College and Career Readiness Standards for Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening

Draft for Review and Comment

September 21, 2009
# College and Career Readiness Standards for Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening

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Core Standards for Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening

The Core Standards identify essential college- and career-ready skills and knowledge in reading, writing, and speaking and listening across the disciplines. While the English language arts classroom has often been seen as the proper site for literacy instruction, this document acknowledges that the responsibility for teaching such skills must also extend to the other content areas. Teachers in the social and natural sciences, the humanities, and mathematics need to use their content area expertise to help students acquire the discipline-specific skills necessary to comprehend challenging texts and develop deep knowledge in those fields. At the same time, English language arts teachers not only must engage their students in a rich array of literature but also must help develop their students’ ability to read complex works of nonfiction independently.

What is taught is just as important as how it is taught; the Core Standards should be accompanied by a comprehensive, content-rich curriculum. While this document defines the outcomes all students need to reach to be college and career ready, many important decisions about curriculum will necessarily be left to states, districts, schools, teachers, professional organizations, and parents. For example, while the standards require that students read texts of sufficient complexity, quality, and range, this document does not contain a required reading list. If states and districts choose to develop one, they should look at the Reading exemplars provided here to get a sense of the level of complexity students must be able to handle independently when they read. Educators can also model their efforts on reading lists from around the nation and the world as long as the texts ultimately included meet the range and content standards in this document.

Standards today must ready students for competition and collaboration in a global, media-saturated environment. Colleges and universities have become international meetinghouses where people from across the globe learn with and from one another. At the same time, business today is truly a worldwide enterprise. Media-related technology helps shape what goes on in both college and the workplace; indeed, it has in some important ways reshaped the very nature of communication. Students who meet the Core Standards will have the reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills to flourish in the diverse, rapidly changing environments of college and careers.

Although reading, writing, and speaking and listening are articulated separately in the standards that follow, these divisions are made for the sake of clarity and manageability. In reality, the processes of communication are tightly interrelated and often reciprocal. The act of reading can no more be separated from the written word than the act of listening can be from the spoken word. When reading, students demonstrate their comprehension most commonly through a spoken or written interpretation of the text. As students solve problems, share insights, and build the
knowledge they need for college and career success, they draw simultaneously on their capacities to read, write, speak, and listen.
Student Practices in Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening

The following practices in reading, writing, and speaking and listening undergird and help unify the rest of the standards document. They are the “premises”—broad statements about the nature of college and career readiness in reading, writing, and speaking and listening—that underlie the individual standards statements and cut across the various sections of the document. Every idea introduced here is subsequently represented in one or more places within the larger document.

***

Students who are college and career ready exhibit the following capacities in their reading, writing, and speaking and listening:

1. **They demonstrate independence as readers, writers, speakers, and listeners.**

   Students can, without significant scaffolding or support, comprehend and evaluate complex text across a range of types and disciplines, and they can construct effective arguments and clearly convey intricate or multifaceted information. Likewise, students are independently able to discern a speaker’s key points as well as ask questions and articulate their own ideas.

2. **They build strong content knowledge.**

   Students build a base of knowledge across a wide range of subject matter by engaging with works of quality and substance. They demonstrate their ability to become proficient in new areas through research and study. They read purposefully and listen attentively to gain both general knowledge and the specific in-depth expertise needed to comprehend subject matter and solve problems in different fields. They refine their knowledge and share it through substantive writing and speaking.

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

   Students consider their reading, writing, and speaking and listening in relation to the contextual factors of audience, task, purpose, and discipline. They appreciate nuances, such as how the composition and familiarity of the audience should affect tone. They also know that different disciplines call for different types of evidence (e.g., documentary evidence in history, experimental evidence in the natural sciences).

4. **They comprehend as well as critique.**

   Students are engaged and open-minded—but skeptical—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 assess the veracity of claims.

5. They privilege evidence.

Students cite specific textual evidence when offering an oral or written interpretation of a piece of writing. 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.

