



“Am I Doing This Right?” A Common Core Lesson Plans Checklist

Common Core Standards for Speaking and Listening		
Standards	Self-Check Questions	Good Examples or Applications
Comprehension and Collaboration		
<p>Standard 1 - Grades 9-10 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues</i>, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas. Work with peers to set rules for collegial discussions and decision-making (e.g., informal consensus, taking votes on key issues, presentation of alternative views), clear goals and deadlines, and individual roles as needed. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented. 	<p>Collaborative Discussion</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 1 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do students participate in collaborative discussion in pairs, in groups, or in whole-class discussion? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are those discussion on the topics required for the grade and course? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students asked to come to discussions prepared? That is, are students required to demonstrate that they have read the text or researched the topic in advance? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Have students assigned themselves and their peers specific goals and roles to follow within the discussion? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to speak directly to other students, responding to their ideas, asking follow-up questions, or challenging their assertions? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do students have to “back up” an assertion or claim with evidence? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the lesson ask students to sum up, restate, or otherwise paraphrase someone else’s point of view? 	<p>Collaborative Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Socratic discussion ❖ Touchstones discussion ❖ Shared Inquiry/Great Books discussion including the following elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prereading questions relevant to the main topic or focus ○ Focused inquiry questions asking “Why?” as in, “Why does the character do/say X?” ○ Passage analysis questions

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<p>Standard 1 – Grades 11-12</p> <p>Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues</i>, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task. 	<p>Collaborative Discussion</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above AND ALL of the criteria listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students rewarded for offering creative or nontraditional answers or viewpoints? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do students have to come to conclusions about what new research or information they may need to arrive at more thorough answers? 	
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<p>Standard 2 – Grades 9-10 Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.</p> <hr/> <p>Standard 2 – Grades 11-12 Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.</p>	<p>Use Multiple Sources to Solve Problems</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 2 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are the students encouraged to present information in different formats – not just text, but pictures, charts, graphs, film clips? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are the students encouraged to solve a problem or make a decision in this activity? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do the students have to come to a conclusion or provide information about how credible or accurate their sources were? <hr/> <p>Use Multiple Sources to Solve Problems</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above AND ALL of the criteria listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are the students encouraged to point out any areas where the sources they used in this speech disagree or don’t come to the same conclusion? 	<p>Use Multiple Sources to Solve Problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ An argumentative speech taking a stand on an issue ❖ A speech presenting a solution to a problem ❖ A speech presenting the process by which the speaker has come to her or his conclusion after considering evidence ❖ A speech as a literary character (e.g. Hamlet) faced with a dilemma in which the speaker works out the process by which that character makes a choice, considering alternative possibilities, pros and cons, or counterarguments present in the text
<p>Standard 3 – Grades 9-10 Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, identifying any fallacious reasoning or exaggerated or distorted evidence.</p>	<p>Evaluate Speaker’s Reasoning</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 3 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are the students asked to view, read, or listen to another person’s speech? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do students have to answer questions such as, “How did XYZ piece of evidence help this speaker 	<p>Evaluate Speaker’s Reasoning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Students compare debate speeches from two presidential candidates (e.g. the famous debates between John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon)



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<p>Standard 3 – Grades 11-12 Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.</p>	<p>prove her point?”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Do students have to identify whether the speech mostly uses logos, ethos, or pathos? ☑ Do students have to answer questions like, “What logical fallacy is used in this passage? Why is this an example of false reasoning?” ☑ Do students have to answer questions such as, “Is this evidence being misrepresented or misstated or misused? How do you know?” <p>Evaluate Speaker’s Reasoning</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above AND ALL of the criteria listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Are students asked questions such as, “Define this speaker’s bias”? ☑ Are students being asked to identify the claims, warrants (the “bridge” between the evidence and the claim), counterclaims, and premises of a speech? ☑ Are students being asked questions such as, “Analyze why the speaker used the word XYZ in this context”? ☑ Are students being asked to define the tone in which a speech is given? 	
Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas		
<p>Standard 4– Grades 9-10 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are</p>	<p>Argumentative Research Presentation</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 4 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p>	<p>Argumentative Research Presentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Presentation element of a research project ❖ Classroom debate over an issue in literature ❖ Classroom debate over an issue in nonfiction text

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<p>appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.</p> <hr/> <p>Standard 4– Grades 11-12 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are the students encouraged to present the results of research or investigation they have conducted? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do the students have to convey a clear perspective or point of view they possess about an issue or topic? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are the elements of the speech’s style – the organization, the style, the development – all specifically designed to appeal to a specific audience? <hr/> <p>Argumentative Research Presentation For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above AND ALL of the criteria listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to present “the other guy’s side” in an argument and explain it, dealing fairly and thoroughly with objections or counterarguments? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Were students given at least two opportunities to fulfill this standard – one INFORMAL speech and one FORMAL speech? 	
<p>Standard 5– Grades 9-10 Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.</p>	<p>Use Media in Argumentative Research Presentation</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 5 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are the speeches research-based or argumentative in nature – that is, do they present findings, reasoning, and evidence to support a central idea or point? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the chance to use digital media to help the audience understand the findings of the 	<p>Use Media in Argumentative Research Presentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Presentation element of a research project featuring a video, a PowerPoint, or other form of media supporting their argument ❖ Classroom debate over an issue in literature in which film or video clips are used as evidence ❖ Classroom debate over an issue in nonfiction text in which film, video clips, re-enactments

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<p>Standard 5– Grades 11-12 Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.</p>	<p>student author’s research, the reasons the student author is offering to believe her or him, or to make the author’s evidence clear in their speeches?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do the media support the students’ reasoning, their arguments, and/or their evidence? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do the digital media add interest to the speech? <p>Use Media in Argumentative Research Presentation</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above.</p>	
<p>Standard 6– Grades 9-10 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grades 9–10 Language standards 1 and 3 on pages 54 for specific expectations.)</p> <p>Standard 6– Grades 11-12 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grades 11–12</p>	<p>Adapt a Speech</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 5 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do the students have to take an existing text or speech and change the language or argumentative tactics or style? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> That is, are the students given the chance to “translate” an existing speech for a new purpose or audience? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the new style have to appeal to a different audience, different setting, or different task than the original speech did? <p>Adapt a Speech</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria</p>	<p>Adapt a Speech</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Taking a speech intended for a friendly audience and altering it to suit a hostile or indifferent audience ❖ Taking a speech intended for an audience familiar with the topic and altering it to suit an audience unfamiliar with the topic ❖ Taking a speech intended for an audience in the past and updating it to suit an audience in the present



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Language standards 1 and 3 on page 54 for specific expectations.)	listed above.	
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Note on Range and Content of Student Speaking and Listening

To become college and career ready, students must have ample opportunities to take part in a **variety** of rich, structured conversations—as part of a whole class, in small groups, and with a partner—built around important content in various domains. They must be able to contribute appropriately to these conversations, to make comparisons and contrasts, and to analyze and synthesize a multitude of ideas in accordance with the standards of evidence appropriate to a particular discipline. Whatever their intended major or profession, high school graduates will depend heavily on their ability to listen attentively to others so that they are able to build on others’ meritorious ideas while expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

New technologies have broadened and expanded the role that speaking and listening play in acquiring and sharing knowledge and have tightened their link to other forms of communication. The Internet has accelerated the speed at which connections between speaking, listening, reading, and writing can be made, requiring that students be ready to use these modalities nearly simultaneously. Technology itself is changing quickly, creating a new urgency for students to be adaptable in response to change.

FAQs on Speaking and Listening Lessons

My students want to act out a debate between two fictional characters and base their debate on choices the characters face in the text. The students plan to present quotations from the text to support their opinions and include video footage of key scenes to help dramatize the presentation and provide evidence for their debate. Does this activity fulfill any of the Speaking and Listening standards for Common Core?

Absolutely. Your students are presenting an argument, giving opposing sides of a viewpoint, incorporating media in support of their arguments, and basing evidence on the text. Sounds like fun!

My students want to do a fun video showing them acting out a scene from a play. Does this fulfill any of the Speaking and Listening standards for Common Core?

Unfortunately, no. Common Core Speaking and Listening standards are mostly focused on presenting, analyzing, and evaluating *arguments* – a logical form of reasoning in which the speaker presents opposing sides of an issue and supports her conclusions with data from a variety of sources and formats. Common Core Speaking and Listening standards also stress the importance of adapting speeches to suit different audiences and purposes

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and analyzing the different effects of a speaker’s rhetorical choices.

However, one way to adapt this assignment might be to present a video in which a character from a play (*Hamlet*, perhaps!) works out his reasoning for making a particular choice, considers different arguments against and for both choices, evaluates evidence, and so on. Hamlet largely performs this process through the soliloquies, but students can adapt the soliloquies to suit their purposes or select scenes to incorporate as “re-enactments” of Hamlet’s evidence, for instance.

I want to assign my students a “Who Am I?” personal speech in which they describe themselves, their childhood, and their academic and professional goals.

