

# Common Core State Standards

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as applied to the English classroom at Redland Middle School

# CCSS Capacities

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Students Who are College and Career Ready  
in Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening, and Language

# They demonstrate independence.

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- Students can, **without significant scaffolding**, comprehend and evaluate complex texts across a range of types and disciplines, and they can construct effective arguments and convey intricate or multifaceted information. Likewise, students are able independently to discern a speaker's key points, request clarification, and ask relevant questions. **They build on others' ideas, articulate their own ideas, and confirm they have been understood.** Without prompting, they demonstrate command of standard English and acquire and **use a wide-ranging vocabulary.** More broadly, they become **self-directed learners, effectively seeking out and using resources to assist them**, including teachers, peers, and print and digital reference materials.

# They build strong content knowledge.

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- Students establish a base of knowledge across a wide range of subject matter by engaging with works of quality and substance. They become proficient in new areas through research and study. **They read purposefully and listen attentively to gain both general knowledge and discipline-specific expertise.** They refine and share their knowledge through writing and speaking.

# They respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.

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- Students adapt their communication in relation to audience, task, purpose, and discipline. They set and adjust purpose for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language use as warranted by the task. They **appreciate nuances, such as how the composition of an audience should affect tone when speaking and how the connotations of words affect meaning.** They also know that different disciplines call for different types of evidence (e.g., documentary evidence in history, experimental evidence in science).

# They comprehend as well as critique.

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- Students are engaged and open-minded—but discerning—readers and listeners. They work diligently to understand precisely what an author or speaker is saying, but they also question an author's or speaker's assumptions and premises and assess the veracity of claims and the soundness of reasoning.

# They value evidence.

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- Students **cite specific evidence when offering an oral or written interpretation of a text.** They use relevant evidence when supporting their own points in writing and speaking, making their reasoning clear to the reader or listener, and they constructively evaluate others' use of evidence.

# They use technology and digital media strategically and capably.

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- Students employ technology thoughtfully to enhance their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language use. They tailor their searches online to acquire useful information efficiently, and they integrate what they learn using technology with what they learn offline. They are familiar with the strengths and limitations of various technological tools and mediums and can select and use those best suited to their communication goals.



# They come to understand other perspectives and cultures.



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- Students appreciate that the twenty-first-century **classroom and workplace** are settings in which people from **often widely divergent cultures and who represent diverse experiences and perspectives must learn and work together**. Students actively seek to understand other perspectives and cultures through reading and listening, and they are **able to communicate effectively with people of varied backgrounds**. They evaluate other points of view critically and constructively. Through reading great **classic and contemporary works of literature representative of a variety of periods, cultures, and worldviews**, students can vicariously inhabit worlds and have experiences much different than their own.

## Core Learning Practices for English Language Arts

In order to meet the demands of the Common Core Standards, students should frequently be engaged in the following learning tasks:

### Close Reading

- Engaging with complex text
- Questioning and making meaning from text
- Reading a variety of short fiction and nonfiction texts
- Thinking critically about diverse points of view

### Reading Choices

- Participating in literature circles
- Selecting from a range of diverse texts
- Understanding and appreciating multiple perspectives
- Reading beyond what is assigned

### Analysis and Use of Language

- Evaluating the effects of an author's word choices
- Exploring how and why an author varies sentence structure and style
- Determining and clarifying meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words from context
- Choosing precise language to convey ideas effectively
- Varying sentence structure for meaning, interest, and style (e.g., sentence combining and imitating)

### Writing for Various Purposes

- Taking risks to develop ideas and voice
- Writing frequently to explore thinking and to build fluency and stamina
- Composing narratives, arguments, and explanatory texts
- Synthesizing evidence from multiple sources in support of claims
- Engaging in reflection and using feedback to develop and strengthen writing

### Student Discourse

- Propelling conversations and building on ideas
- Participating in a range of collaborative discussions (e.g., Shared Inquiry, Socratic seminar)
- Providing meaningful and constructive feedback
- Using effective presentation skills
- Citing evidence to support claims

### Inductive Reasoning

- Thinking critically and independently about texts and ideas
- Recognizing faulty logic and sound reasoning
- Using resources to formulate independent conclusions
- Engaging in inquiry and incorporating new knowledge to refine thinking
- Developing conceptual understanding by analyzing examples

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# Tips for Parents

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how to help at home

# Reading and Viewing Together

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- Books, Stories, Articles, Cartoons, TV Shows, Movies, Artwork
- “Adult Conversations”
- “Why” Questions—Especially Regarding Directors’ and Authors’ Choices:
  - Why did they put her in that costume/make-up?
  - Why was it important that the truck entered right then?
  - Why did that particular song play during the road trip?
  - Why did he begin with the narrator’s explanation of the layout of the entire town?

# Reading and Viewing Together

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- “What” Questions—Use the course terms from the county’s Website
  - Academics → Curriculum Homepage → English Language Arts → Middle School → Grade Level
  - Scroll down to about page 7:  
[http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/curriculum/english/middle/grade7/7.1%20Guide%20for%20Website\(1\).pdf](http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/curriculum/english/middle/grade7/7.1%20Guide%20for%20Website(1).pdf)
  - Google “tone practice” or “tone quiz” or “tone middle school”; focus on “.edu” sites as reliable resources