

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Voices Literature & Writing and Voices Leveled Library

Specific documentation of the Common Core State Standards in Voices Literature & Writing Teacher Guides includes:

- **Annotations within the lesson plans**
- **Correlation to specific standards in the back of each Teacher Guide**

Following is a broad-based alignment demonstrating the strong connections between the Common Core State Standards and Voices Literature & Writing and Voices Leveled Library.

Introduction

Key Design Considerations

CCSS **An integrated model of literacy, p. 4**

“Although the Standards are divided into Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language strands for conceptual clarity, **the processes of communication are closely connected...**”

Voices Literature & Writing

- The program integrates literacy strands along with Social Development and Social Emotional Learning concepts.
- High quality Teacher Read-Aloud trade book literature is the springboard for oral discussion and writing to reflect, respond, and support a perspective.

CCSS **Focus and coherence in instruction and assessment, p. 5**

“While the Standards delineate specific expectations in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language, each standard need not be a separate focus for instruction and assessment. **Often, several standards can be addressed by a single rich task.**”

Voices Literature & Writing

- This cohesive approach promotes literacy, effective communication skills, and social development with efficiency in instructional time.
- Discussion following each Teacher Read-Aloud provides an opportunity for speaking and listening, which contributes to the development of critical thinking, deep comprehension, writing, and the use of new vocabulary.

Teacher Guide Examples:

- **Kindergarten, Getting Along, T14, T19, T39, T43, T75, T92–94**
- **Grade 1, Solving Problems, T14, T19, T39, T41, T75, T92–94**
- **Grade 2, Resolving Conflicts, T14, T19, T39, T41, T75, T92–94**
- **Grade 3, My Problems, My Solutions, T39, T40, T65, T73, T81, T92–94**
- **Grade 4, Solving Community Problems, T39, T42, T65, T73, T81, T92–94**
- **Grade 5, Making Choices, T39, T42, T65, T73, T81, T92–94**
- **Grade 6, Dealing With Bullies, T39, T42, T65, T73, T81, T92–94**

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

CCSS They comprehend as well as critique, p. 7

“Students are engaged and open-minded—but discerning—readers and listeners.”

Voices Literature & Writing

- Comprehension begins with the Background Building Videos providing informational content to help prepare students for success.
- After each Teacher Read-Aloud, comprehension is checked to ensure basic understanding.
- Deep comprehension develops as students learn to think, discuss, consider other points of view, and write supporting their perspective.
- Students are asked to use the text as a source of defending their position.
- The interactive approach keeps students engaged, active participants, and on task. As students learn empathy and hear peer perspectives, they become more open-minded.

CCSS They come to understand other perspectives and cultures, p. 7

“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.**”

Voices Literature & Writing

- The program is built on a foundation to introduce/expand students’ knowledge of diverse cultures and perspectives that may differ from their own.
- Teacher Read-Aloud literature represents widely divergent cultures and experiences.
- Discussion and writing prompts provide opportunities for various perspectives to be shared; students support some responses based on evidence in the text.
- Teacher support guides students to be respectful of each other’s perspective and experiences.

Perspective taking is a major “thread” throughout the program; increasing communication proficiency is a major part of the academic focus.

Reading resources that support the goals of the Common Core State Standards

CCSS Items in light purple boxes are directly from the Common Core State Standards.

Reading Standards	
<i>Voices Literature & Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The full range of literary genre is represented in the Teacher Read-Aloud collection, which includes realistic and historical fiction, fairy tales, informational narrative, expository, poetry, and more.
<i>Voices Leveled Library</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The program includes varied text types—realistic and historic fiction, fairy tales, folktales, mystery, informational narrative, expository, and poetry.
CCSS Key Ideas and Details, p. 10	
<i>Voices Literature & Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Check Comprehension” questions and discussion start with selection details, elements, and the big ideas.
CCSS Craft and Structure, p. 10	
<i>Voices Literature & Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Genre characteristics are addressed in “Preview the Book,” characters’ roles, point of view, etc. and become part of text discussion as key concepts are developed. Students integrate “Theme Vocabulary/Word of the Week” and the Read Aloud’s “Listening Vocabulary” into their oral language and writing.
CCSS Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, p. 10	
<i>Voices Literature & Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion of key concepts from text, personal perspective, supporting a position, and the “Theme Wrap-Up” comparison of multiple selections provide integration of knowledge and ideas.
CCSS Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity, p. 10	
<i>Voices Literature & Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rich, complex texts used in the Teacher Read-Alouds and subsequent discussions develop oral language. This approach prepares students for reading similar texts independently.
<i>Voices Leveled Library</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students read increasingly more complex literary and informational texts.

