practice, structured student interaction, and outcome-based assessments. 	<p>In addition to the critical components of exemplary instruction listed to the left (not an exhaustive list), the CCSS emphasizes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration for the purpose of comprehension (speaking/listening) and to integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language standards during instruction. • Instruction focused on high-quality sets of text-dependent questions that require students to go back into text to defend/support their claims and reasoning • Teacher-led, targeted re-reads of sentences and sections of material to progressively get to a deeper level of student understanding of rich, complex texts • Explicit modeling of teacher thinking for deep, conceptual understanding