

Eighth Grade

Reading, Writing, & Communicating



Revised: December 2010



Colorado Academic Standards in Reading, Writing, and Communicating and The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

On December 10, 2009, the Colorado State Board of Education adopted the revised Reading, Writing, and Communicating Academic Standards, along with academic standards in nine other content areas, creating Colorado's first fully aligned preschool through high school academic expectations. Developed by a broad spectrum of Coloradans representing Pre-K and K-12 education, higher education, and business, utilizing the best national and international exemplars, the intention of these standards is to prepare Colorado schoolchildren for achievement at each grade level, and ultimately, for successful performance in postsecondary institutions and/or the workforce.

Concurrent to the revision of the Colorado standards was the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) initiative, whose process and purpose significantly overlapped with that of the Colorado Academic Standards. Led by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association (NGA), these standards present a national perspective on academic expectations for students, Kindergarten through High School in the United States.

In addition to standards in English Language Arts (ELA), the Common Core State Standards offer literacy expectations for history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. These expectations, beginning in grade 6 through grade 12, are intended to assist teachers in *"use(ing) their content area expertise to help students meet the particular challenges of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language in their respective fields."* (Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects, page 3). These expectations are NOT meant to supplant academic standards in other content areas, but to be used as a literacy supplement.

Upon the release of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects on June 2, 2010, the Colorado Department of Education began a gap analysis process to determine the degree to which the expectations of the Colorado Academic Standards aligned with the Common Core. The independent analysis proved a nearly 95% alignment between the two sets of standards. On August 2, 2010, the Colorado State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards, and requested the integration of the Common Core State Standards and the Colorado Academic Standards.

In partnership with the dedicated members of the Colorado Standards Revision Subcommittee in Reading, Writing, and Communicating, this document represents the integration of the combined academic content of both sets of standards, maintaining the unique aspects of the Colorado Academic Standards, which include personal financial literacy, 21st century skills, school readiness competencies, postsecondary and workforce readiness competencies, and preschool expectations. The result is a world-class set of standards that are greater than the sum of their parts.

The Colorado Department of Education encourages you to review the Common Core State Standards and the extensive appendices at www.corestandards.org. While all the expectations of the Common Core State Standards are embedded and **coded with CCSS:** in this document, additional information on the development and the intentions behind the Common Core State Standards can be found on the website.

Colorado Academic Standards Reading, Writing, and Communicating

"Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested...." --Francis Bacon

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"If you cannot write well, you cannot think well, and if you cannot think well, others will do your thinking for you." --George Orwell

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A strong command of the language arts (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) is vital for being a successful student and ultimately a productive member of the 21st century workforce. Language skills have always been fundamental for academic and professional success. However, students in the 21st century are now facing more complex challenges in an ever-changing global society. These challenges have created the need for rigorous state standards in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Literacy – meaning the ability to construe a written, linguistic, alphabetic symbol system – is arguably the most important skill students acquire in preschool through twelfth-grade education because it makes all other forms of higher-order learning, critical thinking, and communication possible.

The study of reading, writing, and communicating is therefore essential to all other study in early childhood education, primary school, and secondary school. Such study comprises not only the fundamental knowledge and skills of language arts (reading, writing, speaking, and listening), but also the knowledge and skills of discourse (dialogue and discussion) and rhetoric (the ability to make arguments and to think critically about arguments made by others) and the knowledge and skills involved in responding to imaginative literature.

Language skills are necessary for academic success in all disciplines. The ability to integrate reading, writing, speaking, and listening effectively builds understanding across all academic subjects as well as allowing for the development of 21st century skills within the context of these subjects. Critical thinking and reasoning, information literacy, collaboration, self-direction, and innovation are vital 21st century skills.

Standards for reading, writing, and communicating in all grades must be clear and rigorous so that our public educational system gives students the skills, knowledge, and confidence they need to succeed in postsecondary education and the workforce, to be well-informed and responsible citizens, and to lead more fulfilling personal lives.

Standards Organization and Construction

As the subcommittee began the revision process to improve the existing standards, it became evident that the way the standards information was organized, defined, and constructed needed to change from the existing documents. The new design is intended to provide more clarity and direction for teachers, and to show how 21st century skills and the elements of school readiness and postsecondary and workforce readiness indicators give depth and context to essential learning.

The "Continuum of State Standards Definitions" section that follows shows the hierarchical order of the standards components. The "Standards Template" section demonstrates how this continuum is put into practice.

The elements of the revised standards are:

Prepared Graduate Competencies: The preschool through twelfth-grade concepts and skills that all students who complete the Colorado education system must master to ensure their success in a postsecondary and workforce setting.

Standard: The topical organization of an academic content area.

High School Expectations: The articulation of the concepts and skills of a standard that indicates a student is making progress toward being a prepared graduate. *What do students need to know in high school?*