Does this assignment fulfill any of the Speaking and Listening standards for Common Core?

Unfortunately, no. As explained above, Common Core standards for speaking and learning are primarily focused on presenting, analyzing, and evaluating **arguments**. A “Who Am I” speech that focuses on a student’s personality, life, and goals is clearly *not* argumentative. (After all, few sources could really argue against students’ own assertions of who they are!)

However, one way to adapt this assignment might be to have students present a moment in their lives in which they were faced with a personal decision and had to evaluate evidence and opposing ideas in order to come to their conclusions. By presenting the process by which the speaker arrived at a decision, how she or he weighed the pros and cons, how his or her original plan was (or wasn’t) modified by evidence or counterarguments, the assignment would fulfill the CCSS for this strand.



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Common Core Standards for Reading Informational Text		
Standards	Self-Check Questions	Good Examples or Applications
Key Ideas and Details		
<p>Standard 1 - Grades 9-10 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <hr/> <p>Standard 1 – Grades 11-12 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.</p>	<p>Use Evidence to Prove Opinion</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 1 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the opportunity to support a conclusion or opinion with evidence from the text? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to explain how or in what way their evidence supports their conclusion or opinion about the text? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the chance to analyze and support ideas the text says explicitly? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to analyze and support ideas that are not obvious on the surface? <hr/> <p>Use Evidence to Prove Opinion</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above.</p>	<p>Use Evidence to Prove Opinion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Socratic discussion ❖ Touchstones discussion ❖ Shared Inquiry/Great Books discussion including the following elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prereading questions relevant to the main topic or focus ○ Focused inquiry questions asking “Why?” as in, “Why does the character do/say X?” ○ Passage analysis questions
<p>Standard 2 – Grades 9-10 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by</p>	<p>Analyze Central Message of Informational Text</p>	<p>Analyze Central Message of Informational Text</p>



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<p>specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.</p> <hr/> <p>Standard 2 – Grades 11-12 Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.</p>	<p>Summarize Informational Text</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 1 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the chance to determine the main point or message of a text? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students taught how to trace how the author develops this idea from the beginning to the end? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to see how specific details, including facts, help the author communicate his or her message? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the opportunity to summarize the text? <hr/> <p>Analyze Two or More Central Points in Informational Text Summarize Text</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above AND ALL of the criteria listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to find TWO or more central messages or points in an informational text? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the opportunity to trace how those two messages developed from the beginning to the end of the text? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students shown how those two messages build on one another? 	<p>Summarize Informational Text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Writing a three-sentence essay: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sentence 1: Write down the main message of the text (the theme). ○ Sentence 2: Find the moment, line, or passage that BEST articulates or dramatizes this moment. ○ Sentence 3: Explain WHY this moment, line, or passage best articulates the author’s point.
<p>Standard 3 – Grades 9-10 Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn</p>	<p>Analyze Author’s Structure in Informational Text</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 3 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p>	<p>Analyze Author’s Structure in Informational Text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Discuss the “big chunks” – the sections, chapters, or paragraphs in which a text is written. Practice



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<p>between them.</p> <hr/> <p>Standard 3 – Grades 11-12 Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the opportunity to analyze the order in which the author makes her or his main points? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students asked questions such as, “Why did the author choose this order? Why did she NOT choose this different order? How does putting the argument in this order benefit the author or help her make her point?” <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to find the connections between the structure of an argument and its meaning? <hr/> <p>Analyze Author’s Structure in Informational Text</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above AND ALL of the criteria listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the opportunity to analyze a text with complex ideas or events? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to find connections between the characters of specific individuals in the text, their ideas or beliefs, and the events they caused or were involved in? 	<p>copying and pasting one paragraph in a different place within the text. Why has the text lost some effectiveness with this arrangement?</p>
<p>Craft and Structure</p>		
<p>Standard 4– Grades 9-10 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the</p>	<p>Analyze Diction in Informational Text</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 4 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p>	<p>Analyze Diction in Informational Text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Ask, “Why this word? Why not another word? What is a synonym for this word that the author or speaker could have used, but did not?”

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<p>cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).</p> <hr/> <p>Standard 4– Grades 11-12 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines <i>faction</i> in Federalist No. 10).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Are students encouraged to use words such as “diction” in discussing or writing about this text? ☑ Are students given the opportunity to discuss how words in a specific text are used non-literally -- that is, metaphorically or figuratively? ☑ Are students asked questions such as, “Why did the author choose that specific word (and no other)? Why did this word work better than a closely related or similar word?” ☑ Are students asked to define the technical meanings of a word? ☑ Are students asked questions such as, “What is the tone of this passage? What words did the author use that made you think that this was the tone it should be ‘heard’ in?” ☑ Are students asked questions such as, “Do you see a pattern in the kinds of words the author is using? Does this pattern build up to an overall effect? What effect is that?” <hr/> <p>Analyze Diction in Informational Text</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above AND ALL of the criteria listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Are students given the chance to find one crucially important term in a text and explore how the author uses that term throughout the course of her or his argument? ☑ Are students asked questions such as, “How does this author’s use of this term change from the beginning to the end of the text?” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Choose one particularly potent or important word in a poem and explore its multiple meanings. For example, in Gerard M. Hopkins’ “God’s Grandeur,” the poet states that “The world is charged with the grandeur of God.” What are some meanings of the word “charged”? How could EACH of them be valid within the context of Hopkins’ poem? How does EACH separate reading of “charged” reveal Hopkins’ message in a slightly different way? ❖ Consider famous speeches and “track” one word throughout a speech from beginning to end. For example, how does Marc Antony’s use of the word “honorable” acquire a radically different “feel” at the end of his funeral speech for Caesar in Shakespeare’s <i>Julius Caesar</i> than the same word did at the beginning of Antony’s address to the crowd?
<p>Standard 5– Grades 9-10</p>	<p>Analyze Author’s Syntax and Message</p>	<p>Analyze Author’s Syntax and Message</p>



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<p>Analyze in detail how an author’s ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text (e.g., a section or chapter).</p> <hr/> <p>Standard 5– Grades 11-12 Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.</p>	<p>Development in Informational Text</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 5 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the chance to explore how an author’s sentence structure (syntax) affects his or her meaning? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students asked questions such as, “Why put the words in this order and not in another order?” <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students asked questions such as, “Why did the author put this paragraph after (or before) this one? Why did this choice help her make her point?” <hr/> <p>Analyze Effectiveness of Structure in Informational Text</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the opportunity to make a judgment about the effectiveness of an argument’s structure? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the opportunity to make a judgment about the effectiveness of the structure used in an informational essay or speech? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students invited to explain why a particular structure works effectively to help the author communicate her or his message? 	<p>Development in Informational Text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Analyze King’s use of repetition of the phrase, “Let freedom ring” in “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” and how that repetition helps King communicate his point about freedom.
<p>Standard 6– Grades 9-10 Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.</p>	<p>Analyze Rhetoric in Informational Text</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 6 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p>	<p>Analyze Rhetoric in Informational Text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ How does Jonathan Swift’s speaker use logos, specifically “hard facts” and statistics, in his essay “A Modest Proposal”? How does the speaker’s use of

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<p>Standard 6– Grades 11-12 Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text.</p>	<p>Analyze Rhetoric in Informational Text</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above AND all the criteria listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can the student point to an author’s use of logos (facts), pathos (emotion), or ethos (the personal credibility of the speaker)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the opportunity to explain why logos, pathos, or ethos works effectively to communicate the author’s point? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students invited to point out whether “dirty tricks” (logical fallacies) are used in an author’s argument? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can students identify the main message or argument in the author’s text? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students asked questions such as, “How did the author’s use of logos here help her communicate her message?” 	<p>logos and statistics ultimately help Swift prove his point that the British treat the Irish as if they were little better than animals?</p>
<p>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</p>		
<p>Standard 7– Grades 9-10 Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person’s life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account.</p>	<p>Compare Two Nonfictional Accounts in Different Media</p>	<p>Compare Two Nonfictional Accounts in Different Media</p>

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<p>Standard 7– Grades 11-12 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.</p>	<p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 7 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the student have the opportunity to explore TWO different accounts of the same subject told in TWO different forms of media such as a true story and a film based on that true story? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is the student given the chance to focus on specific details and explore how or in what way those details are emphasized in one account versus the other? <p>Compare Two Nonfictional Accounts in Different Media</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is the student given the chance to explore a subject in two DIFFERENT formats such as a graph versus a prose paragraph? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is this information used to solve a problem or address a question? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Compare the written, spoken, and televised versions of the famous Kennedy-Nixon debate by having students first read, then hear, and then watch. Which candidate did the students feel was victorious in the written version of the speech? Did this opinion change when the students saw the candidates debate each other?
<p>Standard 8– Grades 9-10 Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.</p>	<p>Evaluate Reasoning in Informational Text</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 8 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to work with a nonfiction text by summing up the argument the author uses? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the opportunity to identify the specific ideas the author claims to be true? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to question whether or not the evidence the author offers actually proves 	<p>Evaluate Reasoning in Informational Text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Choose a seminal U.S. text or one of historical significance such as Sojourner Truth’s “Ain’t I a Woman?” speech. In that speech, Truth summarizes her opponent’s argument. What, in essence, has her opponent argued about women’s right to vote? What is Truth’s argument? How does Truth’s argument expose the fallacious or inaccurate thinking in her opponent’s claims?