CCSS Fluency, p. 16

<i>Voices Literature & Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong models of fluency are provided through the Teacher Read-Alouds of trade book literature and the accompanying audio recordings of each book.
<i>Voices Leveled Library</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leveled books (Guided Reading Levels AA–Z) extend the concepts of each theme and provide extensive opportunity to develop fluency as students read text at their level.• Kindergarten, 72 titles• Grades 1–3, 144 titles per grade• Grades 4–6, 48 titles per grade

Writing Standards

<i>Voices Literature & Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Writing instruction is comprehensive. “Write About It” is a response to a lesson prompt connected to the literature and/or theme concepts.• The first 3–4 weeks of each theme focus on short writing forms that include working with the traits of writing along with conventions (grammar, usage, mechanics). These weeks scaffold instruction for the “Writing Project” that takes students through the full writing process in the final 1–2 weeks of the theme.• See Suggested Theme Planner in any Theme’s frontmatter (pp. Z12–Z13).
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CCSS Text Types and Purposes, p. 18

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

<i>Voices Literature & Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Opinion</i>: Democracy theme, Grades K–5/<i>Argument</i>: Democracy theme, Grade 6• <i>Informative/Explanatory</i>: Perspective Taking; Family, Friends, and Community; and Social Awareness themes• <i>Narrative</i>: Identity Awareness and Conflict Resolution themes
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CCSS Production and Distribution of Writing, p. 18

4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Voices Literature & Writing

- A goal of writing is creating clear and coherent pieces.
- Partner work, as a way to build trust and respect, is important throughout *Voices Literature & Writing* and is used in writing to help improve pieces, along with self-evaluation rubrics, teacher response, and an evaluator’s checklist, Grades 3–6.
- The use of technology is woven into instruction as appropriate including it as one way to publish writing.

CCSS Research to Build and Present Knowledge, p. 18

7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

Voices Literature & Writing

- Students are explicitly directed to support their points with information from the text, other sources, and input received from peers or their teacher. Students progress from writing a summary of facts to reports and from personal experiences (inward focus on self) to writing about issues in their community/society (outward focus to the world).

CCSS Range of Writing, p. 18

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.

Voices Literature & Writing

- Each lesson offers a short daily writing prompt (“Write About It”) along with the writing process instruction focused on a longer piece and the traits of writing (ideas, voice, word choice, organization, sentence fluency, and conventions). See above explanation.
- **See Suggested Theme Planner (Z12–Z13) for an overview, “Write About It” in Teacher Read-Aloud lessons, and all instruction behind the Writing Instruction Tab.**

Speaking and Listening Standards

CCSS Comprehension and Collaboration, p. 22

1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
3. Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Voices Literature & Writing

- Following the Teacher Read-Aloud, teachers facilitate large group discussions, support one-on-one/partner work and daily discussions that lead to group conversations and collaboration on the “Theme Project.”
- See also the description of partner discussion and collaboration described in the “Introduce the Theme” spread in the Teacher Guide of each theme, p. T3.
- Throughout, students are encouraged to think about the literature they have heard, relate it to their personal experiences, and integrate any other information they have to form their responses and perspectives.

Reading resources that support the goals of the Common Core State Standards

CCSS Items in light purple boxes are directly from the Common Core State Standards.

CCSS Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, p. 22

4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and that the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.
6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Voices Literature & Writing

- Students present information organized in a variety of ways through oral presentations as well as written pieces.
- The “Theme Project” concludes each theme; media use and visual aids are often suggested as tools for presentation.
- “Evaluate and Reflect” with rubric support gives focus to evaluating the oral and written work.
- **See Writing Project and Theme Project overview, pp. T4–T5 and the last two pages of the Theme Wrap Up (end of each theme).**
- English Language Learners and Differentiated Instruction teaching notes are provided throughout to support formal English language as well as the explicit instruction in conventions and listening-speaking activities.

Language Standards

CCSS Conventions of Standard English, p. 25

1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

Voices Literature & Writing

- Conventions are explicitly taught in the writing instruction each week as one of the traits of effective writing.

CCSS Knowledge of Language, p. 25

3. 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.

<i>Voices Literature & Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Voices Literature & Writing</i> utilizes a language-rich approach. Because listening and speaking is used in discussions and presentations, students have constant opportunities to develop and apply the conventions of language in oral and written language.
<i>Voices Leveled Library</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading from <i>Voices Leveled Library</i> books allows opportunity for application and understanding how language is used in different contexts and genres.