6. They care about precision.

Students are mindful of the impact of specific words and details, and they consider what would be achieved by different choices. Students pay especially close attention when precision matters most, such as in the case of reviewing significant data, making important distinctions, or analyzing a key moment in the action of a play or novel.

7. They craft and look for structure.

Students attend to structure when organizing their own writing and speaking as well as when seeking to understand the work of others. They understand and make use of the ways of presenting information typical of different disciplines. They observe, for example, how authors of literary works craft the structure to unfold events and depict the setting.

8. They use technology strategically and capably.

Students employ technology thoughtfully to enhance their reading, writing, speaking, and listening. 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.
To develop college- and career-ready standards for Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening that are rigorous, relevant, and internationally benchmarked, the work group consulted evidence from a wide array of sources. These included standards documents from high-performing states and nations; student performance data (including assessment scores and college grades); academic research; frameworks for assessments, such as NAEP; and results of surveys of postsecondary instructors and employers regarding what is most important for college and career readiness.

The evidence strongly suggests that similar reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills are necessary for success in both college and the workplace. A review of the standards of high-performing nations also suggests that many of these skills are already required in secondary schools internationally. The work group has endeavored to articulate these skills in the Core Standards, focusing educators, students, parents, and resources on what matters most.

Given that a set of standards cannot be simplistically “derived” from any body of evidence, the work group sometimes relied on reasoned judgment to interpret where the evidence was most compelling. For example, there is not a consensus among college faculty about the need for incoming students to be able to comprehend graphs, charts, and tables and to integrate information in these data displays with the information in the accompanying text. Although some evidence suggests that this skill is critical in the workplace and in some entry-level courses, college faculties from the various disciplines disagree on its value (with science and economics faculty rating it more highly than English and humanities professors do). The work group ultimately included a standard on the integration of text and data because the preponderance of the evidence suggests the skill’s importance in meeting the demands of the twenty-first-century workplace and some college classrooms.

In most cases, the evidence is clearer. In writing, for example, there is unequivocal value placed on the logical progression of ideas. The expectation that high school graduates will be able to produce writing that is logical and coherent is found throughout the standards of top-performing countries and states. This ability is also valued highly by college faculty and employers. In response to such clear evidence, the work group included Writing student performance standard #5: “Create a logical progression of ideas or events, and convey the relationships among them.”

A bibliography of some of the sources the work group drew upon most is included at the end of this document. The reader should also refer to the Core Standards Web site (http://www.corestandards.org), which contains a list of standards linked to relevant sources of evidence.
Finally, while the standards reflect the best evidence available to date, the decisions the work group made are necessarily provisional. The core should be reexamined periodically as additional research on college and career readiness emerges. Indeed, this document may serve as an agenda for such research.
How to Read the Document

This document is divided into three main sections: strands, applications, and supporting materials.

Strands
There are three strands: Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening. Although each strand is presented discretely for ease of understanding, the document should be considered a coherent whole.

The three strands are each in turn divided into two sections: Standards for Range and Content and Standards for Student Performance.

Standards for Range and Content
The Standards for Range and Content in each strand describe the contexts in which college- and career-ready students must be able to read, write, speak, and listen. Rather than merely supplement or illustrate the numbered list of Standards for Student Performance, the Standards for Range and Content are themselves required and carry equal force.

Standards for Student Performance
The Standards for Student Performance in each strand enumerate the essential skills and understandings that students who are college and career ready in reading, writing, speaking, and listening must have no later than the end of high school.

Applications
The clearest examples of the integrated nature of communication are the Applications of the Core for Research and Media. The Core Standards for Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening have been designed to include the essential skills and knowledge that students need to apply to college and career tasks, such as research and media. Rather than having an additional set of standards that would largely duplicate those already in Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening, the document includes the Research and Media applications that draw upon standards already in those strands. This both reaffirms the centrality of the core processes of reading, writing, speaking, and listening and shows how those processes can be combined and extended to describe key communicative acts in the classroom and workplace.