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<p>Standard 8– Grades 11-12 Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning (e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court majority opinions and dissents) and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy (e.g., <i>The Federalist</i>, presidential addresses).</p>	<p>his or her main point?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do students get the opportunity to use words such as “fallacy” in their discussion or writing about a nonfiction text? <p>Evaluate Reasoning in Seminal U.S. Documents</p> <p>Analyze Use of Constitutional Principles</p> <p>NOTE: It is expected that students will read the listed seminal U.S. documents in BOTH their language arts courses and their U.S. history courses. Language arts courses will focus on the analysis of argumentative and rhetorical strategies, use of language, organization, and other features of language and composition, while other courses will focus on the documents’ importance to American history.</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the chance to analyze the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, the Preamble to the Constitution, and Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the opportunity to point out the premises in these seminal U.S. texts? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to evaluate the arguments being advanced in these seminal U.S. texts? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the chance to evaluate how these texts uphold ideas present in the Constitution or values which are expressed in our country’s laws and rights? 	<p>Evaluate Reasoning in Seminal U.S. Documents</p> <p>Analyze Use of Constitutional Principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Choose a seminal U.S. text or one of historical significance such as Sojourner Truth’s “Ain’t I a Woman?” speech. In that speech, Truth summarizes her opponent’s argument. What, in essence, has her opponent argued about women’s right to vote? What is Truth’s argument? How does Truth’s argument expose the fallacious or inaccurate thinking in her opponent’s claims?
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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to question whether or not the evidence the authors offer actually proves their primary points?	
<p>Standard 9– Grades 9-10 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.</p> <hr/> <p>Standard 9– Grades 11-12 Analyze seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-</p>	<p>Analyze Historically Significant U.S. Documents</p> <p>NOTE: It is expected that students will read the following seminal U.S. documents in BOTH their language arts courses and their U.S. history courses. Language arts courses will focus on the analysis of argumentative and rhetorical strategies, use of language, organization, and other features of language and composition, while other courses will focus on the documents’ importance to American history.</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 59 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to identify the themes (the main messages or points) in texts of historical importance to American history? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students invited to compare at least two of these documents to answer questions such as, “What message do these two texts have in common?” <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do students have the opportunity to identify the ways in which these authors prove their points? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students asked questions such as, “Is this primarily a logos-based argument? One that relies on pathos? Ethos? Why do you think so?” 	<p>Analyze Historically Significant U.S. Documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Compare King’s “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” with Thoreau’s “Civil Disobedience,” exploring places where the texts are “speaking” to each other.



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<p>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.</p>	<p>Analyze Historically Significant U.S. Documents from 1600-1800</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above.</p>	
<p>Range of Reading and Text Complexity</p>		
<p>Standard 10– Grades 9-10</p> <p>By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 9–10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</p> <p>By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</p> <hr/> <p>Standard 10– Grades 11-12</p> <p>By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</p> <p>By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend</p>	<p>Read Informational Texts of Lexile Level 1080-1305</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 10 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the opportunity to read nonfiction in the Lexile level range of 1080-1305? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Have students been given the chance to read works in the above Lexile range on their own, with minimal class or teacher scaffolding? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> By the end of grade 10, are students able to read works in this range on their own and accurately? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students being given the opportunity to analyze texts in this range on their own, with minimal classroom or teacher scaffolding? <hr/> <p>Read Informational Texts of Lexile Level 1215-1355</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above.</p>	<p>Read Informational Texts of Lexile Level 1080-1305 (9th and 10th grade)</p> <p>Read Informational Texts of Lexile Level 1215-1355 (11th and 12th grade)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Select in-class and independent reading texts at the appropriate Lexile levels. Many texts’ Lexile levels are to be found online at the Lexile Framework website.



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literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.		
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FAQs About Reading Informational Text

Do we have to teach the Declaration, the Preamble, the Bill of Rights, and Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address in our English classes if our school’s American history classes already address those documents?

Absolutely, yes. Common Core places a very high value on the analysis of nonfiction texts, especially arguments, and it does not go too far to say that some of the best arguments ever produced in modern English are in fact those same seminal U.S. texts teachers are required to teach as part of the Common Core State Standards.

Luckily, English teachers can bring their unique “skill sets” to the analysis of these documents. Whereas an excellent teacher of history would provide her students with a rich sense of historical context, English teachers can complement that historical information by teaching students how specific tools of argument, rhetoric, and language allow these texts to be so powerful and long-lasting. To consider a brief example, let’s look at the rhetorical tactics Jefferson uses in the Declaration of Independence when he states, “When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another....” The use of the phrase “when in the course of human events” implies that revolution against a government is all a part of a new nation’s growing-up -- and that this maturation is not only right and proper, but “necessary” and even inevitable, as the word “when” (instead of, say, “if”) implies.

In short, the Declaration is not just a seminal U.S. document but a masterwork of careful rhetoric and skillful argumentation. Few writers can do as well. English teachers are particularly qualified for bringing these qualities to the attention of their students, giving them a wider appreciation of American thought and letters.

How much of our students’ reading should be informational text?

The Common Core seeks to align with the NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) goal to increase students’ reading of informational text. In the 2009 NAEP Reading Framework, for example, informational texts represented 70% of the material on the assessment. Though English classes are not expected to be composed of 70% informational texts, the Common Core urges teachers to provide a robust representation of informational texts alongside literature. To reflect the importance of informational text, the CCSS standards for reading are balanced evenly between



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the reading of literature and the reading of nonfiction – a 50-50 split.

I'm not sure what informational texts would be good to teach in my classes or where to find them.

Luckily, there are many resources! Many outstanding anthologies of essays are available to teachers, particularly teachers of Advanced Placement Language and Composition. Some of these collections are delightful for both students and teachers to read:

- ❖ [The Bedford Reader](#)
- ❖ [Everything's an Argument](#)

Another wonderful resource is the College Board website for Advanced Placement Language and Composition. For AP teachers, the College Board site contains examples of released test passages and free-response readings. The readings are short, vivid, often compelling, and are carefully chosen to provide a range of voices and ideas in nonfiction prose.



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Common Core Standards for Reading – Literature		
Standards	Self-Check Questions	Good Examples
Key Ideas and Details		
<p>Standard 1 - Grades 9-10 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <hr/> <p>Standard 1 – Grades 11-12 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.</p>	<p>Use Evidence to Support Interpretations</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 1 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are the students asked to find evidence from the words of the poem, story, play, poem, or essay to support their opinion about what the text means? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to explain why or in what way their evidence proves their point to be correct? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students asked to find evidence for information that is <i>not</i> obvious or explicitly stated by a character or narrator and which must be inferred by looking at multiple pieces of data and “putting it all together”? <hr/> <p>Use Evidence to Support Interpretations</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above AND ALL of the criteria listed</p>	<p>Use Evidence to Support Interpretations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Passage analysis of a pivotal or key moment in a work of fiction, exploring options such as a character’s motivations for making a crucial decision, e.g., an exploration of why Hamlet finally chooses to kill Claudius. ❖ Diction analysis of key words in a poem or other passage, e.g., an exploration of the word “Windhover” (wind, hover, over, etc.) in Hopkins’ “The Windhover” ❖ An extended analysis of Swift’s use of the diction of animal husbandry to describe the Irish peasants in “A Modest Proposal.” <hr/>

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	<p>below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students asked to use words such as <i>ambiguous</i> or <i>uncertain</i> in their answers? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students being given the opportunity to point out at least two possible ways in which an ambiguous passage, line, moment, or scene could be interpreted by a reasonable reader? 	
<p>Standard 2 – Grades 9-10 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.</p> <hr/> <p>Standard 2 – Grades 11-12 Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective</p>	<p>Analyze the Point of a Text Lessons successfully meeting Standard 2 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to distinguish “theme” from “motif,” making it clear that a <i>theme</i> relays a message, point, or “moral of the story,” while a motif is a repeated idea or repeated set of ideas? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are the students asked to state the central message of the work as a complete thought, e.g., “The author argues that democracy is the only form of government in which individuality is rewarded”? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to “trace the arc” of the story’s theme (central argument) and show how that message evolves from the beginning to the end of the work? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do students have to sum up the main elements of the text’s events? <hr/> <p>Analyzing Two or More Points in One Text</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above AND ALL of the criteria listed</p>	<p>Analyze the Point of a Text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Writing a three-sentence essay: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sentence 1: Write down the main message of the text (the theme). ○ Sentence 2: Find the moment, line, or passage that BEST articulates or dramatizes this moment. ○ Sentence 3: Explain WHY this moment, line, or passage best articulates the author’s point. <hr/> <p>Analyzing Two or More Points in One Text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Three-paragraph essay in which students use paragraph 1 to explore theme 1, paragraph 2