CCSS Vocabulary Acquisition and Use, p. 25

4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

<i>Voices Literature & Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vocabulary is acquired through explicit instruction in theme vocabulary and weekly book-related listening vocabulary. Vocabulary minilessons (ex. Latin roots, using context) enable students to independently analyze words and determine meanings.
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CCSS 5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and **nuances in word meanings.**

<i>Voices Literature & Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explicit instruction in word relationships, shades of meaning (nuances), using context, etc. is incorporated into the lesson plans' minilessons. Additional support is also included for English Language Learners and those requiring Extra Support.
<i>Voices Leveled Library</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides rich opportunities for developing word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

Reading resources that support the goals of the Common Core State Standards

CCSS Items in light purple boxes are directly from the Common Core State Standards.

<p>CCSS 6. Acquire and use accurately a range of 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 encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.</p>	
<p><i>Voices Literature & Writing</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because the Teacher Read-Aloud book, related oral discussions, and writing are so closely related, students develop deep understanding and ownership of new vocabulary in this rich language environment. Words are used repeatedly in multiple ways over the course of an extended period of time.
<p>CCSS Range, Quality, and Complexity of Student Reading K–5, p. 31</p>	
<p><i>Voices Literature & Writing</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The program is based on Teacher Read-Alouds and writing; it is not a core comprehensive program in which students read from an anthology or paperbacks, although students hear a broad range of literary genres.
<p><i>Voices Leveled Library</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students read increasingly complex texts that include realistic and historical fiction, narrative nonfiction and expository texts, drama, mystery, fairy tales and folktales, opinion, and biographies.
<p>CCSS Staying on Topic Within a Grade and Across Grades: How to Build Knowledge Systematically in English Language Arts K–5, p. 33 “Within a grade level there should be an adequate number of titles on a single topic that would allow children to study that topic for a sustained period. Knowledge...should be expanded and developed in subsequent grade levels to ensure an increasingly deeper understanding of these topics...Having children listen to informational read-alouds in the early grades helps lay the necessary foundation for students’ reading and understanding of increasingly complex texts on their own in subsequent grades.”</p>	
<p><i>Voices Literature & Writing</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The same six theme topics are developed with increasing sophistication from Kindergarten–Grade 6. Each theme offers several read-aloud titles that develop the theme concepts. • This approach provides systematic development of the theme concepts and offers an opportunity to build community through common conversations among staff, students, and parents.
<p><i>Voices Leveled Library</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides increasingly more difficult text for students to extend their understandings through independent or guided reading.

Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards

CCSS Reading—Text Complexity, pp. 2–16

- importance of elements that address text complexity—qualitative, quantitative, and reader and task considerations

<i>Voices Literature & Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through Teacher Read-Alouds of rich, high quality trade books containing content around issues that address important social and emotional concepts, teachers scaffold students into successful reading experiences by modeling fluency. By introducing increasingly more complex issues to which the listener’s personal experiences contribute, students develop strong oral language through discussion and exposure to rich vocabulary. • Each grade level collection of Teacher Read-Aloud books contains books of varying length, genre, and illustrative support.
<i>Voices Leveled Library</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The books in <i>Voices Leveled Library</i> gradually increase in length and text complexity.

CCSS Writing—Standards’ Three Text Types, pp. 23–25

- Argument
- Informational/Explanatory
- Narrative

<i>Voices Literature & Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Opinion</i>: Democracy theme, Grades K–5/<i>Argument</i>: Democracy theme, Grade 6 • <i>Informative/Explanatory</i>: Perspective Taking; Family, Friends, and Community; and Social Awareness themes • <i>Narrative</i>: Identity Awareness and Conflict Resolution themes
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<p>CCSS Speaking and Listening, pp. 26–27 The Special Role of Speaking and Listening in K–5 Literacy “Oral language development precedes and is the foundation for written language development.... Children’s oral language competence is strongly predictive of their facility in learning to read and write: listening and speaking vocabulary and even mastery of syntax set boundaries as to what children can read and understand no matter how well they can decode....”</p>	
<i>Voices Literature & Writing</i>	Students engage in collaborative conversations as they work with partners and then in small groups enabling them to incorporate peer suggestions and to defend their position with evidence from the text, other sources, and their personal experiences.
<p>CCSS “...research strongly suggests that the English language arts classrooms should explicitly address the link between oral and written language, exploiting the influence of oral language on a child’s later ability to read by allocating instruction time to building children’s listening skills...”</p>	
<i>Voices Literature & Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The language rich approach links the daily Teacher Read-Aloud with follow-up discussions which develop strong oral language, provides for the use of oral vocabulary, guides students to listen to different perspectives, and deepens comprehension. • Students will experience a much greater amount of time devoted to engaging in discussion/oral language use than in traditional classrooms. • This systematic approach builds the listening-speaking foundation for successful reading and writing experiences. • Oral language discussion and the consideration of multiple perspectives provide the foundation linking to written language instruction.
<p>CCSS “This focus on oral language is of greatest importance for the children most at risk—children for whom English is a second language and children who have not been exposed at home to the kinds of language found in written texts.... An excellent education requires that issues of oral language come to the fore in elementary classrooms.”</p>	
<i>Voices Literature & Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Language Learners and Differentiated Instruction teaching notes are located in the side margins of the lesson plans offering additional support to reach all learners.