In the Research and Media applications, specific Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening standards are identified with a letter or letters corresponding to the relevant strand (R for Reading, W for Writing, and S&L for Speaking and Listening) and a number or letter corresponding to the statement within that strand. For example, R-14 refers to the fourteenth statement in the Standards for Student Performance.
Performance in Reading, and W-A refers to the first statement of the Standards for Range and Content in Writing.

**Supporting Materials: Reading and Writing Exemplars**

Reading and Writing exemplars, and their accompanying annotations, are used to lend further specificity to the standards.

**Reading Exemplars**

The Reading exemplars, representing a range of subject areas, time periods, cultures, and formats, illustrate the level of text complexity students ready for college and careers must be able to handle on their own. The exemplars are mostly excerpts or representations of larger works. To be truly college and career ready, students must be able to handle full texts—poems, short stories, novels, technical manuals, research reports, and the like. Annotations accompanying the exemplars explain how each text meets the criterion of high text complexity. The annotations also provide brief performance examples that further clarify the meaning and application of the standards.

**Writing Exemplars - Coming in the next draft**

The Writing exemplars are authentic samples of student writing created across the nation under a variety of conditions and for a variety of purposes and audiences. Annotations accompanying the exemplars indicate how these samples meet the Standards for Student Performance in Writing.
Core Standards for Reading Informational and Literary Texts

Standards for the Range and Content of Student Reading

A. **Complexity:** A crucial factor in readiness for college and careers is students’ ability to comprehend complex texts independently. In college and careers, students will need to read texts characterized by demanding vocabulary, subtle relationships among ideas or characters, a nuanced rhetorical style and tone, and elaborate structures or formats. These challenging texts require the reader’s close attention and often demand rereading in order to be fully understood.

B. **Quality:** The literary and informational texts chosen for study should be rich in content and in a variety of disciplines. All students should have access to and grapple with works of exceptional craft and thought both for the insights those works offer and as models for students’ own thinking and writing. These texts should include classic works that have broad resonance and are alluded to and quoted often, such as influential political documents, foundational literary works, and seminal historical and scientific texts. Texts should also be selected from among the best contemporary fiction and nonfiction and from a diverse range of authors and perspectives.

C. **Vocabulary:** To be college and career ready, students must encounter and master a rich vocabulary. Complex texts often use challenging words, phrases, and terms that students typically do not encounter in their daily lives. Specific disciplines and careers have vocabularies of their own. Attentive reading of sophisticated works in a wide range of fields, combined with close attention to vocabulary, is essential to building comprehension and knowledge.

D. **Range:** Students must be able to read a variety of literature, informational texts, and multimedia sources in order to gain the knowledge base they need for college and career readiness.

   **Literature:** Literature enables students to access through imagination a wide range of experiences. By immersing themselves in literature, students enlarge their experiences and deepen their understanding of their own and other cultures. Careful reading of literature entails attentiveness to craft and details of design, which has broad value for students’ work in college and career environments.

   **Informational Text:** Because most college and workplace reading is nonfiction, students need to hone their ability to acquire knowledge from informational texts. Workplace and discipline-specific reading will often require students to demonstrate persistence as they encounter a large amount of unfamiliar and often technical vocabulary and concepts. Students must demonstrate facility with the features of texts particular to a variety of disciplines, such as history, science, and mathematics.

   **Multimedia Sources:** Students must be able to integrate what they learn from reading text with what they learn from audio, video, and other digital media. Many of the same critical issues that students face when reading traditional printed texts will arise as they seek to comprehend multimedia, such as determining where the author has chosen to focus, evaluating evidence, and comparing different accounts of similar subjects.

E. **Quantity:** Students must have the capacity to handle independently the quantity of reading material, both in print and online, required in college and workforce training. Studies show that the amount of reading students face in high school is often far lower than that required for typical first-year college courses. Students need to be able to perform a close reading of a much higher volume of texts and to sort efficiently through large amounts of print and online information in search of specific facts or ideas.

