

Maryland College and Career Ready Standards for Language  
Clarifications

Maryland State Department of Education  
English Language Arts/Literacy  
Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards Clarifications



The English Language Arts Department at MSDE facilitated the formation teams of educators from all across the state to participate in writing Clarifications for the Common Core Standards at grades Pre-K through twelve. These serve as resources to educators across this state and others as we implement the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards.

Educators from the local systems worked together to create clarification statements that make up a coherent document that reflects the instructional shifts necessary to achieve the Common Core State Standards. The Clarification statements detail for educators the skills necessary for students to demonstrate proficiency in each grade level standard in Reading Literature, Reading Informational Text, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language. These Clarifications are an integral part of the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards Curriculum toolkit.

### Standard Three

**L3 Anchor Standard: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.**

#### Prekindergarten

##### Standard 3

(Begins in Grade 2)

#### Kindergarten

##### Standard 3

(Begins in Grade 2)

#### Grade One

##### Standard 3

(Begins in Grade 2)

**Grade Two: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, second grade students will compare formal and informal uses of English. Through teacher modeling, students will recognize that there are formal and informal uses of English when writing, speaking, reading, and listening. Students will understand that your level of formality is based on your audience. For example, when speaking or writing to friends and family they would use informal language. When students are writing or speaking in school and formal settings, they would use more formal language.

**Grade Three: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a third grader will analyze and edit writing in order to improve upon the message intended for the audience through the use of figurative language, mood, and audience's interest. The student will recognize ambiguous language and revise to improve clarity. For example, "*It was a cold day.*" This could be replaced by "*The cold, blustery day chilled her to the bone.*" A third grader will also recognize the differences and purposes of conversation and written text. Students will also be able to differentiate between the appropriate uses of formal language vs. informal language in both discourse and essays.

**Grade Four: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a fourth grade student will choose words in their writing and speaking to express their ideas with clarity. For example, instead of "*The boy is good*" a student can say "*The boy is a hard-worker.*"

Fourth grade students will use the appropriate punctuation at the end of a sentence to convey their intended meaning. In addition, a fourth grade student is able to decipher between appropriate speaking and writing for their intended audience. A student's writing and speech to large groups, especially in a presentation atmosphere, and to adults should reflect formal English rules. A student's writing and speech to small groups and their peers can follow informal English patterns. The student should also be aware of dialect used by an author to convey characters' feelings and attitudes.

**Grade Five: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, or reading or listening.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a fifth grade student will be able to identify and use words to formulate clear and concise sentences. Students will be able to express themselves through their writing in formal and informal settings. Students will choose the proper audience when writing and speaking. A fifth grade student will use the correct word choice in their writing using the correct structure and length in sentence construction. A fifth grade student

will use proper punctuation in their writing for emphasis and meaning. In addition, a student will be able to distinguish between different dialects used in stories, dramas, and poems.

**Grade Six: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a sixth grade student is able to identify and use verbs in the correct tense. A fifth grade student will know the difference between verbs in the active and passive voice in their writing, speaking, and reading.

Active Voice - the subject is doing the acting

Example: The teacher is calling the parent about a missed homework assignment.

Passive Voice - subject is acted on by the verb.

Example: The parent is being notified that there is a missed assignment.

The conditional and subjunctive mood expresses uncertainty or describes a state contrary to fact. The subjunctive mood is normally identified by the word “if” used in a hypothetical situation.

Example: It would be great if I could eat a chocolate cookie.

**Grade Seven: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a seventh grade student is able to understand that confusing wording and/or redundancy can distract from meaning. A student must have knowledge of diction, connotation (associations), and denotation (definitions) in order to select precise and concise wording. The student will be able to use this knowledge to revise speech and writing for word choice, wordiness, and redundancy.

Redundancy – saying the same thing twice.

Examples: *Many of the unemployed citizens who did not have jobs, applied at the new shopping center.*

Here *who did not have jobs* is redundant because the term *unemployed* was used immediately before it.

Wordiness – the use of more words than required to express an idea.

Examples: Suggesting that a student watch the film, instead of reading the book is something that the teacher would never do.

This sentence could become less wordy and more concise by writing:

The teacher would never suggest that a student watch the film instead of reading the book.

**Grade Eight: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.**

## Maryland College and Career Ready Standards for Language Clarifications

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, an eighth grade student recognizes how meaning is affected when using the active and passive voice or the conditional and subjunctive mood in reading and listening. Student understanding is demonstrated by effectively using the active voice (the subject does the action) or passive voice (action is done upon the subject) to achieve a particular effect. Likewise, a student is able to incorporate into their writing and speaking the use of the conditional mood (to express uncertainty) and subjunctive mood (to describe a state contrary to fact) to create specific effects on readers and listeners.

The active voice is the form generally preferred and more often employed. In the active voice, sentences are more direct and lively. They are less wordy than those in the passive voice.

Example: *The analysts favored the new solutions.*

The passive voice is particularly useful when it is more important to draw attention to the person/thing acted upon or when the actor in the situation is not important. The passive voice is often used in scientific or technical writing.

Example: *The new solutions were favored by the analysts.*

### **Grades Nine and Ten: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, students must demonstrate effective use of language when writing or speaking. Students will also make effective choices of language in writing to develop individual style.

### **Grades Eleven and Twelve: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.**

For college and career readiness, a student demonstrates proficiency of the skills in this standard by manipulating syntax in order to create a particular effect or style when writing. To create desired syntax a student will use grammatical concepts appropriately and arrange words and sentences relative to audience. Syntax is the order and relationship of words in a sentence.