

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 Five

L5 Anchor Standard: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

Prekindergarten: With modeling and support from adults, explore word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, with modeling and support, prekindergarten students will sort common objects into categories (e.g., shapes, foods) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent.

With modeling and support, students will demonstrate understanding of frequently occurring verbs (e.g., stand/sit) and adjectives (e.g., hot/cold) by relating them to their opposites (antonyms).

Students will identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., note objects in classroom that are small). Teacher will provide opportunities for students to categorize and classify objects based on common characteristics.

Kindergarten: With guidance and support from adults, explore word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, with guidance and support, kindergarten students will sort common objects into categories (e.g., shapes, foods) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent.

Students will demonstrate understanding of frequently occurring verbs (e.g., stand/sit) and adjectives (e.g., hot/cold) by relating them to their opposites (antonyms).

Students will identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., note places at school that are colorful). Teacher will provide opportunities for students to categorize and classify objects based on common characteristics.

Students will distinguish shades of meaning among verbs describing the same general action (e.g., walk, march, strut, prance) by acting out the meanings. The teacher will provide opportunities for students to learn that there are many words that describe the same action, but represent a different way of performing the action. For example, when eating, a person could gulp their food, gobble their food, nibble their food. How a character performs an action tells you something about the character or their circumstances.

Grade One: With guidance and support from adults, demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, with guidance and support, first grade students will sort words into categories (e.g., colors, clothing) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent.

Students will define words by category and by one or more key attributes (e.g., a duck is a bird that swims; a tiger is a large cat with stripes). The teacher will provide opportunities for students to explore different word choices.

Students will identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., note places at home that are cozy). Teacher will provide opportunities for students to categorize and classify objects based on common characteristics.

Students will distinguish shades of meaning among verbs differing in manner (e.g., look, peek, glance, stare, glare, scowl) and adjectives differing in intensity (e.g., large, gigantic) by defining or choosing them or by acting out the meanings. The teacher will provide opportunities for students to learn that there are many words that describe the same action, but represent a different way of performing the action. For example, when drinking, a person could sip, slurp, or gulp down water. How a character performs an action tells you something about the character or their circumstances.

Grade Two: Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, with increasing independence, second grade students will identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., describe foods that are spicy or juicy).

Students will distinguish shades of meaning among closely related verbs (e.g., thin, slender, skinny, scrawny). The teacher will provide opportunities for students to learn that there are many words that describe the same action, but represent a different way of performing the action. For example, when laughing, a person could snicker, chuckle, or cackle. How a character performs an action tells you something about the character or their circumstances.

Grade Three: Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a third grade student will determine the meaning of words and phrases both literally and figuratively. Students will comprehend the combination of the words and acknowledge the difference between the meanings of each individual word.

A third grade student will apply their prior knowledge gained through real-life experiences in order to use words appropriately in their oral and written language.

A third grade student must identify words on a continuum to appropriately express their intended meaning. The continuum can extend from negative to positive, mild to severe, general to specific, etc.

Grade Four: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a fourth grade student is able to decipher the meaning of a simile or metaphor in a text. A simile compares unlike things using the words *like* or *as*. A metaphor makes a comparison between unlike things without using *like* or *as*. *The puppy is as cute as a button* is a simile because a puppy and a button are unlike, but their appearance is being compared using the word *as*. *The boy was a beast on the soccer field* is a metaphor because a boy and a beast are unlike, but their aggression is being compared without the use of the words *like* or *as*.

A fourth grade student is able to apply their knowledge of how the combinations of certain words form idioms, adages, and proverbs in the English language. An idiom is an expression that has a different literal and figurative meaning. An example is *raining cats and dogs*. When these words are grouped together, they take on a new meaning aside from the common meaning for raining, cats, or dogs. Adages and proverbs are wise sayings which express a common experience or lesson. An example of an adage is *one man's trash is another man's treasure*. This saying expresses the notion that what one finds useless, another may find useful. An example of a proverb is *beggars can't be choosers*. This is a commonly used phrase in the

English language that implies if a person has to ask for something, he or she cannot be picky about what they get.

A fourth grade student is also able to identify the opposite, or antonym, of a given word and also a similar word, or synonym. For example, for the word *sad*, an antonym is *happy* and a synonym is *unhappy*.