*Note:* *The essential role of independence in college and career readiness:* The significant scaffolding that often accompanies reading in high school usually disappears in college and workforce training environments. Students must therefore have developed their ability to read texts of sufficient complexity, quality, and range on their own. To become independent, students must encounter unfamiliar texts presented without supporting materials.

1-A
Core Standards for Reading Informational and Literary Texts

Standards for Student Performance

1. Determine both what the text says explicitly and what can be inferred logically from the text.
2. Support or challenge assertions about the text by citing evidence in the text explicitly and accurately.
3. Discern the most important ideas, events, or information, and summarize them accurately and concisely.
4. Delineate the main ideas or themes in the text and the details that elaborate and support them.
5. Determine when, where, and why events unfold in the text, and explain how they relate to one another.
6. Analyze the traits, motivations, and thoughts of individuals in fiction and nonfiction based on how they are described, what they say and do, and how they interact.
7. Determine what is meant by words and phrases in context, including connotative meanings and figurative language.
8. Analyze how specific word choices shape the meaning and tone of the text.
9. Analyze how the text’s organizational structure presents the argument, explanation, or narrative.
10. Analyze how specific details and larger portions of the text contribute to the meaning of the text.
11. Synthesize data, diagrams, maps, and other visual elements with words in the text to further comprehension.
12. Extract key information efficiently in print and online using text features and search techniques.
13. Ascertain the origin, credibility, and accuracy of print and online sources.
14. Evaluate the reasoning and rhetoric that support an argument or explanation, including assessing whether the evidence provided is relevant and sufficient.
15. Analyze how two or more texts with different styles, points of view, or arguments address similar topics or themes.
16. Draw upon relevant prior knowledge to enhance comprehension, and note when the text expands on or challenges that knowledge.
17. Apply knowledge and concepts gained through reading to build a more coherent understanding of a subject, inform reading of additional texts, and solve problems.
18. Demonstrate facility with the specific reading demands of texts drawn from different disciplines, including history, literature, science, and mathematics.

Note: These Standards for Student Performance, as is the case for every strand, must be demonstrated across the range and content from the preceding page. They are meant to apply to fiction and nonfiction. For example:
- "Determine when, where, and why events unfold" applies to plot and setting in literature as well as the sequence of a scientific procedure.
- "Analyze the traits, motivations, and thoughts of individuals" applies to studying characters in fiction and figures in historical texts.
Core Standards for Writing

Standards for the Range and Content of Student Writing

A. Purpose:

**Make an Argument:** While many high school students have experience presenting their opinions, they need to be able to make arguments supported by evidence in order to be ready for careers and college. Students must be able to frame the debate over a claim, present the reasoning and evidence for the argument, and acknowledge and address its limitations. In some cases, students will make arguments to gain entry to college or to obtain a job, laying out their qualifications or experience. In college, students might defend an interpretation of a work of literature or of history; in the workplace, employees might write to recommend a course of action.

**Inform or Explain:** In college and in workforce training, writing is a key means for students to show what they know and to share what they have seen. Writing to inform or explain often requires students to integrate complex information from multiple sources in a lucid fashion. Explanations can take the form of laying out facts about a new technology or documenting findings from historical research; well-crafted explanations often make fresh connections and express ideas creatively.

B. Audience: Students must adapt their writing so that it is appropriate to the audience by choosing words, information, structures, and formats that conform to the conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. The form and use of evidence in literary analysis, for example, are likely to be quite different from those in geology or business. Students must also be able to consider their audience’s background knowledge and potential objections to an argument.

C. Situation:

**On-demand Writing:** Students must have the flexibility, concentration, and fluency to produce high-quality first-draft text under a tight deadline. College and career readiness requires that students be able to write effectively to a prompt on an exam or respond quickly yet thoughtfully to a supervisor’s urgent request for information.

**Writing over Time:** Students must be able to revisit and make improvements to a piece of their writing over multiple drafts when circumstances encourage or require it. To improve writing through revision, students must be capable of distinguishing good changes from ones that would weaken the writing.