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<p>summary of the text.</p>	<p>below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Are students encouraged to find at least TWO important messages or arguments the author is making in the text? ☑ Are students given the opportunity to explain how Theme 1 interacts with Theme 2 over the course of the text? 	<p>to explore theme 2, and paragraph 3 to explore how those themes work together over the course of the work.</p>
<p>Standard 3 – Grades 9-10 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.</p> <hr/> <p>Standard 3 – Grades 11-12</p>	<p>Analyze Conflicted Characters</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 3 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Are students encouraged to find at least TWO different motivations for a character to perform (or not to perform) a particular action in a text? ☑ Are students encouraged to explore at least TWO interactions with other characters and discuss or explain how those interactions show or dramatize the character’s personality? ☑ Are students challenged to answer questions such as, “What is the author’s reason for making X character do/say Y?” ☑ Are students given the opportunity to answer questions such as, “How does this character’s conflict in this scene help the author communicate his message?” <hr/> <p>Analyze Why Authors Make Choices</p>	<p>Analyze Conflicted Characters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Identify the climax of the work and discuss what elements in a character’s personality led her to make a crucial decision that affects the outcome of the work. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For example, what are some reasons Portia in <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> feels conflicted about sparing Antonio’s life? In what way would her marriage to Bassanio be harmed if Antonio were spared? What elements in her character “tip the scale” and make her decide to spare Antonio? What point is Shakespeare making about “bonds” -- both contractual and marital? ○ What factors of Arthur Dimmesdale’s personality make him first conceal, then publicly confess, his sin in <i>The Scarlet Letter</i>? What point is Hawthorne making here about sin and concealment? <hr/> <p>Analyze Why Authors Make</p>

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<p>Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).</p>	<p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above AND ALL of the criteria listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the student have to answer questions such as, “Why does the author set this story in this place and time?” <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the student have to answer questions such as, “In what specific ways does the setting affect the characters, their interactions, the outcome of the story, or the author’s point?” 	<p>Choices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Write a short analytical paper in which the setting is the primary focus. Explore the question. “In what way does the setting help the author convey her or his point or message?” ❖ Explain the importance of the wild heath in <i>Wuthering Heights</i> or the two houses of <i>Wuthering Heights</i> and Thrushcross Grange. What point is Bronte making about civilization and savagery? ❖ Explore how the setting of Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s story “The Yellow Wallpaper” communicates the author’s fear of being “confined” by the role of mother and wife in the 19th century.
<p>Craft and Structure</p>		
<p>Standard 4– Grades 9-10</p> <p>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).</p>	<p>Analyze the Author’s Diction</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 4 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do students have to use words such as “diction” or “connotation” or “denotation” in their work with this text? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given an opportunity to answer questions such as, “Why did the author (or character) use <i>that</i> specific word and no other to describe this situation or person? What ‘work’ is that specific word doing that a closely related (but different) word would <i>not</i> do?” <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students being given the opportunity to use 	<p>Analyze the Author’s Diction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Use Nancy Dean’s diction exercises in <i>Voice Lessons</i> to explore the impact of specific word choice. ❖ Explore one important word in a poem (e.g., the word “charged” in Gerard Manley Hopkins’ poem “God’s Grandeur”) and analyze how the multiple meanings of this word help the author convey his point. ❖ Explore the shifts from “anyone” to “no one” to “everyone” in e.e. cummings’ modernist poem “anyone lived in a pretty how town”

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<p>Standard 4– Grades 11-12</p> <p>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)</p>	<p>words for tone or define the tone with which a character, author, or narrator speaks?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the chance to answer questions such as, “Why did the author use this specific word (and no other) to communicate her point?” <p>Analyze the Author’s Diction</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above AND ALL of the criteria listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students being asked to read a Shakespeare play or poem? 	<p>and explore how identity is developed through connections with others.</p>
<p>Standard 5– Grades 9-10</p> <p>Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.</p>	<p>Analyze the Author’s Structure</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 5 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the chance to answer questions such as, “Why does the author put this event first? Second?” <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the chance to use words such as <i>chronological</i>, <i>non-sequential</i>, <i>flashback</i>, or <i>flash-forward</i> in this assignment? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the chance to use terms such as <i>main plot</i>, <i>secondary plot</i>, or <i>subplot</i> in this assignment? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the chance to use words such as <i>suspense</i>, <i>tension</i>, or <i>mystery</i> in this assignment? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are the students asked to answer questions 	<p>Analyze the Author’s Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Analyze Ambrose Bierce’s use of time in “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge.” Why does Bierce slow down (dilate) time throughout the story? What commentary is the author making about time and its connection to our perception of “reality”?

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<p style="text-align: center;">Standard 5– Grades 11-12</p> <p>Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.</p>	<p>such as, “Why did the author choose to tell these events in flashback rather than in chronological order?”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students asked to answer questions exploring the author’s reasons for making an ending tragic or comic? <p style="text-align: center;">Analyze the Author’s Structure</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above AND ALL of the criteria listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Do the students have to use the word <i>structure</i> in this lesson? ❖ Are students given the chance to use words such as <i>impact, meaning, or effect</i>? ❖ Are the students asked to explain how a comic or tragic ending communicates the author’s overall message or point? 	<p style="text-align: center;">Analyze the Author’s Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The events in Shakespeare’s <i>King Lear</i> have been, for some audiences, unbearably tragic. Eighteenth-century performances of this play often revised the ending altogether, eliminating the death of Cordelia. Were they right to do so? Why did Shakespeare choose to give this play this incredibly grim and tragic ending? Does Shakespeare ultimately see humanity as existing within a bleak and unforgiving universe?
<p style="text-align: center;">Standard 6– Grades 9-10</p> <p>Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Analyze Point of View from Outside U.S.</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 6 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the selection meet the Lexile levels suggested for grades 9-10 -- that is, between 1080-1305? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the selection come from outside of the United States? 	<p style="text-align: center;">Analyze Point of View from Outside U.S.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Choose an important question to unify a diverse group of texts, e.g., “What is an epic hero?” Consider how the notion of the epic hero shifts from <i>The Odyssey</i> to <i>Beowulf</i> to the <i>Ramayana</i>.

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<p>Standard 6– Grades 11-12</p> <p>Analyze a case in which grasping point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).</p>	<p>Analyze Irony or Satire</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Does the selection fall between Lexile levels 1215-1355? ☑ Are students given the chance to answer questions such as, “What is the author’s surface or apparent meaning in this statement? Are we meant to take her point seriously?” ☑ Are students given the chance to answer questions such as, “What is the author actually saying here below the surface?” ☑ Are students working with the concept of a subtext? ☑ Are students asked to use words such as <i>subtext</i>, <i>humor</i>, <i>irony</i>, or <i>sarcasm</i>, or phrases such as <i>tongue in cheek</i>? 	<p>Analyze Irony or Satire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Analyze the differences between Chaucer the Pilgrim and Chaucer the Narrator in Chaucer’s <i>The Canterbury Tales</i>. Which man is smarter? How do we know the author does <i>not</i> always expect us, the audience, to completely agree with Pilgrim Chaucer’s portrayal of others, especially characters like the Prioress? ❖ Practice reading the opening page of Jane Austen’s <i>Northanger Abbey</i> straightforwardly. Try reading it “tongue in cheek,” Where do the author’s words support the second reading? What clues does Austen give her readers to let them know they’re not supposed to take Catherine Morland quite seriously?
<p>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</p>		
<p>Standard 7– Grades 9-10</p> <p>Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment (e.g., Auden’s “Musée des Beaux Arts” and Breughel’s <i>Landscape with the Fall of Icarus</i>).</p>	<p>Analyze Two Depictions of Same Subject</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 7 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Are students being asked to look at the SAME subject presented in two different ways (e.g., one painting and one text both dealing with the story of Icarus)? ☑ Are students being asked to express what is different or distinctive about the treatment of that subject in the painting versus the same 	<p>Analyze Two Depictions of Same Subject</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Compare at least TWO depictions of the same scene, story, moment, or subject. One scene should be textual, but the other can be visual. Many artworks have had poems written about them. The following are some examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Auden, “Musée Des Beaux Arts” AND ○ Breughel, <i>Landscape with the Fall of Icarus</i>.

