

# Instructional Shifts for English language arts / Literacy

## Common Core State Standards

CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT  
EDUCATION



<p>Building knowledge through <b>content-rich nonfiction</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction plays an essential role in literacy and in the standards. To be clear, the standards do require substantial attention to literature throughout K-12, as half of the required work in K-5 and the central work of 6-12 ELA teachers.</li> <li>• In K-5, fulfilling the standards requires a 50-50 balance between informational and literary reading. Informational reading primarily includes content-rich nonfiction in history/social studies, and the arts; the K-5 standards strongly recommend that students build coherent general knowledge both within each year and across years.</li> <li>• In 6-12, English language arts (ELA) classes place a greater emphasis on a specific category of informational text—literary nonfiction—than has been traditional. In grades 6-12, the standards for literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects ensure that students can independently build knowledge in these disciplines through reading and writing. Students are expected to be at a 70-30 split on informational and literary reading.</li> </ul>
<p>Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in <b>evidence from text</b>, both literary and informational</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The standards place a premium on students writing to sources, (i.e. using evidence from texts to present careful analyses, well-defended claims, and clear information). Rather than asking students questions they can answer solely from their prior knowledge or experience, the standards expect students to answer questions that depend on their having read the text or texts with care. The standards also require the cultivation of narrative writing throughout the grades, and in later grades a command of sequence and detail will be essential for effective argumentative and informational writing.</li> <li>• Likewise, the reading standards focus on students' ability to read carefully and grasp information, arguments, ideas, and details based on text evidence. Students should be able to answer a range of text-dependent questions—questions in which the answers require inferences based on careful attention to the text.</li> </ul>
<p>Regular practice with <b>complex text and its academic language</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rather than focusing solely on the skills of reading and writing, the standards highlight the growing complexity of the texts students must read to be ready for the demands of college and career. The standards build a staircase of text complexity so that all students are ready for the demands of college and career level reading no later than the end of high school. Closely related to text complexity, and inextricably connected to reading comprehension, is a focus on academic vocabulary—words that appear in a variety of context areas, such as <i>ignite</i> and <i>commit</i>.</li> </ul>