

Arizona English Language Arts (ELA) Standards Revision – Expert Panel Review

Reviewer Name

Sara Abercrombie

As you conduct your review of the **introduction**, please consider the following questions.

- A. Does the introduction provide sufficient information and guidance on how to read the standards?
- B. Does the introduction provide sufficient information on how the standards are structured?
- C. Is there anything missing that should be included in the introduction?

1. Please provide feedback on the introduction section. Include strengths as well as suggestions for refinements.

The introduction section is very clear, and helps clarify the purpose of the standards, and well as the structure and formatting of the standards. It is not apparent why the Reading Foundational Skills and Writing Foundational Skills are indented in the section, Overview of the Standards, unless it is because these areas extend only to grades 5 and 3, respectively. I think these could be rightly considered standard categories, rather than subcategories.

As
you

conduct your review of the **glossary**, please consider the following questions.

- A. Does the glossary identify key terms and resources?
- B. Do the definitions provide sufficient guidance for practitioners?
- C. Is there anything missing that should be included in the glossary?

2. Please provide feedback on the glossary section. Include strengths as well as suggestions for refinements.

I found the glossary very useful. The section, Reading Foundational Skills, is especially helpful for educators. The definition of manuscript letters might be added for clarification. The definition of functional texts might be omitted, as the standards specific to functional texts are being removed. A list of common Latin and Greek roots might also be added.

As

you conduct your review of the standards, please consider the following questions.

- A. Does each standard clearly state what students should know and be able to do?
- B. Can the standards be measured?
- C. Are there any ambiguous or unclear words/phrases (some, a few, follow, understand...)?
- D. Do the standards in each section have sufficient **breadth of content or skill**?

- E. Do the standards in each section have sufficient **depth of content and rigor**?
- F. Is there meaningful alignment and development of skills/knowledge across the standard from one grade level to the next?
- G. Are the standards written with clear student expectations that would be interpreted and implemented consistently across the state?

3. Please provide feedback on the Reading Literature (RL) Strand. Include strengths as well as suggestions for refinements.

The vertical alignment of the standards in this strand is very clear and appropriate. The inclusion of prompting and support in the K standards in this area encourages developmentally appropriate practice without dictating instructional practice. While developmental appropriateness is often more contingent on instructional practices rather than the standards per se, the standards in this section are almost all within the realm of the cognitive abilities of the typical aged student in each grade level (see exception noted below for Standard 4.RL.4). The standards in this strand are written in clear language reflecting measurable student actions.

In Standard 4.RL.4., the addition of figurative language to the standard is marginally developmentally appropriate for this age range because children at the fourth grade level are just beginning to be capable of abstract thinking.

4. Please provide feedback on the Reading Informational (RI) Text Strand. Include strengths as well as suggestions for refinements.

The vertical and horizontal alignment are clear and appropriate, and the standards are measurable and unambiguous. For the most part, the standards are appropriately rigorous and have both breadth and depth.

Standard 2.RI.3, “Describe the connection between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text”, is potentially beyond the developmental range of many second grade students, because it requires flexible use of seriation, which is a cognitive skill that is just emerging by age 7. I suggest adding “With prompting and support” to the beginning of this standard.

Standard RI.10 was omitted so that there is no mention of functional texts, or perhaps functional texts are now grouped with informational texts. Since the reading skills used to decode functional texts are somewhat different than informational texts, and since functional texts have specific value for College and Career Readiness, this omission might be problematic regarding sufficient breadth of content and skill.

5. Please provide feedback on the Reading Foundational (RF) Skills strand (Grades K-5). Include strengths as well as suggestions for refinements.

I think this section is very well done. In general, the standards are clear and measurable, and the vertical alignment is clear and logical.

K.RF.2 e: The wording is inconsistent with that of the other standards. Consider omitting first phrase, in order to make the standard more obviously about an observable student action.

The standards 1.WF.2 seem to overlap with 1.RF.2 – how are the Phonological Awareness standards different than the oral language standards mentioned in grade 1 Writing Foundations?

6. Please provide feedback on the Writing (W) strand. Include strengths as well as suggestions for refinements.

The standards in the Writing strand are clear, and demonstrate both horizontal and vertical alignment. All the standards in this strand appear to be developmentally appropriate and measure breadth and depth of content, particularly because guidance and support from adults is specified for appropriate standards. The standards are measurable. I do not have further suggestions for refinements for this strand.

7. Please provide feedback on the Writing Foundational (WF) Skills strand (Grades K-3). Include strengths as well as suggestions for refinements.

In general, I applaud the committee for the deliberate and intentional focus on writing skills in the standards. I feel this is a worthwhile and important addition to the current standards, as writing is a critical skill that needs to be more deliberately taught. However, I found the vertical and horizontal alignment of the standards in this section less transparent and harder to evaluate compared to the standards in other categories. For example, in the grade 3 standards, standards around using dictionaries and glossaries to identify the meaning of words was moved to this section, while it remained in the Language strand in grade 2. The standards 1.WF.2 seem to overlap with 1.RF.2 – how are the Phonological Awareness standards different than the oral language standards mentioned in grade 1 Writing Foundations?

The second grade standard for handwriting (2.WF.1) should more directly scaffold the skills needed to develop the skill to write in cursive in third grade, such as how students form manuscript letters and the clarity and form of the letters, skills needed for cursive writing. This was more clearly outlined in the first grade WF standards, but the second grade standards don't seem to build on the first grade standards.

The most major concern that I have regarding this section is the Spelling standards for grades 1 and 2 are much more complex in terms of cognitive demand compared to the reading standards in other sections (the Kindergarten standards seem well aligned). Decoding is a simpler cognitive task compared to encoding, therefore grammatical complexity should first be introduced in the reading standards, not in the writing standards. In addition, Standard 1.WF.3, sections a., b., and c. all specify very specific types of single syllable, inflected ending, and two-syllable words, and it is not clear what the specific limits are for expectations here. Are the students to spell any words following these patterns, and if not how is the scope being limited? Are these above and beyond the 100 most frequent words in English as mentioned in 1.WF.3.d? Finally, the grain size of the detail offered in these standards seems somewhat out of step with how the rest of the standards are generally written.

8. Please provide feedback on the Speaking and Listening (SL) strand. Include strengths as well as suggestions for refinements.

The standards in the Writing strand are clear, and demonstrate both horizontal and vertical alignment. All the standards in this strand appear to be developmentally appropriate and measure breadth and depth of content, with the exception of the standard 2.SL.5. I suggest adding “with guidance and support from adults” to this standard, as the second graders are likely not able to create audio recordings independently. The standards are measurable, with one exception - differentiating between engaging and non-engaging audio recordings (3.SL.5) is not easily measurable. Since this is the only grade level in which this standard mentions “engagement” as a goal, this aspect of the standard could possibly be eliminated.

9. Please provide feedback on the Language (L) strand. Include strengths as well as suggestions for refinements.

The standards in the Language strand are clear, and demonstrate both horizontal and vertical alignment. All the standards in this strand appear to be developmentally appropriate and measure breadth and depth of content, The standards are measurable. I do not have further suggestions for refinements for this strand.

10. Please provide any additional comments about this draft that you want the revision committee to consider.