

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 Nine**

**RI9 Anchor Standard: Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.**

**Pre-Kindergarten: With prompting and support, discuss similarities and differences between two texts on the same topic (i.e. in illustrations or descriptions)**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student has read to him/her a wide variety of informational texts representing diverse cultures, which may include but are not limited to expository and narrative structures and types such as trade books, magazines, multimedia resources, and functional texts.

It is essential that students learn at an early stage through teacher modeling that thinking about what one already knows about the subject matter of the text, previewing the text's title and illustrations or photographs, and making predictions about the text's content assist in understanding.

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Equally essential is that students display age appropriate attention while being read to. As the teacher stops at various intervals during reading and after reading is complete, students should be able to compare two texts on the same topic in a variety of ways—oral response, drawing, Venn diagram etc. For example, if students were being read two different books about windmills, they might view a photograph of a windmill in each of the texts and talk about likenesses and differences between the two.

**Kindergarten: With prompting and support, identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g. in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student has read to him/her a wide variety of informational texts representing diverse cultures, which may include but are not limited to expository and narrative structures and types such as trade books, magazines, multimedia resources, and functional texts.

With encouragement and support from the teacher, students engage in previously learned pre-reading strategies and continue applying previously learned during and post reading strategies as the teacher continues to read. To meet the demands of this standard, with assistance, the kindergartener finds likenesses and differences in two different informational texts written about the same topic. For example, if students were being read a book about firefighters, they might hear a description of a firefighter's uniform. They might find likenesses from both texts about the way a firefighter dresses to fight a fire.

Students might respond orally, drawing, Venn diagram, etc.

**Grade One: Identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g. in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures)**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student reads or has read to him/her a wide variety of informational texts representing diverse cultures, which may include but are not limited to expository and narrative structures and types such as trade books, magazines, multimedia resources, and functional texts.

The more independent first grader possesses the ability to identify with less prompting and support. After reading or having been read two informational texts on the same topic, a first grader understands the procedure for identifying likenesses and differences between two texts written about the same topic. For example, students read two different texts about putting together a puppet stage and compare the step by step procedure. Orally or in writing students may compare the two procedures while actually completing the task.

**Grade Two: Compare and contrast the most important points presented by two texts on the same topic.**

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To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student reads a wide variety of informational texts representing diverse cultures, which may include but are not limited to expository and narrative structures and types such as trade books, magazines, multimedia resources, and functional texts.

Building upon experiences in previous years, a second grader reads two different informational texts written about the same topic. As a student reads he/she takes note of important ideas in each text; this may be individually or with a small, monitored group. Once the reading of both texts is complete, a student compares those important ideas to determine which are featured in both books and which may appear in only a single text.

### **Grade Three: Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student reads a wide variety of informational texts representing diverse cultures, which may include but are not limited to expository and narrative structures and types such as trade books, magazines, multimedia resources, and functional texts.

Building upon experiences in previous years, a third grader reads two different informational texts written about the same topic. As a student reads he/she takes note of important ideas in each text; this may be individually or with a small, monitored group. Once the reading of both texts is complete, a student compares those important ideas to determine which are featured in both books and which may appear in only a single text. This is the same procedure used in second grade, however third graders will use this with more complex informational text.

Next, a student returns to both texts, and after already having identified the important ideas in both, the student reads for and records the important details about each. So a final comparison can now include important ideas from each text and then a finer comparison where the shared important ideas in both texts are viewed through the lens of their important details.

### **Grade Four: Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student reads a wide variety of informational texts representing diverse cultures, which may include but are not limited to expository and narrative structures and types such as trade books, magazines, multimedia resources, and functional texts.

Building upon learning from earlier grades a fourth grader recognizes that in informational text written about the same topic there is a basic likeness to ideas and details around which these informational pieces are organized.

To meet the demands of this standard, fourth graders will read two or more informational texts where the topic is the same. As they did in grade three, they will compare and contrast important ideas and key details in each text and then using ideas and details

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from both texts, organize the information so that a more complete impression of the topic is realized. The fourth grader shares this combined information in class discussion or in writing.

**Grade Five: Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student reads a wide variety of informational texts representing diverse cultures, which may include but are not limited to expository and narrative structures and types such as trade books, magazines, multimedia resources, and functional texts.

Building upon learning from previous grades a fifth grader recognizes that in informational text written about the same topic there is a basic likeness to ideas and details around which these informational pieces are organized.