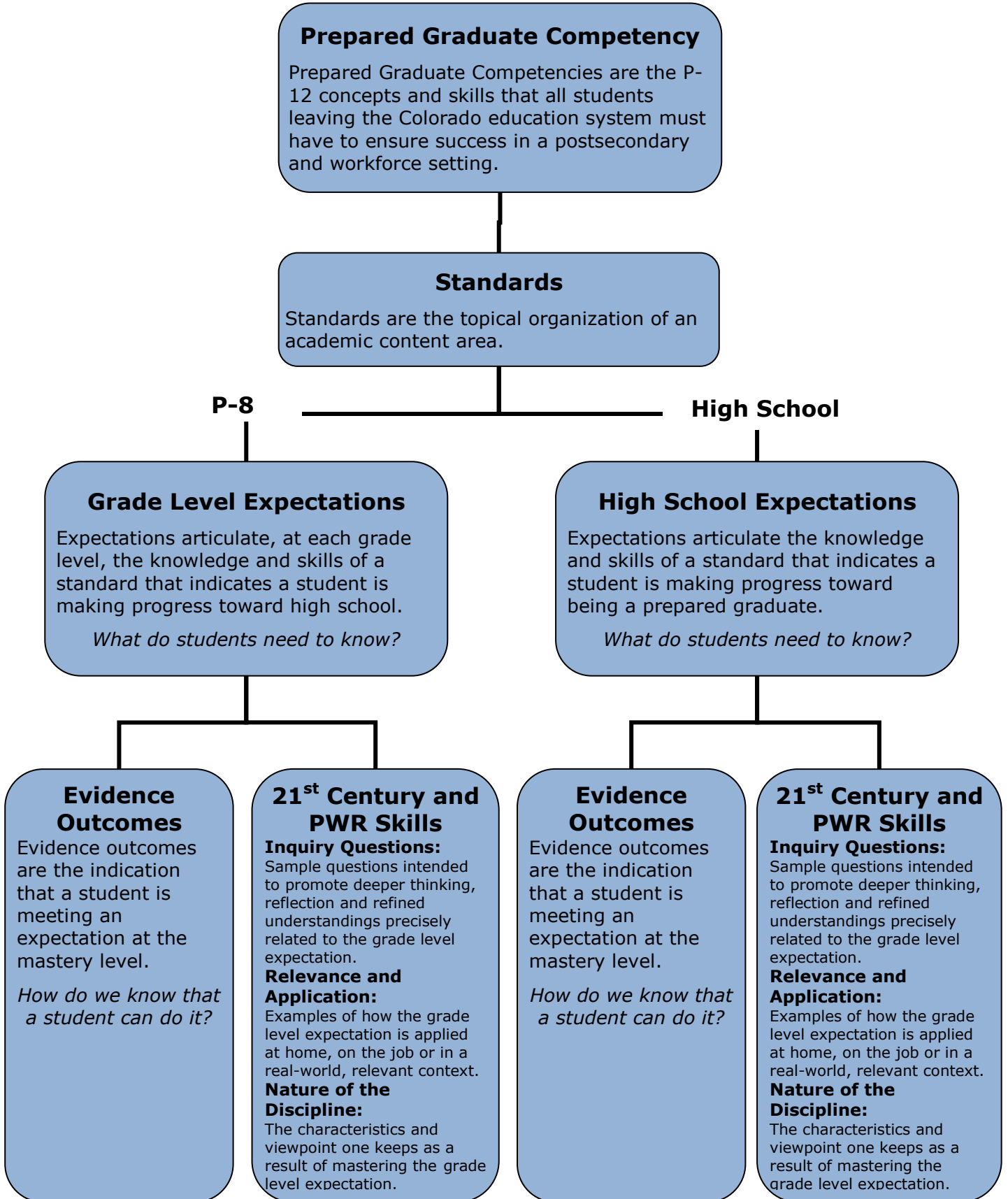
Grade Level Expectations: The articulation (at each grade level), concepts, and skills of a standard that indicate a student is making progress toward being ready for high school. *What do students need to know from preschool through eighth grade?*

Evidence Outcomes: The indication that a student is meeting an expectation at the mastery level. *How do we know that a student can do it?*

21st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies: Includes the following:

- ***Inquiry Questions:***
Sample questions are intended to promote deeper thinking, reflection and refined understandings precisely related to the grade level expectation.
- ***Relevance and Application:***
Examples of how the grade level expectation is applied at home, on the job or in a real-world, relevant context.
- ***Nature of the Discipline:***
The characteristics and viewpoint one keeps as a result of mastering the grade level expectation.

Continuum of State Standards Definitions



STANDARDS TEMPLATE

Content Area: NAME OF CONTENT AREA

Standard: The topical organization of an academic content area.

Prepared Graduates:

- The P-12 concepts and skills that all students leaving the Colorado education system must have to ensure success in a postsecondary and workforce setting.

High School and Grade Level Expectations

Concepts and skills students master:

Grade Level Expectation: High Schools: The articulation of the concepts and skills of a standard that indicates a student is making progress toward being a prepared graduate.

Grade Level Expectations: The articulation, at each grade level, the concepts and skills of a standard that indicates a student is making progress toward being ready for high school.

What do students need to know?

Evidence Outcomes

Students can:

Evidence outcomes are the indication that a student is meeting an expectation at the mastery level.

How do we know that a student can do it?

21st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies

Inquiry Questions:

Sample questions intended to promote deeper thinking, reflection and refined understandings precisely related to the grade level expectation.

Relevance and Application:

Examples of how the grade level expectation is applied at home, on the job or in a real-world, relevant context.

Nature of the Discipline:

The characteristics and viewpoint one keeps as a result of mastering the grade level expectation.

Prepared Graduate Competencies in Reading, Writing, and Communicating

The preschool through twelfth-grade concepts and skills that all students who complete the Colorado education system must master to ensure their success in a postsecondary and workforce setting.

Prepared Graduates:

- Collaborate effectively as group members or leaders who listen actively and respectfully pose thoughtful questions, acknowledge the ideas of others, and contribute ideas to further the group's attainment of an objective
- Deliver organized and effective oral presentations for diverse audiences and varied purposes
- Use language appropriate for purpose and audience
- Demonstrate skill in inferential and evaluative listening
- Interpret how the structure of written English contributes to the pronunciation and meaning of complex vocabulary
- Demonstrate comprehension of a variety of informational, literary, and persuasive texts
- Evaluate how an author uses words to create mental imagery, suggest mood, and set tone
- Read a wide range of literature (American and world literature) to understand important universal themes and the human experience
- Seek feedback, self-assess, and reflect on personal learning while engaging with increasingly more difficult texts
- Engage in a wide range of nonfiction and real-life reading experiences to solve problems, judge the quality of ideas, or complete daily tasks
- Write with a clear focus, coherent organization, sufficient elaboration, and detail
- Effectively use content-specific language, style, tone, and text structure to compose or adapt writing for different audiences and purposes
- Apply standard English conventions to effectively communicate with written language
- Implement the writing process successfully to plan, revise, and edit written work
- Master the techniques of effective informational, literary, and persuasive writing
- Discriminate and justify a position using traditional lines of rhetorical argument and reasoning
- Articulate the position of self and others using experiential and material logic
- Gather information from a variety of sources; analyze and evaluate the quality and relevance of the source; and use it to answer complex questions
- Use primary, secondary, and tertiary written sources to generate and answer research questions
- Evaluate explicit and implicit viewpoints, values, attitudes, and assumptions concealed in speech, writing, and illustration
- Demonstrate the use of a range of strategies, research techniques, and persistence when engaging with difficult texts or examining complex problems or issues
- Exercise ethical conduct when writing, researching, and documenting sources

Standards in Reading, Writing, and Communicating

Standards are the topical organization of an academic content area. The four standards of Reading, Writing, and Communicating are:

1. Oral Expression and Listening

Learning of word meanings occurs rapidly from birth through adolescence within communicative relationships. Everyday interactions with parents, teachers, peers, friends, and community members shape speech habits and knowledge of language. Language is the means to higher mental functioning, that which is a species-specific skill, unique to humans as a generative means for thinking and communication. Through linguistic oral communication, logical thinking develops and makes possible critical thinking, reasoning, development of information literacy, application of collaboration skills, self-direction, and invention.