D. Technology and Collaboration: Technology offers students powerful tools for producing, editing, and distributing writing as well as for collaboration. Especially in the workplace, writers often use technology to produce documents and to provide feedback.

E. Quantity: The evidence is clear that, in order to become better writers, students must devote significant time to producing writing. Students must practice writing several analytical pieces each term if they are to achieve the deep analysis and interpretation of content expected for college and careers.

Note on narrative writing:

Narrative writing is an important mode of writing; it is also a component of making an argument and writing to inform or explain. Telling an interesting story effectively or providing an accurate account of a historical incident requires the skillful use of narrative techniques. Narrative writing requires that students present vivid, relevant details to situate events in a time and place and also craft a structure that lends a larger shape and significance to those details. As an easily grasped and widely used way to share information and ideas with others, narrative writing is a principal stepping-stone to writing forms directly relevant to college and career readiness.
Core Standards for Writing

Standards for Student Performance

1. Establish and refine a topic or thesis that addresses the specific task and audience.

2. Gather the information needed to build an argument, provide an explanation, or address a research question.

3. Sustain focus on a specific topic or argument.

4. Support and illustrate arguments and explanations with relevant details, examples, and evidence.

5. Create a logical progression of ideas or events, and convey the relationships among them.

6. Choose words and phrases to express ideas precisely and concisely.

7. Use varied sentence structures to engage the reader and achieve cohesion between sentences.

8. Develop and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.

9. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard written English, including grammar, usage, and mechanics.

10. Represent and cite accurately the data, conclusions, and opinions of others, effectively incorporating them into one’s own work while avoiding plagiarism.

11. Assess the quality of one’s own writing, and, when necessary, strengthen it through revision.

12. Use technology as a tool to produce, edit, and distribute writing.

When writing to inform or explain, students must also do the following:

13. Synthesize information from multiple relevant sources, including graphics and quantitative information when appropriate, to provide an accurate picture of that information.

14. Convey complex information clearly and coherently to the audience through purposeful selection and organization of content.

15. Demonstrate understanding of content by reporting facts accurately and anticipating reader misconceptions.

When writing arguments, students must also do the following:

16. Establish a substantive claim, distinguishing it from alternate or opposing claims.

17. Link claims and evidence with clear reasons, and ensure that the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.

18. Acknowledge competing arguments or information, defending or qualifying the initial claim as appropriate.

Note: “The conventions of standard written English” encompass a range of commonly accepted language practices designed to make writing clear and widely understood. When formal writing contains errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics, its meaning is obscured, its message is too easily dismissed, and its author is often judged negatively. Proper sentence structure, correct verb formation, careful use of verb tense, clear subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement, conventional usage, and appropriate punctuation are of particular importance to formal writing.
A. **Group and One-to-One Situations:** Students are expected to be able to speak and listen effectively in both groups and one-to-one. Success in credit-bearing college coursework, whether in the humanities, mathematics, or the sciences, depends heavily on being able to take in and respond to the concepts and information conveyed in lectures and class discussions. Success in the workplace is similarly dependent on listening attentively to colleagues and customers and expressing ideas clearly and persuasively.

These speaking and listening skills may need to be applied differently in different settings. The immediate communication between two people might be replaced by formal turn taking in large-group discussions. When working in classroom or workplace teams, students should be able to ask questions that initiate thoughtful discussions, gain the floor in respectful ways, and build on the contributions of others to complete tasks or reach consensus.

B. **Varied Disciplinary Content:** Students must adapt their speaking and listening to a range of disciplines to communicate effectively. Each academic discipline and industry has its own vocabulary and conventions; for instance, evidence is handled and discussed differently in literary analysis than in history or medicine or the sciences. College- and career-ready students must develop a foundation of disciplinary knowledge and conventions in order not only to comprehend the complexity of information and ideas but also to present and explain them.

