



Instructional Implications of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects.

Informational Text, Grades K–5

Session Description

Participants will examine the K-5 grade-specific Reading Informational Text Standards of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects.

Expected Outcomes

- Become familiar with the K-5 CCSS Reading Informational Text Standards.
- Identify standards that may be new or represent a new emphasis for teachers.

Agenda

- Welcome and Introduction (5 minutes)
- CCSS Reading Informational Text Standards (25 minutes)
 - Partner activity – Progression of difficulty
 - Partner activities – What's new? and ideas to approach these standards
- Reflection (10 minutes)
 - Partner activity – How did we do?
 - What's next?
 - Reflection

Time

- 45 minutes

Audience

- Designed to be used with groups of K—5 leaders and teachers working with grade-level partners.

Materials

- Handout copy of PowerPoint slides
- Handout Reading Informational Text Standards K-5
- Handout Reflections

Resources/References

- Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects
http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_ELA%20Standards.pdf

Slide 1

Welcome participants and suggest they sit with partners who teach the same subject and grade level(s).

Introduce the subject for today and **check** to see that everyone has the materials.

For instance, the facilitator might say,

“Implementing the Common Core State Standards will mean an increased emphasis on teaching students to understand and interact with informational text.

From viewing the results of the ‘fourth grade slump’ to reviewing research correlating science achievement with the ability to read informational text, we all can appreciate the importance – and challenge – of teaching students to read complex informational text proficiently. The goal is for every student to graduate ready for the reading demands of college and career. Most of the required reading in college and workforce training programs is informational in structure and challenging in content. Postsecondary education programs typically provide students with both a higher volume of such reading than is generally required in K-12 schools and comparatively little scaffolding. However, traditionally, only a fraction of the texts students are exposed to in early grades are informational.”

Slide 2

Go over the expected outcomes for this session.

For instance, the facilitator might say,

“Today we will take a look at the 10 Informational Text Reading Standards at grades K-5, looking a bit more closely at some that may be less familiar, and remembering that the Standards depict WHAT students should know and be able to do.

Slide 3

Explain that the CCSS call for a “balance” of literature and informational text: 50% informational text and 50% literature.

For instance, the facilitator might say,

“One of the most significant instructional impacts of the CCSS is the increase in the quantity of literacy materials and amount instructional time devoted to informational text, so that it equals the time and weight given to literature.

Recent studies have shown that as little as 7 to 15% of elementary reading instruction time is devoted to informational text.

The CCSS call for a ‘balance’ of literature and informational text at every grade level, K-5. In other words, 50% of reading instruction will be devoted to supporting students at every grade level become proficient at reading increasingly complex, high quality informational text.”

Slide 4

Explain that the National Assessment of Educational Progress has taken the lead in assigning relative weight to literary and informative text.

For instance, the facilitator might say,

“The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading test, given every two years, uses a balance of literary and informational text at the elementary level. The CCSS follows NAEP’s lead in calling for 50% of the texts students read to be informational, starting from the very beginning in kindergarten.”

Slide 5

Explain that the CCSS document defines informational text as literary nonfiction as well as historical, scientific, and technical texts.

Point out that the emphasis is on text structure other than narrative.

Invite participants to work with their partner(s) to think of texts where their students are likely to encounter these text structures. Invite participants to share.

For instance, the facilitator might say,

“The term *literary* in the previous slide may be a bit confusing. For the purposes of the Standards, *literature* is broadly defined to include stories (including myths, legends, folk tales), drama, and poetry. Biography, autobiography, speeches, etc. – commonly referred to as *literary nonfiction* – are included in *informational text*.

Students typically are more familiar with the narrative structure found in stories of various types and have difficulty with the text structures found in most informational text. So, it is important that the informational text selections chosen for students have a structure other than the more familiar narrative arc (rising action/conflict – climax – falling action/resolution).

Equally important is that students receive explicit instruction and support in understanding these other text structures and using that knowledge to help them comprehend the text itself. Among the Standards we will be taking a closer look at is Standard 5, which deals specifically with text features at K – 3 and text structure at 4 – 5.

Listed here are some common informational text structures. Take a few minutes with your partner to think of texts where your students are likely to encounter these text structures." [*Invite participants to share some of these.*]

Slide 6

Direct participants’ attention to the Handout “CCSS Reading Informational Text Standards K-5” and suggest that they work with partners who teach the same grade(s).

Note that on the handout the standards requiring multiple texts have been set off with additional borders.

Explain that the standards represent a continuum of proficiency from a very beginning level at K to the college and career readiness level depicted in the CCR Anchor Standards. Remind participants that each step up in task difficulty defined by the Standards is matched by a “step up” in text complexity not reflected in the individual grade-level standards themselves.

Invite participants to work with partners to identify the “step up” in task difficulty at each grade for several standards.

Allow about 5 minutes for partners to work.

Invite participants to report out on some.

For instance, the facilitator might say,

“Let’s take a look at the Handout ‘CCSS Reading Informational Text Standards K-5.’ This document has been set up to show the K-5 progression for each of the 10 standards. Those standards requiring multiple texts have been set off with additional borders since they may necessitate some extra planning effort in identifying suitable texts. Later in this session, we’ll note an online resources that will be very helpful in identifying suggested works.