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<p>Standard 7– Grades 11-12 Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist.)</p>	<p>subject’s treatment in a poem (or the graph versus the text)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Do the students have to answer questions such as, “What parts of the story does the painter/artist/author leave out? What parts of the story are emphasized in one text versus another?” “What elements of this subject does the painter fail to address?” <hr/> <p>Analyze Two or More Versions of Same Literary Text</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Are students reading a Shakespeare play? ☑ Are students reading an American playwright? ☑ Are students being asked to compare AT LEAST TWO versions of the same story -- one in text form and one in a recording, video, or stage production? ☑ Are students being asked to take the SAME play/novel/poem and compare key scenes (or the entire work) in two different presentations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tennyson, “The Lady of Shalott” AND ○ Loreena McKennit, “The Lady of Shalott” (song) AND ○ Waterhouse, <i>The Lady of Shalott</i> (painting) ○ Greek myth of Leda and the swan AND W.B. Yeats, “Leda and the Swan” <hr/> <p>Analyze Two or More Versions of Same Literary Text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Compare key scenes from the Laurence Olivier version of <i>Hamlet</i> with the same scenes from the Kenneth Branagh, Mel Gibson, or Derek Jacobi productions. What different interpretations of the scene did these four actors present? Which was the most powerful interpretation of the scene and why? ❖ Compare the Lee J. Cobb version of Miller’s <i>Death of a Salesman</i> with the Dustin Hoffman version. The physicality of these two actors is markedly different. Which one is more convincing as Willy Loman? What elements made that actor’s choices more powerful or valid?
<p>Standard 8– Grades 9-10 (Not applicable to literature)</p>	<p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 8 should contain ALL of the following elements: (Not applicable to literature)</p>	<p>(Not applicable to literature)</p>

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<p>Standard 8– Grades 11-12</p> <p>(Not applicable to literature)</p>	<p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above.</p> <p>(Not applicable to literature)</p>	
<p>Standard 9– Grades 9-10</p> <p>Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).</p> <p>Standard 9– Grades 11-12</p> <p>Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.</p>	<p>Analyze How Author Transforms Source Material</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 9 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the student have to read TWO works, one of which was influenced or inspired by the source material in the other? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the student get to read the source work in whole or in part? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the student have to point out in what ways the second author transforms or changes the story in the source material? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the opportunity to answer questions such as, “How does X author change the story? How does this change affect the way the audience feels about this character?” <p>Analyze Same Theme in Two Classic U.S. Texts from 1700-1950</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above AND all the criteria listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do students get to read foundational American works from the 1700s? 	<p>Analyze How Author Transforms Source Material</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ How does Shakespeare transform the original Greek myth of Pyramus and Thisbe in <i>A Midsummer Night’s Dream</i>? How does this comic transformation shed light on the suicide of Romeo and Juliet? ❖ Compare the episode in Homer’s <i>Odyssey</i> in which Odysseus meets the Sirens with Canadian poet Margaret Atwood’s poem “Siren Song.” How does Atwood’s poem reinterpret Homer’s myth? How does changing the point of view in Atwood’s poem alter our understanding of Homer’s original text? <p>Analyze Same Theme in Two Classic U.S. Texts from 1700-1950</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ How do American Romantic poets Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman both treat the subject of death in their poetry? How does their poetic rendering of death fit with the American version of the Romantic



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do students get to read American works from the 1800s? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do students get to read important American works from the early 1900s (before 1950)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the opportunity to take TWO texts from one period and compare how those texts deal with the same issue? 	<p>movement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Compare Sojourner Truth’s definition of womanhood in her speech “Ain’t I a Woman?” with the definition of womanhood presented in Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s story “The Yellow Wallpaper.” In what way were Sojourner Truth and the narrator of Gilman’s story both “enslaved” not just by race but by gender? In what way does Truth’s position as a former slave (ironically) allow her a different or greater kind of empowerment than that afforded to Gilman’s heroine?
<p>Standard 10– Grades 9-10</p>		
<p>By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 9–10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</p> <p>By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</p>	<p>Read Literary Texts of Lexile Level 1080-1305</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 10 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the opportunity to read stories, dramas, and poems in the Lexile level range of 1080-1305? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Have students been given the chance to read works in the above Lexile range on their own, with minimal class or teacher scaffolding? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> By the end of grade 10, are students able to read works in this range on their own and accurately? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students being given the opportunity to analyze texts in this range on their own, with minimal classroom or teacher scaffolding? 	<p>Read Texts of Lexile Level 1080-1305</p> <p>See the exemplar text list in Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards for examples of outstanding literature at the two major high school levels (9-10and 11-12).</p>

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<p>Standard 10– Grades 11-12</p> <p>By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</p> <p>By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.</p>	<p>Read Literary Texts of Lexile Level 1215-1355</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above, except that the Lexile level of texts should fall between approximately 1215-1355.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the opportunity to read stories, dramas, and poems in the Lexile level range of 1215-1355.? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Have students been given the chance to read works in the above Lexile range on their own, with minimal class or teacher scaffolding? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> By the end of grade 10, are students able to read works in this range on their own and accurately? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students being given the opportunity to analyze texts in this range on their own, with minimal classroom or teacher scaffolding? 	<p>Read Texts of Lexile Level 1215-1355</p> <p>See the exemplar text list in Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards for examples of outstanding literature at the two major high school levels (9-10 and 11-12).</p>
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FAQs on Reading Literature

I'd like to assign my students independent reading selections that include many popular novels -- works such as Twilight, The Kite Runner, The Lovely Bones, Artemis Fowl, or The Perks of a Being a Wallflower.¹ Would assignments like this fulfill the Common Core State Standards for reading?

¹¹ It should go without saying that in addition to considering Lexile levels and lasting influence, teachers should carefully select works for appropriate content. Many contemporary and some classic works contain scenes or language many students, parents, teachers, and administrators would understandably find offensive. Teachers need to balance considerations of likely offensive content against the importance of the book to a general and well-rounded understanding of literature. Works such as *The Kite Runner*, which graphically describes the forcible sodomy of a young boy, or *The Lovely Bones*, which graphically describes the rape and murder of a young girl, are difficult to justify particularly since their popularity is not matched by the kind of substantial and important acknowledgement of their lasting worth or value that might warrant their inclusion.

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Unfortunately, no. Students benefit most when they read works of “exceptional craft and thought” that stimulate higher-level thinking and deeper engagement with complex issues. The ample research into this question used by Common Core demonstrates that students don’t merely need independent reading, but independent reading of *complex texts*.

When considering what works to include on an independent reading list, teachers should ideally consider two major issues. First, teachers should evaluate whether a text under consideration has made an important and lasting influence on the literature and nonfiction of our times. Especially for students who may have received limited exposure to these influential works, a teacher’s choice to include these works could be a vital aid to a student’s success. Secondly, another important consideration should be the prospective work’s Lexile level. Texts chosen for 9th- and 10th-graders should ideally fall between 1080-1305, and 1215-1355 for 11th- and 12th-graders. Here are the Lexile levels (and rough grade equivalents) for the texts listed above:

Text	Lexile Levels	Rough Grade Equivalents
<i>Twilight</i>	720	4.8 (4 th grade, 8 th month)
<i>The Kite Runner</i>	840	6.8
<i>The Lovely Bones</i>	890	7.1
<i>Artemis Fowl</i>	580	5.6
<i>The Perks of Being a Wallflower</i>	720	4.8

However, one of the genuine delights of constructing a well-written and thoughtful independent reading list that offers complex and well-written texts is in watching students discover the richness and diversity of outstanding, challenging fiction and nonfiction. Luckily, many texts – both classic and contemporary works – fit that bill.

Acknowledged classics such as *Huckleberry Finn* or more recent and acclaimed works such as Elie Wiesel’s *Night* or Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* -- both Nobel Prize-winning texts -- are easier to justify despite containing content some might consider objectionable.

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Common Core Standards for Writing		
Standards	Self-Check Questions	Good Examples
Text Types and Purposes		
<p>Standard 1– Grades 9-10</p> <p>Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level and concerns. Use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented. 	<p>Write Fact-Based Argumentative Essays</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 1 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is this an argumentative essay? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does this essay make an argument about an important literary text OR about an important nonfiction topic? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is the student given the opportunity to base this essay’s argument primarily on facts and evidence as the means by which the author convinces the audience s/he is right? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does this argument make a particular claim about an important literary text or important nonfiction topic? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is the student permitted to introduce “the other person’s side” – that is, an opposing claim – and answer the objections raised thoroughly and fairly? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the student get the opportunity to point out the strengths and weaknesses of her/his own argument? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is the student encouraged to point out the strengths and weaknesses of “the other side” as well? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the student get an opportunity to supply specific evidence for her/his side? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is the student encouraged to supply 	<p>Write Fact-Based Argumentative Essays</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Construct a comparative essay that explores the motives of two different characters in a literary work (e.g., Dimmesdale vs. Chillingworth) and ultimately evaluates which character acted with greater integrity. ❖ Write a composition that explores how two different texts define an important topic or explore a crucial question, and take a stance on the issue, e.g., “How do Machiavelli and Cincinnatus define the quality of an ideal ruler, and whose argument is ultimately more persuasive?” ❖ Explore multiple versions of William Shakespeare’s <i>Hamlet</i> on stage or video (e.g., the Laurence Olivier, Derek Jacobi, Mel Gibson, Kenneth Branagh, or David Tennant versions) and argue which actor interpreted the role most powerfully or convincingly.