Oral language foundation and written symbol systems concretize the way a student communicates. Thus, students in Colorado develop oral language skills in listening and speaking, and master the written language skills of reading and writing. Specifically, holding Colorado students accountable for language mastery from the perspectives of scientific research in linguistics, cognitive psychology, human information processing, brain-behavior relationships, and socio-cultural perspectives on language development will allow students to master 21st century skills and serve the state, region, and nation well.

2. Reading for All Purposes

Literacy skills are essential for students to fully participate in and expand their understanding of today's global society. Whether they are reading functional texts (voting ballots, a map, a train schedule, a driver's test, a job application, a text message, product labels); reference materials (textbooks, technical manuals, electronic media); or print and non-print literary texts, students need reading skills to fully manage, evaluate, and use the myriad information available in their day-to-day lives.

3. Writing and Composition

Writing is a fundamental component of literacy. Writing is a means of critical inquiry; it promotes problem solving and mastering new concepts. Adept writers can work through various ideas while producing informational, persuasive, and narrative or literary texts. In other words, writing can be used as a medium for reasoning and making intellectual connections. As students arrange ideas to persuade, describe, and inform, they engage in logical critique, and they are likely to gain new insights and a deeper understanding of concepts and content.

4. Research and Reasoning

Research and Reasoning skills are pertinent for success in a postsecondary and workforce setting. Students need to acquire these skills throughout their schooling. This means students need to be able to distinguish their own ideas from information created or discovered by others, understand the importance of creating authentic works, and correctly cite sources to give credit to the author of the original work.

The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects include a separate standard for Language. In this document, those Language expectations are integrated into the four standards above as appropriate.

Reading, Writing, and Communicating Grade Level Expectations at a Glance

Standard

Grade Level Expectation

Eighth Grade	
1. Oral Expression and Listening	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communication skills and interviewing techniques are required to gather information and to develop and deliver oral presentations 2. A variety of response strategies clarifies meaning or messages
2. Reading for All Purposes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quality comprehension and interpretation of literary texts demand self-monitoring and self-assessment 2. Quality comprehension and interpretation of informational and persuasive texts demand monitoring and self-assessment 3. Context, grammar, and word choice influence the understanding of literary, persuasive, and informational texts
3. Writing and Composition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stylistic devices and descriptive details in literary and narrative texts are organized for a variety of audiences and purposes and evaluated for quality 2. Ideas and supporting details in informational and persuasive texts are organized for a variety of audiences and purposes and evaluated for quality 3. Editing writing for grammar, usage, mechanics, and clarity is an essential trait of a well-written document
4. Research and Reasoning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Individual research projects begin with information obtained from a variety of sources, and is organized, documented, and presented using logical procedures 2. Common fallacies and errors occur in reasoning 3. Quality reasoning relies on supporting evidence in media

21st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies in Reading, Writing, and Communicating

The reading, writing, and communicating subcommittee embedded 21st century skills, school readiness, and postsecondary and workforce readiness skills into the revised standards utilizing descriptions developed by Coloradans and vetted by educators, policymakers, and citizens.

Colorado's Description of 21st Century Skills

The 21st century skills are the synthesis of the essential abilities students must apply in our rapidly changing world. Today's students need a repertoire of knowledge and skills that are more diverse, complex, and integrated than any previous generation. Reading, Writing, and Communicating are inherently demonstrated in each of Colorado's 21st century skills, as follows:

Critical Thinking and Reasoning

Critical thinking and reasoning are vital to advance in the technologically sophisticated world we live in. In order for students to be successful and powerful readers, writers, and communicators, they must incorporate critical thinking and reasoning skills. Students need to be able to successfully argue a point, justify reasoning, evaluate for a purpose, infer to predict and draw conclusions, problem-solve, and understand and use logic to inform critical thinking.

Information Literacy

The student who is information-literate accesses information efficiently and effectively by reading and understanding essential content of a range of informational texts and documents in all academic areas. This involves evaluating information critically and competently; accessing appropriate tools to synthesize information; recognizing relevant primary and secondary information; and distinguishing among fact, point of view, and opinion.

Collaboration

Reading, writing, and communicating must encompass collaboration skills. Students should be able to collaborate with each other in multiple settings: peer groups, one-on-one, in front of an audience, in large and small group settings, and with people of other ethnicities. Students should be able to participate in a peer review, foster a safe environment for discourse, mediate opposing perspectives, contribute ideas, speak with a purpose, understand and apply knowledge of culture, and seek others' ideas.

Self Direction

Students who read, write, and communicate independently portray self-direction by using metacognition skills. These important skills are a learner's automatic awareness of knowledge and ability to understand, control, and manipulate cognitive processes. These skills are important not only in school but throughout life, enabling the student to learn and set goals independently.

Invention

Applying new ways to solve problems is an ideal in reading and writing instruction. Invention is one of the key components of creating an exemplary writing piece or synthesizing information from multiple sources. Invention takes students to a higher level of metacognition while exploring literature and writing about their experiences.

Colorado’s Description for School Readiness

(Adopted by the State Board of Education, December 2008)

School readiness describes both the preparedness of a child to engage in and benefit from learning experiences, and the ability of a school to meet the needs of all students enrolled in publicly funded preschools or kindergartens. School readiness is enhanced when schools, families, and community service providers work collaboratively to ensure that every child is ready for higher levels of learning in academic content.