The Standards, as we have seen, are arranged around a framework of the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards and have been written using a ‘back-mapping’ strategy, identifying where students need to be on the learning progression by the end of each grade in order to make the end-point attainable. So, the standards at each subsequent grade level incorporate a ‘step up’ in task difficulty (as well as the ‘step up’ in the complexity of the texts).

With your partner(s), examine several of these K—5 progressions to identify how the tasks become more difficult at each grade. Sometimes this takes quite a close read, and some of the ‘steps’ seem larger than others.”

Slide 7

Draw participants’ attention to Standard 9 and how the task difficulty “steps up” at each grade level.

Note that some of the steps appear bigger than others: The jump here between 3rd and 4th grade for example.

Ask participants if they identified other places where the “step up” between grades was quite substantial. *[In Standards 3, 5, 8, for example.]*

For instance, the facilitator might say,

“Let’s look at how the standards ‘step up’ the level of task difficulty from grade to grade in Standard 9 first. If we look at these steps, I think we will agree that the step between 3rd and 4th grades represents a ‘bigger step’ than the other increments. In this case, it requires an integrated approach to the strands.

Where else did you find relatively big jumps in cognitive demand? These are worth noting because they may prove a bit more challenging for us.

Yes, Standards 3 and 8 ask students in grade 3 to begin using the language of the logical connections of time, sequence, cause/effect, comparison. That seems like a relatively big jump. How about Standard 6? *[from grades 1 to 2 to 3 to 4. A level of self-awareness is necessary at the 3rd grade level, etc.]*

And Standard 5 goes from focusing on text features (which are visible) to text structure (which is not) in grade 4.”

Slide 8

Invite partners to look closely at the Informational Text standards at their own grade level(s) and identify elements that are new or new in emphasis.

Allow about 10 minutes for group work.

Invite participants to share what they found and ideas they have about instructional approaches they might use.

For instance, the facilitator might say,

“With partners or in small groups, read through the K-5 continuum for several of the standards and think about current classroom practice at your grade level(s).

Identify standards that represent new content, new emphasis, or a new level of rigor at your grade level(s). Then, brainstorm some possible instructional strategies and approaches you might consider using in addressing these. *[Allow time to work and report out some examples.]*

Since all students read the central, grade appropriate text around which instruction is centered, appropriate scaffolding and supports will be necessary for students reading below grade level.

Slide 9 (Intentionally deleted)

Slide 10

Draw participants’ attention to these three standards, and invite them to share instructional ideas for approaching these standards, starting at Kindergarten.

Invite them to reflect back on one or two of these standards, thinking about how to apply strategies discussed in subsequent slides.

For instance, the facilitator might say,

“Here are three standards that represent changes at virtually all the K-5 grade levels, and each of them represents a pretty high cognitive demand.

Standard 3 at 3rd grade, for instance, asks students to distinguish their own point of view from that of the author. What ideas did you come up with that would help children become aware of their own point of view and then differentiate it from an author’s?

Did you come up with other ideas to approach any of these standards? *[Continue with some examples from other grades and standards.]*

Slide 11

Explain that the present strategies for instruction and assessment to ensure that students who are at risk of not meeting the grade-level expectations will be able to meet them, and that students who are reading at grade level or above will continue to make commensurate progress.

Slide 12 (Intentionally deleted)

Slide 13

Draw participants’ attention to the instructional strategies and practices that support struggling readers.

For instance, the facilitator might say,

“Research indicates that just because informational text has text features that make it more challenging doesn’t mean young children cannot handle informational text or learn content from it.

Here are several instructional strategies and practices supported by research.

Think about the standards you focused on in Slide 10. How might these instructional strategies be applied to them?”

Slide 14

Explain that research indicates that young student’s reading preferences are closely connected to the classroom context and how they have experienced informational texts.

For instance, the facilitator might say,

“No research evidence supports the notion that children don’t like informational text. Rather, it is important to put student text preference within the context of classroom instructional activities. In other words, how texts are used in the classroom is more centrally related to how children form attitudes about texts.”

Slide 15

For instance, the facilitator might say,

“If one were to visit an elementary classroom that was supporting all children in attaining the Reading Informational Text Standards, what would it look like? What would it sound like?”

Slide 16

Explain that this is a sampling of the "classroom snapshot" depicting what a visitor would hear in a classroom teaching informational text literacy.

For instance, the facilitator might say,

“Here is a sampling of what the visitor might hear.”

Slide 17

Invite participants to turn to their partners and give short answers to the questions.

For instance, the facilitator might say,

“So how did we do? Our goals for today were 1) to become more familiar with the CCSS Reading Informational Text standards, and 2) identify some of the standards that are new (or new in emphasis) at our grade level.

Let’s practice a little active learning for a minute or two. Please turn to your partner and recall a few details from the session as you discuss these four questions. We know they are more likely to stay with us that way.”

Invite participants to fill out the Reflections page.

Slide 18 (Intentionally deleted)