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<p style="text-align: center;">Standard 1 – Grades 11-12</p> <p>Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases. c. Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and 	<p>specific evidence for the counterargument?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the student explain why or in what way her or his evidence actually proves the argument being made in the composition? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is the student permitted to base his or her argument mostly on evidence and objective data rather than personal opinion alone? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is the student given the opportunity to maintain a formal style and objective tone? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is there a conclusion statement or section that “follows up” on the argument and lets the audience know the author’s ultimate stance on the issue she or he presented in the composition? <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Write Fact-Based Argumentative Essays</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above.</p>	
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<p>clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.</p> <p>d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.</p> <p>e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.</p>		
<p>Standard 2 – Grades 9-10 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.</p> <p>a. Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</p> <p>b. Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.</p> <p>c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.</p> <p>d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.</p> <p>e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.</p> <p>f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).</p>	<p>Write Fact-Based Informative Essays</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 2 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the opportunity to provide an extended, fact-based explanation of concepts, ideas, or information? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is the student encouraged to include pictures, figures, tables, or multimedia in order to help readers understand the point the student is making? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the student have the opportunity to introduce facts, definitions, quotations, and details to support his or her explanation? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is the student given the opportunity to use transitional words or phrases such as, “Next,” or “Furthermore...” to signal movement between ideas? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is the student encouraged to avoid vague language (e.g., over-used pronouns or the words “thing” or “stuff” instead of concrete nouns)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the student maintain a formal style? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is there a clear conclusion that does more 	<p>Write Fact-Based Informative Essays</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Compare Anne Bradstreet’s “A Letter to Her Husband, Absent on Public Employment” with John Donne’s “A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning.” How does each author negotiate the problem of absence in marriage? How do these authors treat the connection between the body and the soul, or the mind and the heart? Consider figurative language, themes, and historical context of both.

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<p style="text-align: center;">Standard 2 – Grades 11-12</p> <p>Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic. c. Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts. d. Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic. e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic). 	<p>than summarize the information? Does it provide a “big picture” or explore larger implications of the topic?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Write Fact-Based Informative Essays</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above AND ALL of the criteria listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is the student encouraged to support his or her main point with facts and details? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is the student given the understanding of how to avoid providing facts that primarily support less-important details (but do not provide support for main ideas or points)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is the student encouraged to use metaphors? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the student have the opportunity to use similes? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is the student asked to use analogies? 	
<p style="text-align: center;">Standard 3 – Grades 9-10</p> <p>Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Write Theme-Centered Narrative Essay</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Write Theme-Centered Narrative Essay</p>

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<p>using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative. 	<p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 3 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does this essay tell a story? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does it set out a problem or situation that needs to be confronted or solved? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does this essay use dialogue? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does this essay use pacing? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is the student asked to include multiple plot lines? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is the student encouraged to reflect on or suggest the importance of these events to the central lesson or “moral of the story”? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students invited to use telling details? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to use sensory language (imagery)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is there a conclusion that reflects on the lessons learned by this event or experience? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Use the following Common Application essay question prompts to help students prepare to write narrative essays for college admissions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Evaluate a significant experience, achievement, risk you have taken, or ethical dilemma you have faced and its impact on you. ○ Discuss some issue of personal, local, national, or international concern and its importance to you. ○ Indicate a person who has had a significant influence on you, and describe that influence. ○ Describe a character in fiction, a historical figure, or a creative work (as in art, music, science, etc.) that has had an influence on you, and explain that influence. ○ A range of academic interests, personal perspectives, and life experiences adds much to the educational mix. Given your personal background, describe an experience that illustrates what you would bring to the diversity in a college community, or an encounter that demonstrated the importance of diversity to you.
<p>Standard 3 – Grades 11-12</p> <p>Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution). 	<p>Write Theme-Centered Narrative Essay</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above AND ALL of the criteria listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Has the student been encouraged to establish a sense of mystery or suspense or narrative tension? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the essay ultimately build up to a moment of growth or resolution? 	



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<p>d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.</p> <p>e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.</p>		
Production and Distribution of Writing		

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<p>Standard 4– Grades 9-10 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)</p>	<p>Produce Argumentative, Informative, and Narrative Essays</p> <p>NOTE: Standards 4, 5, and 6 do not apply to “general writing.” These standards specifically refer to the production and distribution of the major “grade-specific...writing types”: argumentative, informational/explanatory, and narrative compositions defined in Standards 1,2, and 3.</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 4 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the argumentative, narrative, or informative writing successfully complete the basic requirements of an argumentative, narrative, or informative text? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is the argumentative, narrative, or informative writing directed toward fulfilling a specific purpose? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is the argumentative, narrative, or informative writing directed toward a specific audience? 	<p>Produce Argumentative, Informative, and Narrative Essays</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Helpful hint: Students can be provided with an “example essay” from the Common Core Appendix information to give them a sense of what outstanding argumentative, narrative, or informative essays look like. ❖ Provide students with examples from their own or previous classes to act as exemplar texts. ❖ Provide students with a clear rubric using the language of the Common Core Standards.
<p>Standard 4– Grades 11-12 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)</p>	<p>Produce Argumentative, Informative, and Narrative Essays</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above.</p>	



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<p>Standard 5– Grades 9-10 Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.</p> <hr/> <p>Standard 5– Grades 11-12 Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.</p>	<p>Edit the Argumentative, Informative, and Narrative Essays</p> <p>NOTE: Standards 4, 5, and 6 do not apply to just “general writing.” These standards specifically refer to the production and distribution of the major “grade-specific...writing types”: argumentative, informational/explanatory, and narrative compositions defined in Standards 1,2, and 3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the chance to practice writing brief “skeleton outlines” as well as more formal outlines to develop skills in planning written work? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students allowed the opportunity to take a graded work and revise it in order to improve the writing? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to try a new approach – a “tie the bow” structure instead of a standard five-paragraph approach, for example? <hr/> <p>Edit the Argumentative, Informative, and Narrative Essays</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above.</p>	<p>Edit the Argumentative, Informative, and Narrative Essays</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Using Microsoft Word, guide students to eliminate vague words (e.g., thing, stuff) by using the “find and replace” function. ❖ Using MS Word’s “ab” highlighter function, guide students to highlight multi-word quotations in black. Can another student editor figure out what the quotation addresses or proves based only on the context and the analysis the student writer has provided?
<p>Standard 6– Grades 9-10</p>	<p>Publish the Argumentative,</p>	<p>Publish the Argumentative,</p>

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<p>Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology’s capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.</p> <hr/> <p>Standard 6– Grades 11-12</p> <p>Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.</p>	<p>Informative, and Narrative Essays</p> <p>NOTE: Standards 4, 5, and 6 do not apply to just “general writing.” These standards specifically refer to the production and distribution of the major “grade-specific...writing types”: argumentative, informational/explanatory, and narrative compositions defined in Standards 1,2, and 3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the chance to use tools such as MS Word to edit text? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to edit each others’ papers using programs such as Dropbox.com or Google Docs? <hr/> <p>Publish the Argumentative, Informative, and Narrative Essays</p> <p>NOTE: Standards 4, 5, and 6 do not apply to “general writing.” These standards specifically refer to the production and distribution of the major “grade-specific...writing types”: argumentative, informational/explanatory, and narrative compositions defined in Standards 1,2, and 3.</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above.</p>	<p>Informative, and Narrative Essays</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Use Google Docs, Inbox, Turnitin.com, or cloud computing functions to share documents among multiple users who can edit or revise documents online or offsite.
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Research to Build and Present Knowledge		
<p>Standard 7– Grades 9-10 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.</p>	<p>Write Short Research Projects and Sustained Research Projects</p> <p>Note: Students should be allowed to do at least TWO research projects – one short, one sustained.</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 5 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Have students been given the opportunity to do at least TWO research projects – one short, one sustained? 	<p>Use the AP Language and Composition Synthesis Essay prompts to provide students with material for an “instant research paper”: that is, documents, graphs, charts, and other forms of evidence students can use to take a position on a question of importance. Students can do this as an in-class essay or, if more scaffolding is needed, as a sustained response.</p>
<p>Standard 7– Grades 11-12 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.</p>	<p>Write Short Research Projects and Sustained Research Projects</p> <p>Note: Students should be allowed to do at least TWO research projects – one short, one sustained.</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above.</p>	
<p>Standard 8– Grades 9-10 Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow</p>	<p>Conduct Research for the Research Project</p> <p>Note: Standard 8 applies to research conducted</p>	<p>Conduct Research for the Research Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Invite school or county librarian to