Colorado’s Description of Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness

(Adopted by the State Board of Education, June 2009)

Postsecondary and workforce readiness describes the knowledge, skills, and behaviors essential for high school graduates to be prepared to enter college and the workforce and to compete in the global economy. The description assumes students have developed consistent intellectual growth throughout their high school career as a result of academic work that is increasingly challenging, engaging, and coherent. Postsecondary education and workforce readiness assumes that students are ready and able to demonstrate the following without the need for remediation: Critical thinking and problem-solving; finding and using information/information technology; creativity and innovation; global and cultural awareness; civic responsibility; work ethic; personal responsibility; communication; and collaboration.

How These Skills and Competencies are Embedded in the Revised Standards

Three themes are used to describe these important skills and competencies and are interwoven throughout the standards: *inquiry questions; relevance and application; and the nature of each discipline*. These competencies should not be thought of stand-alone concepts, but should be integrated throughout the curriculum in all grade levels. Just as it is impossible to teach thinking skills to students without the content to think about, it is equally impossible for students to understand the content of a discipline without grappling with complex questions and the investigation of topics.

Inquiry Questions – Inquiry is a multifaceted process requiring students to think and pursue understanding. Inquiry demands that students (a) engage in an active observation and questioning process; (b) investigate to gather evidence; (c) formulate explanations based on evidence; (d) communicate and justify explanations, and; (e) reflect and refine ideas. Inquiry is more than hands-on activities; it requires students to cognitively wrestle with core concepts as they make sense of new ideas.

Relevance and Application – The hallmark of learning a discipline is the ability to apply the knowledge, skills, and concepts in real-world, relevant contexts. Components of this include solving problems, developing, adapting, and refining solutions for the betterment of society. The application of a discipline, including how technology assists or accelerates the work, enables students to more fully appreciate how the mastery of the grade level expectation matters after formal schooling is complete.

Nature of Discipline – The unique advantage of a discipline is the perspective it gives the mind to see the world and situations differently. The characteristics and viewpoint one keeps as a result of mastering the grade level expectation is the nature of the discipline retained in the mind’s eye.

1. Oral Expression and Listening

Learning of word meanings occurs rapidly from birth through adolescence within communicative relationships. Everyday interactions with parents, teachers, peers, friends, and community members shape speech habits and knowledge of language. Language is the means to higher mental functioning, that which is a species-specific skill, unique to humans as a generative means for thinking and communication. Through linguistic oral communication, logical thinking develops and makes possible critical thinking, reasoning, development of information literacy, application of collaboration skills, self-direction, and invention.

Oral language foundation and written symbol systems concretize the way a student communicates. Thus, students in Colorado develop oral language skills in listening and speaking, and master the written language skills of reading and writing. Specifically, holding Colorado students accountable for language mastery from the perspectives of scientific research in linguistics, cognitive psychology, human information processing, brain-behavior relationships, and socio-cultural perspectives on language development will allow students to master 21st century skills and serve the state, region, and nation well.

Prepared Graduate Competencies

The preschool through grade 12 concepts and skills that all students who complete the Colorado education system must master to ensure their success in a postsecondary and workforce setting.

Prepared Graduate Competencies in the Oral Expression and Listening Standard:

- Collaborate effectively as group members or leaders who listen actively and respectfully pose thoughtful questions, acknowledge the ideas of others, and contribute ideas to further the group's attainment of an objective
- Deliver organized and effective oral presentations for diverse audiences and varied purposes
- Use language appropriate for purpose and audience
- Demonstrate skill in inferential and evaluative listening

Content Area: Reading, Writing, and Communicating

Standard: 1. Oral Expression and Listening

Prepared Graduates:

- Collaborate effectively as group members or leaders who listen actively and respectfully pose thoughtful questions, acknowledge the ideas of others, and contribute ideas to further the group’s attainment of an objective

Grade Level Expectation: Eighth Grade

Concepts and skills students master:

1. Communication skills and interviewing techniques are required to gather information and to develop and deliver oral presentations

Evidence Outcomes

Students can:

- a. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly. (CCSS: SL.8.1)
 - i. 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. (CCSS: SL.8.1a)
 - ii. Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. (CCSS: SL.8.1b)
 - iii. Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others’ questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas. (CCSS: SL.8.1c)
 - iv. Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented. (CCSS: SL.8.1d)
 - v. Identify a central idea and prepare and ask relevant interview questions for researching and developing ideas further
 - vi. Evaluate the effectiveness of the techniques used and information gained from the interview
 - vii. Give a planned oral presentation to a specific audience for an intended purpose
 - viii. Demonstrate appropriate verbal and nonverbal delivery techniques (clear enunciation, gesture, volume, pace, use of visuals, and language) for intended effect
- b. Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation. (CCSS: SL.8.2)
- c. Delineate a speaker’s argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced. (CCSS: SL.8.3)

21st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies

Inquiry Questions:

1. How do delivery techniques change in relation to audience purpose or content?
2. What makes a good interview?
3. How do presenters determine what information is relevant when preparing a report or presentation?
4. How do speakers know if an audience is actively engaged in a presentation?

Relevance and Application:

1. When hiring, a supervisor must develop and use effective interview techniques to select the proper candidate.
2. Public speakers can study theatre arts to improve their presentation skills.
3. Audio and video recording technologies assist in studying interview footage to assimilate relevant information.
4. Electronic presentation tools can be used to enhance oral presentations.
5. Long distance interviews can be conducted electronically.

Nature of Reading, Writing, and Communicating:

1. Skilled communicators use dialogue to understand and to be understood, with consideration for self and others.
2. Skilled communicators must be open to the ideas of others.

Content Area: Reading, Writing, and Communicating
Standard: 1. Oral Expression and Listening

Prepared Graduates:
 > Demonstrate skill in inferential and evaluative listening

Grade Level Expectation: Eighth Grade

Concepts and skills students master:
 2. A variety of response strategies clarifies meaning or messages

Evidence Outcomes	21st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies
<p>Students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation. (CCSS: SL.8.4) b. Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest. (CCSS: SL.8.5) c. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (CCSS: SL.8.6) d. Paraphrase speaker’s meaning e. Ask questions to clarify inferences 	<p>Inquiry Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do people develop good listening skills? 2. How do audience members determine the meaning of nonverbal cues? 3. Why is it important to understand the speaker’s background? 4. How is asking questions a useful strategy in learning? <p>Relevance and Application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public speakers use appropriate gestures, facial expressions, posture, and body language in a variety of situations (such as resolving conflicts, negotiating, and presenting reports). 2. Professionals use oral communication skills to foster collaboration. For example, jury members are required to determine if a witness is telling the truth; business executives work in teams to complete a project on time. 3. Computer animation technologies portray the nonverbal intent of a character. 4. Use electronic tools, such as word mapping techniques, to analyze a speaker’s meaning. <p>Nature of Reading, Writing, and Communicating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Skilled listeners recognize the contributions of others. 2. Skilled listeners listen and ask good questions.

