

Instructional Shifts

Introduction

This guide explores the instructional shifts that are reflected in the Common Core Standards for English Language Arts. It also shows how the instructional shifts are featured in ReadyGEN™—the all-new K–5 literacy curriculum for next-generation learning.

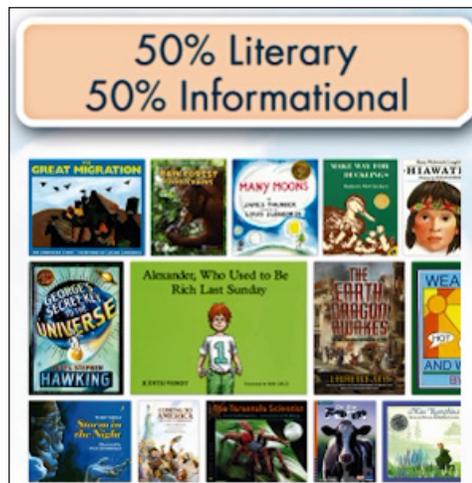
Six Instructional Shifts for ELA

The six instructional shifts in English language arts (ELA) are

1. balancing informational and literary text;
2. knowledge in the disciplines;
3. staircase of complexity;
4. text-based answers;
5. writing from sources; and
6. academic vocabulary.

Shift 1: Balancing Informational and Literary Text

The first instructional shift is balancing literary and informational text. To meet the goals of the Common Core Standards, students must read a true balance of 50% literary and 50% informational texts in the elementary grades. In ReadyGEN™, text sets are organized to reflect this balance.



Shift 2: Knowledge in the Disciplines

The second shift is knowledge in the disciplines, which requires that students build content knowledge about the world through text. The standards address reading and writing across the curriculum that complements the content standards in social studies and science.

The standards for Grades K–5 recommend that students build coherent knowledge both within the year and across the years. At Grades 6–12 there are specific literacy standards for history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. The emphasis throughout the grades is on students building knowledge from reading.

In ReadyGEN™, unit topics are centered on Big Ideas linked to science and social studies standards and grow in sophistication across the grade levels.

**Shift 3:
Staircase of
Complexity**

The third instructional shift highlights the growing complexity of the texts students must read to be ready for the demands of college and careers in the 21st century.

The standards build a staircase of text complexity so that all students are ready for the demands of college- and career-level reading no later than the end of high school. Students read the central, grade-appropriate texts around which instruction is centered.

More time, space, and support in the curriculum exists for close reading of complex texts. ReadyGEN™ texts are aligned to the complexity requirements outlined in the standards.

Text Complexity Rubrics

Text Complexity Measure
Use the rubric to familiarize yourself with the text complexity of *Let's Visit the Moon*.

QUANTITATIVE MEASURES	
LEXILE	476L
AVERAGE SENTENCE LENGTH	7.68
WORD FREQUENCY	0.45
WORD COUNT	1187

QUALITATIVE MEASURES	
LEVELS OF MEANING	accessible concept, wide variety of facts about the moon
STRUCTURE	descriptive text structure; information about the moon organized around main ideas and supporting details
LANGUAGE CONVENTIONALITY AND CLARITY	content-specific vocabulary often defined in text; additional historical, geographical, and scientific terms may require additional support
THEME AND KNOWLEDGE DEMAND	understanding about space exploration to the moon, its history and importance

READER AND TASK SUGGESTIONS	
PREPARING TO READ THE TEXT	LEVELLED TASKS
Invite partners to talk about the moon and then list two pieces of information they know or believe about the moon.	Work with children to create a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting the moon with Earth.

Instructional routines during the Close Reading Workshop provide opportunities for students to read like a detective to ensure that all students engage in close reading. Teachers will have a variety of scaffolding strategies so that all students can access complex text.

**Shift 4:
Text-Based
Answers**

The fourth instructional shift focuses on text-based answers. The reading standards emphasize students' ability to read closely and grasp information, arguments, ideas, and details based on text evidence.

Students should be able to answer a range of text-dependent questions in which the answers require inferences based on careful attention to the text itself. Students have rich and rigorous conversations that are dependent on a common text.

ReadyGEN™ uses focused, text-based questioning that provides opportunities for all students to deconstruct the text in order to more closely examine vocabulary, sentence structure, and the development of ideas.