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<p>of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.</p> <hr/> <p>Standard 8– Grades 11-12 Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.</p>	<p>specifically for the research paper.</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 5 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to include reliable print sources? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students allowed to use digital sources, e.g., a library database? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do the students understand how to evaluate sources – that is, to distinguish a reliable source from one that is not? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to integrate quotations, paraphrases, or summaries of information into their writing smoothly, not “breaking the flow” of the writing? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students held to a standard of academic honesty? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students shown how to follow a specific format such as MLA style? <hr/> <p>Conduct Research for the Research Project</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above AND ALL of the criteria listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students shown how to assess the usefulness of their sources and evaluate, “How useful is this source for my research project or my question?” <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to avoid relying too heavily on one source? 	<p>discuss databases available at the school or in the district. Librarians are often outstanding sources of information about reliability of sources, fair use and copyright, and other issues of important to researchers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Have students practice using Turnitin.com to edit papers. Turnitin.com will allow students to submit papers for what amounts to a “test run” – an evaluation of the student’s work for similarity to other works. Students can practice appropriate citation, appropriate use of sources, and citation methods.
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<p>Standard 9— Grades 9-10 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Apply grades 9–10 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work [e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare]”) Apply grades 9–10 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning”). 	<p>Write Comparative Analysis of Literature</p> <p>Write Rhetorical Analysis of Nonfiction</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 5 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to write an essay to compare an author’s text with her or his source material? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to write an extended analysis of a nonfiction author’s argument, claims, use of evidence, and rhetoric? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to point out where an author’s claims or statements are false or an author’s evidence is irrelevant? 	<p>Write Comparative Analysis of Literature</p> <p>Write Rhetorical Analysis of Nonfiction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Compare Margaret Atwood’s poem “Siren Song” with the passage detailing Odysseus’ encounter with the Sirens in Homer’s <i>The Odyssey</i>. In what way does Atwood’s text – and its speaker – cast a new light on the concept of (male) heroism in Homer’s text?
<p>Standard 9— Grades 11-12 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Apply grades 11–12 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics”). Apply grades 11–12 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning [e.g., in 	<p>Write Comparative Analysis of U.S. Literature from 1700-1950</p> <p>Write Rhetorical Analysis of Seminal U.S. Texts</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed below for literary works AND ALSO for nonfiction works:</p>	

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<p>U.S. Supreme Court Case majority opinions and dissents] and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy [e.g., <i>The Federalist</i>, presidential addresses]”)</p> <p>c. Apply grades 11–12 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning [e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court Case majority opinions and dissents] and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy [e.g., <i>The Federalist</i>, presidential addresses]”).</p>	<p>Literary Works Checklist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do students get the opportunity to research and write about an important, foundational work of American literature from the 18th century? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is the student given the opportunity to write a comparison of two or more texts from the 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries to see how those two texts deal with the same theme or topic? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do students get the opportunity to analyze an important, foundational work of American literature from the 19th century? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do students get the opportunity to write about an important, foundational work of American literature from the early 20th century -- that is, before 1950? <p>Nonfiction Works Checklist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do students get the opportunity to write an analysis evaluating the premises, reasoning, arguments, and purposes the author uses in the following documents? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Declaration of the United States ○ The Preamble to the Constitution? ○ The Bill of Rights? ○ Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address ○ A U.S. Supreme Court majority opinion and dissent? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is the student given the opportunity to write a comparison of two or more texts from this period to see how they deal with the same theme or topic? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do students get the opportunity to write about an important, foundational work of 	
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	American literature from the early 20th century -- that is, before 1950?	
Range of Writing		
<p>Standard 10– Grades 9-10 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 tasks, purposes, and audiences.</p> <hr/> <p>Standard 10– Grades 11-12 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 tasks, purposes, and audiences.</p>	<p>Write Routinely Over Extended Time Frame</p> <p>Write Routinely Over Short Time Frame</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 5 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to go through a full process of writing that takes longer than two days to complete? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does this full writing process include distinct stages for brainstorming and research, outlining and planning, writing and reflection, revision and rewriting? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to go through shorter periods of writing – ones that take a single sitting or a day or two? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to complete a variety of writing tasks for a range of purposes and audiences? <hr/> <p>Write Routinely Over Extended Time Frame</p>	<p>Write Routinely Over Extended Time Frame</p> <p>Write Routinely Over Short Time Frame</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ See suggestions for writing tasks above.

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	<p>Write Routinely Over Short Time Frame</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above.</p>	
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FAQs on Writing

For my unit on A Raisin in the Sun, I want to have my students write an imaginary “Act IV” that continues the action of the play and shows what happens to the characters after the “official” end of the play. Would this assignment fulfill any of the Common Core State Standards for writing?

Unfortunately, no. Not only would it be difficult to establish objective, meaningful criteria for an assignment of this nature, the assignment is not argumentative, informative, research-based, or narrative.

However, one *can* use the question, “Why did *Lorraine Hansberry* choose to end the drama where she did?” as an outstanding starting question to initiate research for an analytical essay or research project examining why the *author* made those choices and how those choices affect our larger understanding of the play and the themes Hansberry addresses.

My students write every day in reflective journals in which they record their feelings about a particular literary work and how it relates to their lives. Would this assignment fulfill any of the Common Core State Standards for writing?

Unfortunately, no. Students’ reactions, opinions, and feelings about a text are valuable and can be incorporated into the discussion and writing they do in order to understand a work of nonfiction or literature. However, the (often) deliberately informal, unstructured nature of journal writing does not fulfill the criteria for students to demonstrate mastery of writing argumentative, informational, analytical, and research-based essays.

However, some of the same goals accomplished by a writing journal -- that is, expression of feelings, reactions, and reflections about a literary work -- can be used as part of the prewriting or brainstorming process in which a student takes those ideas and transforms them into a structured, formal work. Ultimately, a student’s opinion – when supported with facts and evidence – is crucial to a successful argumentative paper, for example.

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I want my students to develop their own important questions about an informational or literary text and use their favorite question as the basis for writing a paper exploring that question. Would that assignment fulfill any of the Common Core State Standards for writing?

Absolutely. Standard 7 in the writing strand specifically encourages students to conduct research to answer a question or solve a problem, using multiple sources to help answer or solve the issue at hand. Students are likely to be more committed to a topic or question they developed themselves!

For my classroom project on *To Kill a Mockingbird*, I want students to make a “mind map” -- they cut out pictures from a magazine or find pictures on the Internet to represent the various characters in the novel and then draw lines with explanations of these characters’ relationships to each other. Does this assignment fulfill any of the Common Core State Standards for writing?

Unfortunately, no. Common Core State Standards stress the importance of extended argumentative, informational, and analytical writing as a means of engaging with literature, and the amount and depth of the writing presented in this activity would essentially be too brief and superficial to accomplish the goals of this standard.²

However, given that it is definitely important to establish relationships between and among the characters in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, this topic can be the subject of in-class discussion in small groups or as a whole class, a choice that achieves the central content goals of the project while using class time efficiently and productively.

I think it’s important for my students to be able to write a good résumé. Does this assignment fulfill any of the Common Core State Standards for writing?

² Additionally, the teacher should reflect carefully about what could be called the “time/benefit calculus” for a project: that is, *the amount of time spent on a project should be proportional to the amount learned from that project*. Due to physical, artistic, or other limitations students may face, projects of this nature often become the work of parents. At a time when many parents are concerned about the amount of homework students receive, projects which can often take hours to complete become increasingly difficult to justify. Moreover, projects are also particularly difficult for students with limited financial or technological resources to accomplish well. Grading of the projects tends to focus on aesthetic considerations (how well it looks) rather than content (which is limited). One question to ask is this: If a project takes (for example) two hours to complete, does it teach the content *as well as or better than* the same two hours spent learning by more traditional methods (writing, reading, reviewing, self-quizzing)?

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Unfortunately, no. Though writing a résumé can be a helpful skill, Common Core writing standards for language arts focus on developing student mastery of argumentative, informational, narrative, and research essays. Though a résumé assignment has value for a student, this assignment might be more appropriately addressed by using the insights of business teachers or career counselors, both of whom have substantial expertise in this area.

Why wouldn't the résumé assignment fulfill standard 4, which calls for producing clear and coherent writing?

Standards 4, 5, and 6 are about producing and distributing the “grade-specific...writing types” of argumentative, informational, narrative, and research essays. In other words, the Common Core is essentially saying, “Following standards 1, 2, and 3, have students write argumentative, informational, and narrative essays. Then produce and distribute *those same essays* according to standards 4, 5, and 6.”

My students want to explore how two pieces of writing from the Jazz Age – F. Scott Fitzgerald's Letters to Scottie and Margaret Banning's (nonfictional) letters to her daughter Susan reflect the values of the time. Would this assignment fulfill any of the Common Core State Standards for writing?

Yes, definitely. The student writer can not only use those two central texts as the “anchors” of her paper, but she can also bring in artifacts or evidence from photographs, film stills, or advertisements to add interest and clarify issues or terms. The writer can explore Banning's and Fitzgerald's claims about the relationship between parents and children, analyzing places of divergence and agreement to provide a wider picture of the era.