To meet the demands of this standard, fourth graders will read three or more informational texts where the topic is the same. As they did in grades three and four, they will compare and contrast important ideas and key details in each text and then using ideas and details from both texts, organize the information so that a more complete impression of the topic is realized. The fifth grader shares this combined information in class discussion or in writing. Simply, the fifth grader follows the same procedure to gain this information as did the third and fourth grader; the basic difference is that the fifth grader accesses more sources (texts) than they did in previous grades.

**Grade Six: Compare and contrast one author's presentation of events with that of another (e.g. a memoir written by and a biography on the same person).**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student reads a wide variety of literary nonfiction texts representing diverse cultures, which may include but are not limited to expository and narrative structures and types such as trade books, magazines, multimedia resources, and functional texts.

Having previously learned to integrate information from several texts on the same topic, the sixth grader now compares and contrasts one author's presentation of an individual or events with that of another with particular attention paid to the sources of information. A sixth grader understands that the author and format of a text play a crucial role in the scope and the limitations of information in literary nonfiction. For example, a primary source is a document created within the range its own time period and includes personal narratives, diaries, journals, letters, historical documents, speeches, newspaper accounts, and interview and reflects the narrow view of its writer. A secondary source can be created with the aid of primary sources and are removed from the influence of a time period. Secondary sources include biographies, newspaper articles, periodicals, online materials, tradebooks, and nonprint text and may provide, but not always, a more objective view of the individual or the events.

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When considering the information gathered from both primary and secondary sources, a sixth grader applies a critical eye and using skills established in earlier grades checks the selected sources for likenesses and differences.

**Grade Seven: Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic share their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student reads a wide variety of literary nonfiction texts representing diverse cultures, which may include but are not limited to expository and narrative structures and types such as trade books, magazines, multimedia resources, and functional texts.

Building upon a sixth grader's ability to compare one author's presentation of events or an individual with another, a seventh grader accesses multiple texts on the same subject to determine if there is consistency in the information. While evaluating multiple texts on the same subject, a student decides if the first text contains the same information as the subsequent texts or if the first text presents information not contained in the others. A discrepancy in information can point to an inaccuracy in a text or to a more current source of information.

Additionally, a student should be attuned to elements of bias in an author's presentation of material. This might involve the ideas that an author emphasizes, the organization of material, attempts at a balanced view so that treatment of the subject represents various views, and the author's word choice. Based upon attention to these elements, a student makes a critical decision about a text's full presentation of material or the limits of use to a student.

**Grade Eight: 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.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student reads a wide variety of literary nonfiction texts representing diverse cultures, which may include but are not limited to expository and narrative structures and types such as trade books, magazines, multimedia resources, and functional texts.

Building upon skills learned in previous grades, an eighth grader works with more complex pieces of literary nonfiction and may find that certain texts written about the same individual or events depart on basic facts and interpretation of those facts. A student considers first whether the texts are primary or secondary sources. Next, a student considers the credibility of the author. Is there a reason to believe that an author might present or ignore facts and color their interpretation for a particular result? A student, depending upon the individual or event, considers the currency of a text. A student may also consider where texts diverge and the potential reason for that

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divergence. After considering these elements, an eighth grader determines which text proves the more reliable and least biased and serves the student best for his/her goals.

**Grades Nine and Ten: Analyze seminal U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (e.g. Washington’s Farewell Address, the Gettysburg Address, Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms speech, King’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail”) including how they address related themes and concepts.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student reads a wide variety of literary nonfiction texts representing seminal U.S. documents from a broadening array of genres.

Continuing the comparison and contrast of texts, ninth and tenth graders read seminal U.S. documents such as those listed in Standard Nine to compare and contrast how they treat like theme and concepts. For example, in Washington’s Farewell Address he indicates one of the greatest dangers to the continuity of this new nation is any movement to separate one part of this country from another. Years later, in Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address, Lincoln notes the country has been divided and questions how long it may continue or survive in this condition. A comparison of that concept in those two documents requires analysis of the time period and the purpose of those two speeches.

**Grades Eleven and Twelve: Analyze seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth century foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (including the Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address) for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student reads a wide variety of literary nonfiction texts representing seminal U.S. documents from a broadening array of genres.

Eleventh and twelfth graders identify with valid explanation which concepts and topics are unique to specific time periods in American history. After successful identification of time periods, students determine and analyze the author’s purpose in each document and then continue to analyze the documents regarding the historical, cultural, and literary impact they had and have on American society. Finally, students will compare and analyze these documents for common themes, concepts, and rhetorical devices.