2. Reading for All Purposes

Literacy skills are essential for students to fully participate in and expand their understanding of today's global society. Whether they are reading functional texts (voting ballots, a map, a train schedule, a driver's test, a job application, a text message, product labels); reference materials (textbooks, technical manuals, electronic media); or print and non-print literary texts, students need reading skills to fully manage, evaluate, and use the myriad information available in their day-to-day lives.

Prepared Graduate Competencies

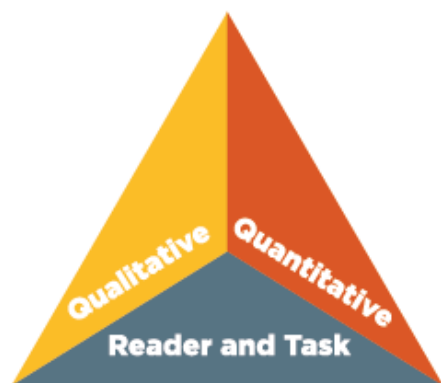
The preschool through grade 12 concepts and skills that all students who complete the Colorado education system must master to ensure their success in a postsecondary and workforce setting.

Prepared Graduate Competencies in the Reading for All Purposes Standard:

- Interpret how the structure of written English contributes to the pronunciation and meaning of complex vocabulary
- Demonstrate comprehension of a variety of informational, literary, and persuasive texts
- Evaluate how an author uses words to create mental imagery, suggest mood, and set tone
- Read a wide range of literature (American and world literature) to understand important universal themes and the human experience
- Seek feedback, self-assess, and reflect on personal learning while engaging with increasingly more difficult texts
- Engage in a wide range of nonfiction and real-life reading experiences to solve problems, judge the quality of ideas, or complete daily tasks

From the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (Pages 31 and 57):

Measuring Text Complexity: Three Factors



Qualitative evaluation of the text: Levels of meaning, structure, language conventionality and clarity, and knowledge demands

Quantitative evaluation of the text: Readability measures and other scores of text complexity

Matching reader to text and task: Reader variables (such as motivation, knowledge, and experiences) and task variables (such as purpose and the complexity generated by the task assigned and the questions posed)

Note: More detailed information on text complexity and how it is measured is contained in Appendix A.

Range of Text Types for K-5

Students in K-5 apply the Reading standards to the following range of text types, with texts selected from a broad range of cultures and periods.

Literature			Informational Text
Stories	Dramas	Poetry	Literary Nonfiction and Historical, Scientific, and Technical Texts
Includes children’s adventure stories, folktales, legends, fables, fantasy, realistic fiction, and myth	Includes staged dialogue and brief familiar scenes	Includes nursery rhymes and the subgenres of the narrative poem, limerick, and free verse poem	Includes biographies and autobiographies; books about history, social studies, science, and the arts; technical texts, including directions, forms, and information displayed in graphs, charts, or maps; and digital sources on a range of topics

Range of Text Types for 6-12

Students in grades 6-12 apply the Reading standards to the following range of text types, with texts selected from a broad range of cultures and periods.

Literature			Informational Text
Stories	Drama	Poetry	Literary Nonfiction
Includes the subgenres of adventure stories, historical fiction, mysteries, myths, science fiction, realistic fiction, allegories, parodies, satire, and graphic novels	Includes one-act and multi-act plays, both in written form and on film	Includes the subgenres of narrative poems, lyrical poems, free verse poems, sonnets, odes, ballads, and epics	Includes the subgenres of exposition, argument, and functional text in the form of personal essays, speeches, opinion pieces, essays about art or literature, biographies, memoirs, journalism, and historical, scientific, technical, or economic accounts (including digital sources) written for a broad audience

Content Area: Reading, Writing, and Communicating
Standard: 2. Reading for All Purposes

Prepared Graduates:

- Seek feedback, self-assess, and reflect on personal learning while engaging with increasingly more difficult texts

Grade Level Expectation: Eighth Grade

Concepts and skills students master:

1. Quality comprehension and interpretation of literary texts demand self-monitoring and self-assessment

Evidence Outcomes

Students can:

- a. Use Key Ideas and Details to:
 - i. Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (CCSS: RL.8.1)
 - ii. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text. (CCSS: RL.8.2)
 - iii. Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision. (CCSS: RL.8.3)
- b. Use Craft and Structure to:
 - i. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts. (CCSS: RL.8.4)
 - ii. Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style. (CCSS: RL.8.5)
 - iii. Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor. (CCSS: RL.8.6)
- c. Use Integration of Knowledge and Ideas to:
 - i. Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors. (CCSS: RL.8.7)
 - ii. Use graphic organizers and note-taking formats while reading to map relationships among implied or explicit ideas or viewpoints
 - iii. Develop and share interpretations of literary works of personal interest
 - iv. Analyze 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, including describing how the material is rendered new. (CCSS: RL.8.9)
- d. Use Range of Reading and Complexity of Text to:
 - i. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently. (CCSS: RL.8.10)

21st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies

Inquiry Questions:

1. What motivates you to keep reading a book?
2. How do authors develop theme?
3. How do authors convey mood?
4. How do different authors approach story elements?
5. Why does a particular literary work hold value for someone?

Relevance and Application:

1. On a daily basis, people are confronted with multiple points of view. Analyzing viewpoints and perspectives will help them see both sides of an issue.
2. Having the opportunity to explore a variety of authors and literature will expand personal interest and choice of reading.
3. Dialoging with others in book clubs and via social networking sites for books such as Shelfari and Library Thing allow students to explore other points of view around literature.