C. **Multimedia Comprehension:** New technologies expand the role that speaking and listening skills will play in acquiring and sharing knowledge. Students will need to view and listen to diverse media to gain knowledge and also must integrate this information with what they learn through reading text online as well as in print. When speaking, students can draw on media to illustrate their points, make data and evidence vivid, and engage their audience. Multimedia accelerates the speed at which connections between reading, writing, speaking, and listening can be made, requiring students to be ready to use these skills nearly simultaneously.
Core Standards for Speaking and Listening

Standards for Student Performance

1. Select and use a format, organization, and style appropriate to the topic, purpose, and audience.

2. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly and concisely.

3. Make strategic use of multimedia elements and visual displays of data to gain audience attention and enhance understanding.

4. Demonstrate command of formal Standard English when appropriate to task and audience.

5. Listen to complex information, and discern the main ideas, the significant details, and the relationships among them.

6. Follow the progression of the speaker’s message, and evaluate the speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

7. Ask relevant questions to clarify points and challenge ideas.

8. Respond constructively to advance a discussion and build on the input of others.

Note: “Style appropriate to the topic, purpose, and audience” includes word choice specific to the demands of the discipline as well as delivery techniques such as gestures and eye contact that contribute to effective message delivery.

“Evaluate the speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric” includes distinguishing facts from opinions and determining whether the speaker is biased and evidence has been distorted.
Application of the Core: Research

The Core Standards for Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening have been designed to include the essential skills and knowledge that students need to apply to college and career tasks such as research. This section shows how standards in the core incorporate the skills of research.

To be college and career ready, students must engage in research and present their findings in writing and orally, in print and online. The ability to conduct research independently and effectively plays a fundamental role in gaining knowledge and insight in college and the workplace.

Research as described here is not limited to the formal, extended research paper nor simply to gathering information from books; rather, research encompasses a flexible yet systematic approach to resolving questions and investigating issues through the careful collection, analysis, synthesis, and presentation of information from a wide range of print and digital sources, such as historical archives and online interviews. With well-developed research skills, students have the tools to engage in sustained inquiry as well as the sort of short, focused research projects that typify many assignments in college and the workplace.

Research in the digital age offers new possibilities as well as new or heightened challenges. While the Internet provides ready access to unprecedented amounts of primary and secondary source material (such as oral histories, historical documents, maps, and scientific reports), students sorting through this wealth of data must be skilled at and vigilant in determining the origin and credibility of these sources.

The following Core Standards pertain to elements of the research process and particular research skills required for college and career readiness:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formulate research questions:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Establish and refine a topic or thesis that addresses the specific task and audience. (W-1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Establish a substantive claim, distinguishing it from alternate or opposing claims. (W-16)</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Gather and evaluate relevant information from a range of sources:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Gather the information needed to build an argument, provide an explanation or address a research question. (W-2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Extract key information efficiently in print and online using text features and search techniques. (R-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Ascertain the origin, credibility, and accuracy of print and online sources. (R-13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Evaluate the reasoning and rhetoric that support an argument or explanation, including assessing whether the evidence provided is relevant and sufficient. (R-14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Follow the progression of the speaker’s message and evaluate the speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric. (S&amp;L-6)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Analyze research sources:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Delineate the main ideas or themes in the text and the details that elaborate and support them. (R-4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Listen to complex information and discern the main ideas, the significant details, and the relationships among them. (S&amp;L-5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Discern the most important ideas, events, or information and summarize them accurately and concisely. (R-3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Synthesize data, diagrams, maps, and other visual elements with words in the text to further comprehension. (R-11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Synthesize information from multiple relevant sources, including graphics and quantitative information when appropriate, to provide an accurate picture of that information. (W-13)</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Analyze how two or more texts with different styles, points of view, or arguments address similar topics or themes. (R-15)</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Acknowledge competing arguments or information, defending or qualifying the initial claim as appropriate. (W-18)</td>
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<th>Report findings:</th>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Link claims and evidence with clear reasons and ensure that the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims. (W-17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Convey complex information clearly and coherently to the audience through purposeful selection and organization of the content. (W-14)</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Demonstrate understanding of the content by reporting the facts accurately and anticipating reader misconceptions. (W-15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, clearly and concisely. (S&amp;L-2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Support and illustrate arguments and explanations with relevant details, examples, and evidence. (W-4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Represent and cite accurately the data, conclusions, and opinions of others, effectively incorporating them into one’s own work while avoiding plagiarism. (W-10)</td>
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Application of the Core: Media

The Core Standards for Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening have been designed to include the essential skills and knowledge that students need to apply to college and career tasks such as media analysis and creation. This section shows how standards in the core apply to media.