CCSS Read-Alouds and the Reading-Speaking-Listening Link, p. 27

“By reading a story or nonfiction selection aloud, teachers allow children to experience written language without the burden of decoding, granting them access to content that they may not be able to read and understand by themselves. Children are then free to focus their mental energy on the words and ideas presented in the text, and they will eventually be better prepared to tackle rich written content on their own.”

Voices Literature & Writing

- Teachers read aloud high quality trade book literature each day. These high quality texts provide models of varied genre, sentences structures, and vocabulary.
- Teachers facilitate oral conversations that extend the literary and theme concepts and help develop deep comprehension. Students are encouraged to use the new vocabulary in their oral conversations as well as in their writing, giving them multiple experiences in using new vocabulary, concepts, and conventions of language.
- Students develop understanding of important concepts they might not be able to access on their own.

CCSS Language, pp. 28–31

“...conventions, knowledge of language, and vocabulary extend across reading, writing, speaking, and listening.”

Voices Literature & Writing

- The rich trade book literature in the Teacher Read-Aloud collection provides a model of varied use of language conventions and opportunities for students to incorporate interesting patterns in their speech and writing.

Reading resources that support the goals of the Common Core State Standards

CCSS Items in light purple boxes are directly from the Common Core State Standards.

<p>CCSS Conventions and Knowledge of Language Teaching and Learning the Conventions of Standard English <i>Development of Grammatical Knowledge</i> "...the Standards account for the recursive, ongoing nature of grammatical knowledge..." <i>Making Appropriate Grammar and Usage Choices in Writing and Speaking</i> <i>Using Knowledge of Grammar and Usage for Reading and Listening Comprehension</i></p>	
<p><i>Voices Literature & Writing</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language conventions are explicitly taught in the writing minilessons at the time they can be immediately applied in the student's writing giving purpose and opportunity for use. Grammar instruction is both recursive and progressive as the level of work becomes more sophisticated across the grades.
<p>CCSS Vocabulary, pp. 32–35 Acquiring Vocabulary "Research suggests that if students are going to grasp and retain words and comprehend text, they need incremental, repeated exposure in a variety of contexts to the words they are trying to learn... Key to students' vocabulary development is building rich and flexible word knowledge. Students need plentiful opportunities to use and respond to the words they learn through playful informal talk, discussion, reading or being read to, and responding to what is read...Most word learning occurs indirectly and unconsciously through normal reading, writing, listening, and speaking."</p>	
<p><i>Voices Literature & Writing</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocabulary instruction and the opportunities to use the new words are integrated into each aspect of <i>Voices Literature & Writing</i>. The "Theme Vocabulary" and "Listening Vocabulary" are used by listening to the read-alouds, participating in discussion, and in writing. Students have multiple opportunities to use new words in thinking, reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities.
<p><i>Voices Leveled Library</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plentiful opportunities are available for the use of new vocabulary.

CCSS Tier Two Words and Access to Complex Texts

“...Tier Two words are frequently encountered in complex written texts and are particularly powerful because of their wide applicability...”

<i>Voices Literature & Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key words are introduced prior to each Teacher Read-Aloud through explicit instruction and in the Background Building Videos. Students have many opportunities to incorporate them into their discussions and in their related writing.
<i>Voices Leveled Library</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students learn many new words and are able to listen to them through Audio Recordings prior to reading them in leveled text and using them in follow-up activities.

CCSS Tier Three Words and Content Learning

“...vocabulary development for these words occurs most effectively through a coherent course of study in which subject matters are integrated and coordinated across the curriculum and domains become familiar to the student over several days or weeks.”

<i>Voices Literature & Writing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Theme Vocabulary” establishes core vocabulary that will be part of the concept development for the theme and therefore used for many weeks. Additional content-specific words will be introduced through the read-aloud literature and the accompanying informational Background Building videos.
<i>Voices Leveled Library</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Content specific vocabulary is also taught through <i>Voices Leveled Library</i> instruction.

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