Nature of Reading, Writing, and Communicating:

1. Readers are able to connect with author's style, tone, and mood to support their own personal selections.
2. Reading Standards for Literacy in Science and Technical Subjects, Grades 6-8. (CCSS: RST.6-8.1-10)
3. Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Grades 6-8. (CCSS: RH.6-8.1-10)

Content Area: Reading, Writing, and Communicating

Standard: 2. Reading for All Purposes

Prepared Graduates:

- Engage in a wide range of nonfiction and real-life reading experiences to solve problems, judge the quality of ideas, or complete daily tasks

Grade Level Expectation: Eighth Grade

Concepts and skills students master:

2. Quality comprehension and interpretation of informational and persuasive texts demand monitoring and self-assessment

Evidence Outcomes

Students can:

- Use Key Ideas and Details to:
 - Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (CCSS: RI.8.1)
 - 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. (CCSS: RI.8.2)
 - Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories). (CCSS: RI.8.3)
- Use Craft and Structure to:
 - Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts. (CCSS: RI.8.4)
 - Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept. (CCSS: RI.8.5)
 - Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints. (CCSS: RI.8.6)
- Use Integration of Knowledge and Ideas to:
 - Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea. (CCSS: RI.8.7)
 - Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced. (CCSS: RI.8.8)
 - Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation. (CCSS: RI.8.9)
 - Interpret and explain informational texts of personal interest
- Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity
 - By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently. (CCSS: RI.8.10)

21st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies

Inquiry Questions:

- Why is this author qualified to write this informational text?
- How do visuals convey information?
- How can bias influence the reader?
- Which texts do you connect with and why?
- What elements make a text more attractive to some readers than others?
- Why is it important to critique an author's credentials?

Relevance and Application:

- While reading science and social studies texts, analyze details for relevance and accuracy.
- When reading for information, people think about the credibility of the author to be sure that the information is current and accurate.
- Voters need to understand both the gist of a proposition and the details.
- The exponentially growing access to information of all types on the Internet make it essential for students to practice and hone skills for evaluating online information and learn how to efficiently and effectively locate reliable information sources.

Nature of Reading, Writing, and Communicating:

- Readers understand there may be multiple points of view on the same topic.
- Reading Standards for Literacy in Science and Technical Subjects, Grades 6-8. (CCSS: RST.6-8.1-10)
- Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Grades 6-8. (CCSS: RH.6-8.1-10)

Content Area: Reading, Writing, and Communicating

Standard: 2. Reading for All Purposes

Prepared Graduates:

- Interpret how the structure of written English contributes to the pronunciation and meaning of complex vocabulary

Grade Level Expectation: Eighth Grade

Concepts and skills students master:

- 3. Context, grammar, and word choice influence the understanding of literary, persuasive, and informational texts

Evidence Outcomes

Students can:

- a. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. (CCSS: L.8.4)
 - i. Select and employ strategies to persist when encountering unknown or ambiguous words or difficult passages
 - ii. Explain how authors use language to influence audience perceptions of events, people, and ideas
 - iii. Explain how word choice and sentence structure are used to achieve specific effects (such as tone, voice, and mood)
 - iv. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. (CCSS: L.8.4a)
 - v. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., *precede*, *recede*, *secede*). (CCSS: L.8.4b)
 - vi. 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. (CCSS: L.8.4c)
 - vii. 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). (CCSS: L.8.4d)
- b. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. (CCSS: L.8.5)
 - i. Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context. (CCSS: L.8.5a)
 - ii. Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words. (CCSS: L.8.5b)
 - iii. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., *bullheaded*, *willful*, *firm*, *persistent*, *resolute*). (CCSS: L.8.5c)
- c. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression. (CCSS: L.8.6)

21st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies

Inquiry Questions:

- 1. How has language changed through the centuries? Is the English language still changing? If so, how does that happen?
- 2. How can grammar and texting cause some conflicting points of view?
- 3. How can use of dialect or jargon bias a listener? How are words misinterpreted?
- 4. How does the expression “don’t judge a book by its cover” apply to eighth-graders?

Relevance and Application:

- 1. Columnists and blog writers have a distinctive voice, tone, and mood.
- 2. Using online dictionaries and built in dictionary tools contained within subscription databases can enhance student ability to increase their vocabulary and understanding of online reading

Nature of Reading, Writing, and Communicating:

- 1. People use different types of language depending on their setting and their audience.
- 2. People adjust language according to the purpose of their message: In some situations, they may need more formal language to establish credibility.

3. Writing and Composition

Writing is a fundamental component of literacy. Writing is a means of critical inquiry; it promotes problem solving and mastering new concepts. Adept writers can work through various ideas while producing informational, persuasive, and narrative or literary texts. In other words, writing can be used as a medium for reasoning and making intellectual connections. As students arrange ideas to persuade, describe, and inform, they engage in logical critique, and they are likely to gain new insights and a deeper understanding of concepts and content.

From the Common Core State Standards Expectations for EACH grade level:

"Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences."

Prepared Graduate Competencies

The preschool through grade 12 concepts and skills that all students who complete the Colorado education system must master to ensure their success in a postsecondary and workforce setting.

Prepared Graduate Competencies in the Writing and Composition standard:

- Write with a clear focus, coherent organization, sufficient elaboration, and detail
- Effectively use content-specific language, style, tone, and text structure to compose or adapt writing for different audiences and purposes
- Apply standard English conventions to effectively communicate with written language
- Implement the writing process successfully to plan, revise, and edit written work
- Master the techniques of effective informational, literary, and persuasive writing

Content Area: Reading, Writing, and Communicating
Standard: 3. Writing and Composition