Shift 5: Writing from Sources

The fifth instructional shift is writing from sources. The Common Core Standards place a premium on writing that emphasizes the use of evidence from sources to inform or make an argument. The standards require students to not only show that they can analyze and synthesize sources but also present careful analysis, well-defended claims, and clear information through their writing.

Reading Objectives
Craft the meaning of words in text.
Ask and answer questions about the details and ideas in a text.

Benchmark Vocabulary
INTRODUCE Find and read aloud the sentences from *Our World in Space: Planets*, p. 38, with the words *Earth* and *hotter*.
TEACH Using the **Benchmark Vocabulary Routine for Informational Text** on pp. TR48–TR53, teach the meaning of *Earth*. Then, using the information on pp. 150–151b as a guide, discuss where to place it on the word chart. Repeat for the word *hotter*.
MONITOR PROGRESS Have children show contextual understanding of the Benchmark Vocabulary by using the words in sentences on p. 273 in their *Reader's and Writer's Journal*. Use responses to monitor progress.

Text-Based Conversation
COLLABORATE Have children go back to the illustrations and text on pp. 40–41 to ask questions about things they do not understand. Have them use the text, photographs, and text features or their own experience to answer each question that is asked. Use the **Whole Class Discussion Routine** on pp. TR24–TR27.
Remind children to listen closely to other's questions during the discussion. To respond with an answer, suggest they look back to the text or think about what they already know about the inner planets and Earth. Encourage children to form the answer carefully so that they clarify or explain the thing that was confusing.
You may wish to provide a **Think Aloud**, such as the following: *Other scientists ask a question, then think about it and understand exactly what they are asking. If you are sure that you already know the answer, you can answer the question. If not, look back to the text to find the answer.*

Team Talk
STATE AND SUPPORT AN OPINION Use the **Team Talk Routine** on pp. TR28–TR32. Do you like to ask someone a question when you don't understand something? Why or why not? (Possible response: I like to ask someone a question so that I can get the answer quickly.)

Reading Analysis
ASK AND ANSWER QUESTIONS Tell children that in an informational text such as *Our World in Space: Planets*, there are many facts, details, and ideas to remember and understand. Readers can ask questions in order to better understand. Remind children that questions usually start with who, what, when, where, why, or how. Model asking questions about planets and help children find the answers in details and facts in the text.
CITE TEXT EVIDENCE Guide children to ask and answer questions about the planets.
• Where are the four inner planets? (Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars.)
• Where do you find the answer to this question? (In the fourth planet from the sun.)
• What questions do you have about our planet Earth? Use children's questions. Read the text with children to find answers to their questions.

Independent Reading Practice
READING ANALYSIS: ASK AND ANSWER QUESTIONS Have children work independently to complete p. 273 in their *Reader's and Writer's Journal*. Children should write questions they have about the planets. They will use these questions later during Independent Writing Practice.
WRITERS IN RESPONSE TO READING Have children work independently on p. 276 of their *Reader's and Writer's Journal*. Have them write to tell if they like to read about the planets.
ACCOUNTABLE INDEPENDENT READING As children read texts independently, remind them to look for answers to their questions in the text's facts and details. Use the **Independent Reading Routine** on pp. TR40–TR43.

Reading Wrap-Up
SHARE WRITTEN RESPONSES Take a few minutes to wrap up today's reading. Ask students to share their *Writing in Response to Reading*. Use the **Reading Wrap-Up Routine** on pp. TR40–TR43.

In ReadyGEN™, students write every day in response to multiple sources and make connections among ideas within and across texts. Students are taught to carefully analyze and synthesize sources and defend their claims through textual evidence.

Shift 6: Academic Vocabulary

The sixth instructional shift focuses on academic vocabulary. Students constantly build the transferable vocabulary they need to access grade-level complex texts.

A focus on academic vocabulary is found throughout the daily instruction in ReadyGEN™ with connected text sets and topics that link across grade levels.

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Close Reading
CITE TEXT EVIDENCE During guided close reading, have children focus on key details on pp. 40–41 of *Our World in Space: Planets*. Use the following questions to lead the discussion.
• Look at the image on pages 40–41. This is a diagram. A diagram is a picture that explains something. What does this diagram show? (the sun and the planets in our solar system) What information can readers find in the diagram labels? (the names of the planets) **Craft and Structure**
• **BY-THE-WAY WORDS** What is the solar system? Let's read the page again and put the information together to figure out the answer. (eight big planets and five dwarf planets that circle the sun)