Rapidly evolving technologies are powerful tools—but only for those who have the skills to put them to work. As the capability of the technology grows, students’ command of these skills must only increase.

At the core of media mastery are the same fundamental capacities as are required offline in traditional print forms: an ability to access, understand, and evaluate complex materials and messages and to produce clear, effective communications. Media mastery does, however, call upon students to apply these core skills in new ways and contexts. Media enable students to communicate quickly with a large, often unknown, and broadly diverse audience. Whereas in the past, students may have had days or weeks to digest new information and formulate a response, the online environment pushes students to exercise judgment and present their responses in a matter of minutes.

Speed is not the only new factor. In the electronic world, reading, writing, speaking, and listening are uniquely intertwined. Multimedia forms force students to engage with constantly changing combinations of elements, such as graphics, images, hyperlinks, and embedded video and audio. The technology itself is changing quickly, creating new urgency for adaptation and flexibility on the part of students.

The following Core Standards describe the particular reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills that students will need in order to use media effectively in college and careers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards for Range and Content drawn from each strand</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multimedia Sources:</strong> Students must be able to integrate what they learn from reading text with what they learn from audio, video, and other digital media. Many of the same critical issues that students face when reading traditional printed texts will arise as they seek to comprehend multimedia, such as determining where the author has chosen to focus, evaluating evidence, and comparing different accounts of similar subjects. [R-D]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technology and Collaboration:</strong> Technology offers students powerful tools for producing, editing, and distributing writing as well as for collaboration. Especially in the workplace, writers often use technology to produce documents and to provide feedback. [W-D]</td>
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<td><strong>Multimedia Comprehension:</strong> New technologies expand the role that speaking and listening skills will play in acquiring and sharing knowledge. Students will need to view and listen to diverse media to gain knowledge and integrate this information with what they learn through reading text online as well as in print. When speaking, students can draw on media to illustrate their points, make data and evidence vivid, and engage their audiences. Multimedia accelerates the speed at which connections between reading, writing, and speaking and listening can be made, requiring students to be ready to use these skills nearly simultaneously. [S&amp;L-C]</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards for Student Performance drawn from each strand</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gather information from a wide array of electronic sources and multimedia:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Extract key information efficiently in print and online using text features and search techniques. (R-12)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Synthesize data, diagrams, maps, and other visual elements with words in the text to further comprehension. (R-11)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Listen to complex information and discern the main ideas, the significant details, and the relationships among them. (S&amp;L-5)</td>
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<td>Evaluate information from digital media:</td>
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<td>- Ascertaining the origin, credibility, and accuracy of print and online sources. (R-13)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Evaluate the reasoning and rhetoric that support an argument or explanation, including assessing whether the evidence provided is relevant and sufficient. (R-14)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Follow the progression of the speaker’s message and evaluate the speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric. (S&amp;L-6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create and distribute media communications:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Use technology as a tool to produce, edit, and distribute writing. (W-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Synthesize information from multiple relevant sources, including graphics and quantitative information when appropriate, to provide an accurate picture of that information. (W-13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Make strategic use of multimedia elements and visual displays of data to gain audience attention and enhance understanding. (S&amp;L-3)</td>
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Notes on Illustrative Text #2

“O Captain! My Captain!” by Walt Whitman

Though poetry’s complexity cannot be assessed by the measures of readability used for the prose exemplars, “O Captain! My Captain!” by Walt Whitman clearly has many of the features of complex texts listed in the Standards for the Range and Content of Student Reading. Modern readers must work to understand what would have been obvious to readers in 1865: “O Captain! My Captain!” is an extended-metaphor poem intended to convey Whitman’s and the North’s grief over the assassination of Abraham Lincoln so near the conclusion of hostilities in the Civil War. Every element in the poem stands for something else, with the captain representing Lincoln, the ship representing the Union (or the “ship of state”), the voyage representing the war, and so on. Historical context, along with skill in reading literature, is thus particularly important to interpreting this text.