<p>Prepared Graduates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Effectively use content-specific language, style, tone, and text structure to compose or adapt writing for different audiences and purposes 	
<p>Grade Level Expectation: Eighth Grade</p>	
<p>Concepts and skills students master:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stylistic devices and descriptive details in literary and narrative texts are organized for a variety of audiences and purposes and evaluated for quality 	
<p>Evidence Outcomes</p> <p>Students can:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences. (CCSS: W.8.3) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. (CCSS: W.8.3a) ii. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. (CCSS: W.8.3b) iii. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events. (CCSS: W.8.3c) iv. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events. (CCSS: W.8.3d) v. Establish and maintain a controlling idea appropriate to audience and purpose vi. Integrate the use of organizing techniques that break up sequential presentation of chronology in a story (use of foreshadowing; starting in the middle of the action, then filling in background information using flashbacks) vii. Write using poetic techniques (alliteration, onomatopoeia); figurative language (simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole); and graphic elements (capital letters, line length, word position) for intended effect viii. Express voice and tone and influence readers’ perceptions by varying vocabulary, sentence structure, and descriptive details ix. Use mentor text/authors to help craft appropriate technique x. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events. (CCSS: W.8.3e) 	<p>21st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies</p> <p>Inquiry Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the elements of a well-developed character? 2. Why is visual imagery a skill that an author uses to create tone? 3. What makes characters interesting to the reader? 4. How does foreshadowing create connections for the reader? <p>Relevance and Application:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Readers who study key story elements will enhance their work as writers. 2. People who monitor what they are reading and attend to how a text is organized become more organized writers. <p>Nature of Reading, Writing, and Communicating:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Writers realize the importance and relevance of the setting. 2. Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects, Grades 6-8. (CCSS: WHST.6-8.1-6 and 10)

Content Area: Reading, Writing, and Communicating
Standard: 3. Writing and Composition

Prepared Graduates:

- Write with a clear focus, coherent organization, sufficient elaboration, and detail

Grade Level Expectation: Eighth Grade

Concepts and skills students master:

- 2. Ideas and supporting details in informational and persuasive texts are organized for a variety of audiences and purposes and evaluated for quality

Evidence Outcomes

Students can:

- a. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. (CCSS: W.8.1)
 - i. Develop texts that offer a comparison, show cause and effect, or support a point
 - ii. Write and justify a personal interpretation of literary or informational text that includes a thesis, supporting details from the literature, and a conclusion
 - iii. Select and use appropriate rhetorical techniques (such as asking questions, using humor, etc.) for a variety of purposes
 - iv. Use specific details and references to text or relevant citations to support focus or judgment
 - v. Use planning strategies to select and narrow topic
 - vi. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. (CCSS: W.8.1a)
 - vii. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. (CCSS: W.8.1b)
 - viii. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. (CCSS: W.8.1c)
 - ix. Establish and maintain a formal style. (CCSS: W.8.1d)
 - x. Explain and imitate emotional and logical appeals used by writers who are trying to persuade an audience
 - xi. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented. (CCSS: W.8.1e)
- b. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. (CCSS: W.8.2)
 - i. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. (CCSS: W.8.2a)
 - ii. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples. (CCSS: W.8.2b)
 - iii. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts. (CCSS: W.8.2c)
 - iv. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. (CCSS: W.8.2d)
 - v. Establish and maintain a formal style. (CCSS: W.8.2e)
 - vi. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented. (CCSS: W.8.2f)
 - vii. Elaborate to give detail, add depth, and continue the flow of an idea

21st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies

Inquiry Questions:

1. When tools do readers use to summarize ideas as they read?
2. Why do authors like to persuade readers?
3. If you could persuade someone to do something that you wanted, what would that be? How might you go about persuading them in writing?
4. What types of words do authors use when they are trying to convince or persuade others to do what they want?
5. When can an author's influence or persuasion be dangerous? Helpful?

Relevance and Application:

1. Convincing someone to vote for a candidate in an election usually requires comparisons, details and citations.
2. *Consumers Reports* gathers, analyzes, and publishes product comparisons that evaluate for quality.

Nature of Reading, Writing, and Communicating:

1. Writers know how important it is to connect prior knowledge with new information.
2. Writers write for pleasure and to influence people.
3. Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects, Grades 6-8. (CCSS: WHST.6-8.1-6 and 10)

Content Area: Reading, Writing, and Communicating
Standard: 3. Writing and Composition

Prepared Graduates:

- Apply standard English conventions to effectively communicate with written language

Grade Level Expectation: Eighth Grade

Concepts and skills students master:

3. Editing writing for grammar, usage, mechanics, and clarity is an essential trait of a well-written document

Evidence Outcomes

Students can:

- a. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. (CCSS: L.8.1)
 - i. Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences. (CCSS: L.8.1a)
 - ii. Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice. (CCSS: L.8.1b)
 - iii. Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood. (CCSS: L.8.1c)
 - iv. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood. (CCSS: L.8.1d)
 - v. Use comparative and superlative adjectives and adverbs correctly in sentences
 - vi. Combine sentences with subordinate conjunctions
 - vii. Use subject-verb agreement with intervening phrases and clauses
 - viii. Identify main and subordinate clauses and use that knowledge to write varied, strong, correct, complete sentences
- b. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. (CCSS: L.8.2)
 - i. Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break. (CCSS: L.8.2a)
 - ii. Format and punctuate dialogue correctly
 - iii. Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission. (CCSS: L.8.2b)
 - iv. Spell correctly. (CCSS: L.8.2c)
- c. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. (CCSS: L.8.3)
 - i. Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact). (CCSS: L.8.3a)
- d. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (CCSS: W.8.4)
- e. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (CCSS: W.8.5)
- f. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others. (CCSS: W.8.6)

21st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies

Inquiry Questions:

1. How does the use of correct grammar, usage, and mechanics add clarity to writing?
2. How can various tools help a writer edit work?
3. What are some common punctuation errors? How can writers avoid these challenges in the future?
4. When do writers use software tools in their writing?
5. When is it beneficial to use the thesaurus?

Relevance and Application:

1. Writing guides are used as an essential tool for making a piece of writing professional.
2. Job interviews often include the evaluation of correct grammar and the request for a writing sample.

Nature of Reading, Writing, and Communicating:

1. Writers often use the tools from editing software programs, but don't want to become dependent on them so they will try to figure it out on their own and then double-check their work using the tools.

4. Research and Reasoning

Research and Reasoning skills are pertinent for success in a postsecondary and workforce setting. Students need to acquire these skills throughout their schooling. This means students need to be able to distinguish their own ideas from information created or discovered by others, understand the importance of creating authentic works, and correctly cite sources to give credit to the author of the original work.

Prepared Graduate Competencies

The preschool through grade 12 concepts and skills that all students who complete the Colorado education system must master to ensure their success in a postsecondary and workforce setting.