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Common Core Standards for Language		
Standards	Self-Check Questions	Good Examples or Applications
Conventions of Standard English		
<p>Standard 1 - Grades 9-10 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Use parallel structure. Use various types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, participial, prepositional, absolute) and clauses (independent, dependent; noun, relative, adverbial) to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing or presentations. <p>NOTE: The following language skills, introduced in earlier grades, are also to be emphasized, taught, or re-taught as necessary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ L.3.3a. Choose words and phrases for effect. ❖ L.4.1f. Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons. ❖ L.4.1g. Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., to/too/two; there/their). ❖ L.4.3b. Choose punctuation for effect. ❖ L.5.1d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense. ❖ L.6.1c. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person. ❖ L.6.1d. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents). ❖ L.6.1e. Recognize variations from standard 	<p>Teach G.U.M.S.S. (Grammar, Usage, Mechanics, Spelling, and Sentence Structure) Routinely Over Extended Time Frame</p> <p>IN ADDITION to reinforcing specific language skills listed in the CCSS (reprinted in the column to the left), lessons successfully meeting Standard 1 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given examples of grammar concepts? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students shown how to recognize and avoid grammar errors? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students rewarded for using specific types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, etc.) in their writing? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to vary their writing styles by including specific types of clauses (independent, dependent, etc.) in their writing? 	<p>Teach G.U.M.S.S. (Grammar, Usage, Mechanics, Spelling, and Sentence Structure) Routinely Over Extended Time Frame</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Excellent resource for teachers: <i>Warriner’s Handbook</i>, Sixth Course, ISBN-13:978-0-03-099040-3. This is a reliable and thorough source for grammar, containing a thorough course and exercises for students.

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<p>English in their own and others’ writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ L.6.2a. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements. ❖ L.6.3b. Maintain consistency in style and tone. ❖ L.7.1c. Place phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers. ❖ L.7.3a. Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy. ❖ L.8.1d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood. ❖ L.9–10.1a. Use parallel structure. <p>NOTE: See p. 56 in the CCSS for a fuller explanation.</p> <hr/> <p>Standard 1 – Grades 11-12 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested. b. Resolve issues of complex or contested usage, consulting references (e.g., <i>Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary of English Usage</i>, <i>Garner’s Modern American Usage</i>) as needed. 	<hr/> <p>IN ADDITION to reinforcing specific language skills listed in the CCSS (reprinted in the column to the left), lessons for grades 11-12 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do students have to maintain a consistent standard of mastery of grammar, usage, spelling, and mechanics in writing and speaking? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do students have to use a reference work to solve issues of usage? 	
<p>Standard 2 – Grades 9-10 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</p>	<p>Write Compound Sentences, Use Colons, Spell Correctly</p>	<p>Write Compound Sentences, Use Colons, Spell Correctly</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Use a semicolon (and perhaps a conjunctive adverb) to link two or more closely related independent clauses. b. Use a colon to introduce a list or quotation. c. Spell correctly. <hr/> <p>Standard 2 – Grades 11-12 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Observe hyphenation conventions. b. Spell correctly. 	<p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 2 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students rewarded for including compound sentences (two independent clauses joined with a semicolon and perhaps a conjunctive adverb) in their writing? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to use colons to introduce lists or quotations? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to spell correctly? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students asked to spell correctly? <hr/> <p>Write Compound Sentences, Use Colons, Spell Correctly</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above AND ALL of the criteria listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do students have to demonstrate command of conventional capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and hyphens in writing? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ An extremely helpful book to teach sentence construction is The Art of Styling Sentences. This helpful book gives twenty sentence patterns to learn and provides abundant examples to illustrate how the patterns work.
Knowledge of Language		
<p>Standard 3 – Grades 9-10 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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Write and edit work so that it conforms to the guidelines in a style manual (e.g., <i>MLA Handbook</i>, <i>Turabian’s Manual for Writers</i>) appropriate for the discipline and writing type. 	<p>Use Language Appropriate to Context</p> <p>Use Style Manual</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 3 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do students have the chance to edit 	<p>Use Language Appropriate to Context</p> <p>Use Style Manual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Using Microsoft Word, guide students to eliminate vague words (e.g., thing, stuff) by using the “find and replace” function.

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<p>Standard 3 – Grades 11-12 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.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Vary syntax for effect, consulting references (e.g., Tufte’s <i>Artful Sentences</i>) for guidance as needed; apply an understanding of syntax to the study of complex texts when reading. 	<p>compositions or other forms of writing using MLA style or other style manual?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students taught how to change diction or tone to suit a particular audience or to make meaning more clear? <p>Use Language Appropriate to Context Vary Syntax</p> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Using MS Word’s “ab” highlighter function, guide students to highlight multi-word quotations in black. Can another student editor figure out what the quotation addresses or proves based only on the context and the analysis the student writer has provided? ❖ An extremely helpful book to teach sentence construction is The Art of Styling Sentences. This helpful book gives twenty sentence patterns to learn and provides abundant examples to illustrate how the patterns work.
Vocabulary Acquisition and Use		
<p>Standard 4 – Grades 9-10 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 9–10 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., analyze, analysis, analytical; advocate, advocacy). Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find 	<p>Use Context, Word Changes, and References to Determine Word Meaning</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 4 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students shown how to use context clues such as pronoun antecedents, overall meaning or subject, or other clues to determine meaning? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students taught about word changes from one form to another? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given the opportunity to answer test questions such as, “Change the word 	<p>Use Context, Word Changes, and References to Determine Word Meaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Play with cloze tests – i.e., tests in which a significant word in a passage or sentence is crossed out or left blank. Teach students to substitute a word that “sounds right” – that is, one that makes sense in the context of the passage.

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<p>the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, or its etymology.</p> <p>d. 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).</p> <hr/> <p>Standard 4 – Grades 11-12 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., <i>conceive, conception, conceivable</i>). 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, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage. 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). 	<p><i>analysis</i> to its verb form.”</p> <hr/> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above.</p>	
<p>Standard 5 – Grades 9-10 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p>	<p>Use Context, Word Changes, and References to Determine Word</p>	<p>Use Context, Word Changes, and References to Determine Word</p>

“Am I Doing This Right?” A Common Core Lesson Plans Checklist

<p>a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., euphemism, oxymoron) in context and analyze their role in the text.</p> <p>b. Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.</p> <hr/> <p>Standard 5 – Grades 11-12 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p> <p>a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.</p> <p>b. Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.</p>	<p>Meaning</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 5 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students presented with the differences between “connotation” and “denotation”? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students asked to define words according to their connotations? Their denotations? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If presented with two nearly-synonymous words, are students encouraged to answer questions such as, “What is the feeling of this word? What emotions does it evoke? Which of these two words is the ‘polite’ word?” <hr/> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students presented with the differences between “figurative language” and “literal language”? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If presented with two nearly-synonymous words, are students encouraged to answer questions such as, “What is the feeling of this word? What emotions does it evoke? Which of these two words is the ‘polite’ word?” 	<p>Meaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Read George Orwell’s “Politics and the English Language” to discuss the role of cliché and euphemism in politics and the shaping of the modern consciousness. ❖ “Translate” words from euphemistic to direct speech (e.g., “passed away” to “dead”).
<p>Standard 6 – Grades 9-10 Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or</p>	<p>Use College and Career-Ready Language</p> <p>Lessons successfully meeting Standard 6 should contain ALL of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students encouraged to find their own 	<p>Use College and Career-Ready Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Read articles, journals, nonfiction texts at the college level or career level in order to acquire a “feel” for the structural moves and technical

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<p>expression.</p> <hr/> <p>Standard 6 – Grades 11-12 Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.</p>	<p>“voices” within an academic or professional context?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students rewarded for carefully selecting not just a good word, but the best word? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are students given strategies to use college and career-ready vocabulary? <hr/> <p>For grades 11-12, lessons should meet ALL of the criteria listed above.</p>	<p>vocabulary of higher-level writing.</p>
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FAQs About Language Standards

I don’t really know much about teaching grammar. Do I have to teach grammar to my students?

Absolutely, yes. As the Core Standards document puts it, “To be college and career ready in language, students must have firm control over the conventions of standard English” (51). Luckily, there are many outstanding resources available to help teachers. One of the best is the classic *Warriner’s English Grammar* (mentioned above), a solid textbook that still remains the gold standard of English grammar texts.

I think my students are better off learning grammar “holistically” from texts they read rather than from explicit instruction. Would this technique be sufficient to instruct students in the CCSS Language Standards?

For outstanding and voracious readers of English, this statement is probably true some of the time. However, for students who do not fit this description, the practice of having students attempt to intuit grammar rules from reading has not always proven particularly effective as a method of instruction. This is especially true for students whose first language is not English or whose personal circumstances are not necessarily conducive to reading complex, challenging works. Those students are particularly disadvantaged and “left out of the loop” by what one might call “indirect teaching” of grammar, usage, mechanics, sentence structure, and spelling. Moreover, throughout human experience, many people have found that the best way to learn a skill – any skill -- is to have



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its rules and practices taught explicitly. Approaches must vary according to the needs of the student, and if a student needs the direct, explicit teaching of grammar, then that method should be applied.