Sample performance aligned with the Core Standards

Students apply knowledge gained from reading the New York Times articles on Lincoln’s assassination to their understanding of the poem “O Captain! My Captain!” Specifically, students draw on the description of the crowd’s response to the attack on Lincoln to inform their understanding of Whitman’s poem. [R-17]
"O Captain! My Captain!" by Walt Whitman

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weather’d every rack, the prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring,
But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills,
For you bouquets and ribbon’d wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding,
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning,
Here, Captain! dear father!
This arm beneath your head;
It is some dream that on the deck
You’ve fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,
The ship is anchor’d safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,
From fearful trip, the victor ship comes in with object won;
Exult, O shores, and ring O bells!
But I with mournful tread
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.
The front page of the *New York Times*, April 15, 1865

The challenge posed to a modern reader by the front page of the *New York Times* on April 15, 1865, is significant in terms of format, timeliness, and point of view. Unlike the graphically heavy front page of modern newspapers, this 1865 *New York Times* front page is mostly uninterrupted columns of text. The reader is obviously expected to proceed from top to bottom and left to right across the page, but little other guidance is provided. Because the assassination of Lincoln was still “breaking news” as this edition of the *Times* would have gone to press, some details of the event would have not yet been known; readers will have to sort out what they know about the assassination from what the people reading the paper on that Saturday morning would just have been learning. Three accounts of the events rather than one are provided here, and the sourcing and tone vary greatly. Certain details found in one place are contradicted in another: the “Detail of the Occurrence,” for example, suggests that Lincoln may not have been mortally wounded, but the main headline in the top left-hand corner of the page states “No Hopes Entertained of His Recovery.” While the first two accounts aim at a certain objectivity, the third begins with a flourish that may surprise readers more used to a restrained style of journalism: “A stroke from Heaven laying the whole of the city in instant ruin could not have startled us as did the word that broke from Ford’s Theatre a half hour ago that the President had been shot.”

Sample performance aligned with the Core Standards

Students analyze how the three different accounts on the front page portray Lincoln’s assassination, including which details are similar or different. [R-15]
AWFUL EVENT.

President Lincoln Shot by an Assassin.

The front page of the New York Times, April 15, 1865.

http://timesmachine.nytimes.com/browser/1865/04/15/P1

DETAILS OF THE DREADFUL TRAGEDY.

OFFICIAL.

War Department, Washington, April 15, 1:30 A.M.

MAJ.-GEN. DIX:

This evening at about 9:30 P.M. at Ford's Theater, the President, while sitting in his private box with Mrs. Lincoln, Mrs. Harris, and Major Rathburn, was shot by an assassin, who suddenly entered the box and approached behind the President.

The assassin then leaped upon the stage, brandishing a large dagger or knife, and made his escape in the rear of the theater.

ANOTHER ACCOUNT.

Special Dispatch to the New York Times.

Washington, Friday, April 14, 11:15 P.M.

A stroke from Heaven laying the whole of the city in instant ruin could not have startled us as did the word that broke from Ford's Theater a half hour ago that the President had been shot. It flew everywhere in five minutes, and set five thousand people in swift and excited motion on the instant.

DETAIL OF THE OCCURRENCE.

Washington, Friday, April 14, 12:30 A.M.

The President was shot in a theater tonight, and is, perhaps, mortally wounded. Secretary Seward was also assassinated.

SECOND DISPATCH.

Washington, Friday, April 14. President Lincoln and Secretary of War, with other friends, this evening visited Ford's Theater for the purpose of witnessing the performance of the "American Cousin."