Prepared Graduate Competencies in the Research and Reasoning standard:

- Discriminate and justify a position using traditional lines of rhetorical argument and reasoning
- Articulate the position of self and others using experiential and material logic
- Gather information from a variety of sources; analyze and evaluate the quality and relevance of the source; and use it to answer complex questions
- Use primary, secondary, and tertiary written sources to generate and answer research questions
- Evaluate explicit and implicit viewpoints, values, attitudes, and assumptions concealed in speech, writing, and illustration
- Demonstrate the use of a range of strategies, research techniques, and persistence when engaging with difficult texts or examining complex problems or issues
- Exercise ethical conduct when writing, researching, and documenting sources

Content Area: Reading, Writing, and Communicating
Standard: 4. Research and Reasoning

Prepared Graduates:
 ➤ Exercise ethical conduct when writing, researching, and documenting sources

Grade Level Expectation: Eighth Grade

Concepts and skills students master:
 1. Individual research projects begin with information obtained from a variety of sources, and is organized, documented, and presented using logical procedures

Evidence Outcomes	21 st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies
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Students can:

- a. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration. (CCSS: W.8.7)
 - i. Differentiate between paraphrasing and using direct quotes in a report
 - ii. Organize and present research appropriately for audience and purpose
 - iii. Present findings
- b. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation. (CCSS: W.8.8)
 - i. Differentiate between primary and secondary source materials
 - ii. Document information and quotations; use a consistent format for footnotes or endnotes; and use standard bibliographic format to document sources
 - iii. Write reports based on research that include quotations, footnotes or endnotes, and a bibliography or works cited page
- c. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (CCSS: W.8.9)
 - i. Apply *grade 8 Reading standards* to literature (e.g., “Analyze 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, including describing how the material is rendered new”). (CCSS: W.8.a)
 - ii. Apply *grade 8 Reading standards* to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced”). (CCSS: W.8.9b)

Inquiry Questions:

1. How do we use the computer and other media to answer questions about a subject?
2. What is the difference between a primary and secondary source?
3. How might you invent a new set of rules about the use and style of footnotes and endnotes which you find more creative?
4. When is a primary source unethical to use?

Relevance and Application:

1. New forms of chemicals and medicines are approved and given to people to save or improve the quality of lives only after research, bibliographies and citations are presented.
2. Search engines can exclusively do their scanning for logical and related sources based on direct quotes, footnotes and quotations in the research community networks.
3. An understanding of intellectual property can be obtained by participating and publishing online.

Nature of Reading, Writing, and Communicating:

1. Researchers know conducting reliable and valid research is an ethical responsibility.
2. Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects, Grades 6-8. (CCSS: WHST.6-8.7-9)

Content Area: Reading, Writing, and Communicating
Standard: 4. Research and Reasoning

Prepared Graduates:
 ➤ Discriminate and justify a position using traditional lines of rhetorical argument and reasoning

Grade Level Expectation: Eighth Grade

Concepts and skills students master:
 2. Common fallacies and errors occur in reasoning

Evidence Outcomes	21st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies
<p>Students can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Analyze the purpose, question at issue, information, points of view, implications and consequences, inferences, assumptions, and concepts inherent in thinking b. Determine strengths and weaknesses of their thinking and thinking of others by using criteria including relevance, clarity, accuracy, fairness, significance, depth, breadth, logic, and precision c. Identify common reasoning fallacies in print and non-printed sources d. Differentiate between valid and faulty generalizations 	<p>Inquiry Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do you identify common reasoning fallacies in your thinking and others'? 2. Is a generalization usually acceptable in research reporting? 3. When students are reading text, how do they monitor clarity and bias about what others are saying? 4. What are common fallacies found in print and non-print? 5. In a global conversation, how do assumptions and "common" reasoned thinking in research work? <p>Relevance and Application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Valid and reliable information is a signature of acceptable research. 2. Researchers monitor the sources that are selected and check the credibility of the author or the source before it is used in their work. 3. Online information can be published by anyone. Use rigorous evaluation processes to determine accuracy. <p>Nature of Reading, Writing, and Communicating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Researchers acknowledge that there is faulty reasoning in communication, which keeps them aware of what they must do to make sure their work is clear and accurate. 2. Researchers understand that making good decisions, based on careful reasoning, are important to the quality of life.

Content Area: Reading, Writing, and Communicating

Standard: 4. Research and Reasoning

Prepared Graduates:

- Gather information from a variety of sources; analyze and evaluate the quality and relevance of the source; and use it to answer complex questions

Grade Level Expectation: Eighth Grade

Concepts and skills students master:

3. Quality reasoning relies on supporting evidence in media

Evidence Outcomes

Students can:

- a. Take a position on an issue and support it using quality reasoning
- b. Analyze own or others' appeal for purpose, question at issue, information, points of view, implications and consequences, assumptions, and concepts
- c. Evaluate own or others' appeal for relevance, clarity, accuracy, fairness, significance, depth, breadth, logic, and precision
- d. Use appropriate media to demonstrate reasoning and explain decisions in the creative process

21st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies

Inquiry Questions:

- 1. How does someone determine the logic of a position on an issue and support it with quality reasoning and assessment?
- 2. How might someone use media to demonstrate multiple points of view?
- 3. How does media play a role in fairness?
- 4. How is quality reasoning enhanced when multiple mediums are used?
- 5. Why is media used to portray different reasons about issues?
- 6. What is an example of a time when you looked at two sides of an issue?

Relevance and Application:

- 1. Comprehension strategies should be applied to resources used in supporting a position.
- 2. Daily, people are confronted with issues and questions that require quality reasoning.
- 3. Careful practice and review of reasoning to determine if it is faulty or reliable can help people as they make important decisions (such as voting or buying an expensive item).
- 4. The ability to prove reasoning is helpful when explaining an opinion to someone else.

Nature of Reading, Writing, and Communicating:

- 1. Quality reasoning enhances the creation of media.
- 2. Clearly articulating thinking and reasoning is essential to communication.
- 3. Researchers who listen to others in a fair-minded way increase their skills in reasoning.

Colorado Department of Education
Office of Standards and Instructional Support
201 East Colfax Ave. • Denver, CO 80203
The Literacy Content Specialist: Charles Dana Hall (hall_d@cde.state.co.us)
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/CoReadingWriting/StateStandards.asp>