Grade Five: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a fifth grade student will know that figurative language goes beyond the literal meaning of a text. Students will use figurative language to help create visual images in their mind to help understand the text.

A simile compares unlike things using the words *like* or *as*. A metaphor makes a comparison between unlike things without using *like* or *as*. *The sun is like a big yellow cookie* because the sun and the cookie are unlike, but their appearance is being compared to each other. *The girl was a monster on the tennis field* is a metaphor because a girl and a monster are unlike, but their aggression is being compared without the use of the words *like* or *as*.

A fifth grade student is able to apply their knowledge of how the combinations of certain words form idioms, adages, and proverbs in the English language. An idiom is an expression that has a different literal and figurative meaning. An example is *pass the buck*. When these words are grouped together, they take on a new meaning aside from the common meaning that someone else is to blame. Adages and proverbs are wise sayings which express a common experience or lesson. An example of an adage is *the early bird gets the worm*. This saying expresses the notion that you have to rise early to get what it is that you want. An example of a proverb is *two wrongs don't make it right*. This is a commonly used phrase in the English language that implies that you should not try to get even with someone that has done something wrong to you.

A fifth grade student is also able to identify the opposite, or antonym, of a given word and also a similar word, or synonym. For example, for the word *tall*, an antonym is *short* and a synonym is *giant*.

Grade Six: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

To show proficiency of this standard, a sixth grade student understands that writers use figurative language in their writing to understand that a text goes beyond the literal meaning. Figures of speech can include similes, metaphors, and personification.

A simile compares unlike things using the words *like* or *as*. A metaphor makes a comparison between unlike things without using *like* or *as*. *The sun is like a big yellow cookie* because the sun and the cookie are unlike, but their appearance is being compared to each other. *The girl was a monster on the tennis field* is a metaphor because a girl and a monster are unlike, but

their aggression is being compared without the use of the words *like* or *as*. Personification is giving nonhuman objects human qualities. I heard the wind whisper my name at the shore is an example of personification because the wind cannot speak.

Grade Seven: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a seventh grade student is able to identify allusions within speech and writing. A student must understand the meaning of the given allusion, and its effect on the message of the speech or writing. A student must identify connections, such as synonymy/antonym and analogies, to understand how the words contribute to the overall meaning of speech and writing. A student must differentiate between the connotation of a word and the denotation of a word in order to ensure precise word choice.

Grade Eight: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, an eighth grade student is able to identify verbal irony and puns within speech and writing. A student understands the purpose of using verbal irony and puns to determine its effect on the message of the speech or writing. A student is able to identify the connections between words and phrases to understand how the words contribute to the overall meaning of speech and writing. A student can differentiate between the connotation of a word and the denotation of a word in order to ensure precise word choice. Verbal irony – uses a word or phrase to mean the exact opposite of its normal meaning. (e.g., *My favorite pastime is cleaning my room.*)

Pun – is a word or phrase used in a way that gives it a funny twist. The words used in a pun sound the same but have different meanings. (e.g., *I scream, you scream, we all scream for ice cream!*) *I scream* sounds like *ice cream*.

Grades Nine and Ten: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student is able to interpret euphemism and oxymoron within writing and speech. A student can also understand degree of connotation in the meanings of words with similar denotations. For example, the distinction between the words *house* and *home*.

Euphemism is a word or phrase that is substituted for another because it is considered a less offensive way of saying something.

Example: This environmentally challenged room has the distinct odor of a sanitary landfill. (A more offensive way of saying this would be: This filthy room smells like a garbage dump.)

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Oxymoron: A combination of contradictory terms.

Examples: Jumbo shrimp, tough love

Grades Eleven and Twelve: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

For college and career readiness, a student demonstrates proficiency of the skills in this standard by interpreting hyperbole and paradox within writing and speech. A student has also mastered an understanding of the degree of connotation in the meanings of words with similar denotations. For example, the distinction between the words *house* and *home*.

Hyperbole is an extreme exaggeration

Example: "I have never seen this river so wide, it had only one bank." – Mark Twain, *It was life on the Mississippi*.

Paradox is a contradictory statement that reveals truth.

Example: The coach considered this a good loss.