

Grade 7 Reading Standards

Grade 7 Reading Standards for Literature [RL]

The following standards offer a focus for instruction each year and help ensure that students gain adequate exposure to a range of texts and tasks. Rigor is also infused through the requirement that students read increasingly complex texts through the grades. *Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.*

Key Ideas and Details

1. Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what a text states explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, quoting or paraphrasing as appropriate. (See grade 7 Writing Standard 8 for more on quoting and paraphrasing.)
2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of a text.
3. Analyze how particular elements of a story, poem, or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

Craft and Structure

4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning, tone, or mood, including the impact of repeated use of particular images. (See grade 7 Language Standards 4–6 on applying knowledge of vocabulary to reading.)
5. Analyze how aspects of a literary work's structure contribute to its meaning or style (e.g., the effect of repetition in an epic, flashback in a novel, soliloquy in a drama).
6. Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version.

For example, students analyze how an author uses words and phrases to create a mood of fear in a print text and compare that to the way a film director creates a similar mood with settings and images, sounds, lighting, and camera angles.

8. (Not applicable. For expectations regarding themes in literary texts, see RL.2.)
9. Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history.

*For example, students read Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and selections from Twain's autobiography. They explore the conflicts and tensions in the novel, including the honesty, lies, and oaths by various characters and their consequences, and historical conflicts, such as the prejudices of mid-nineteenth-century America. Students write an essay on one of the conflicts and deliver an oral report, using evidence to support their arguments and conclusions. (RL.7.1, RL.7.9, RI.7.1, W.7.1, SL.7.4)*

10. Independently and proficiently read and comprehend literary texts representing a variety of genres, cultures, and perspectives and exhibiting complexity appropriate for at least grade 7. (See [more on qualitative and quantitative dimensions of text complexity](#).)

Grade 7 Reading Standards for Informational Text [RI]

Key Ideas and Details

1. Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what a text states explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, quoting or paraphrasing as appropriate. (See grade 7 Writing Standard 8 for more on quoting and paraphrasing.)
2. Determine a text's central idea(s) and analyze its/their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of a text.
3. Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).

Craft and Structure

4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone. (See grade 7 Language Standards 4–6 on applying knowledge of vocabulary to reading.)

For example, students read David Macaulay's Cathedral: The Story of its Construction and analyze how he uses words and images to depict the complex process of architectural design and the sequence of construction in the medieval period. In order to develop a thesis about the characteristics of Macaulay's style as a writer/illustrator, they examine a collection of his books and write an essay about his style as a writer of literary nonfiction. (RI.7.1, RI.7.4, W.7.2, W.7.9)

5. Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections and text features (e.g., headings) contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.
6. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Compare and contrast a written text to an audio, video, or multimedia version, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).
8. Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.
9. Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. Independently and proficiently read and comprehend literary nonfiction representing a variety of genres, cultures, and perspectives and exhibiting complexity appropriate for at least grade 7. (See [more on qualitative and quantitative dimensions of text complexity](#).)

Grade 7 Writing Standards [W]

The following standards for grades 6–12 offer a focus for instruction each year to help ensure that students gain adequate mastery of a range of skills and applications. Each year in their writing, students should demonstrate increasing sophistication in all aspects of language use, from vocabulary and syntax to the development and organization of ideas, and they should address increasingly demanding content and sources. *Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year’s grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.* The expected growth in student writing ability is reflected both in the standards themselves and in the collection of annotated student writing samples in [Appendix C of the Common Core State Standards](#) and the [Massachusetts Writing Standards in Action Project](#).

Text Types and Purposes

Note: The intent of Writing Standards 1–3 is to ensure flexibility, not rigidity, in student writing. Many effective pieces of writing blend elements of more than one text type in service of a single purpose: for example, an argument may rely on anecdotal evidence, a short story may function to explain some phenomenon, or a literary analysis may use explication to develop an argument. In addition, each of the three types of writing is itself a broad category encompassing a variety of texts: for example, narrative poems, short stories, and memoirs represent three distinct forms of narrative writing. Finally, although the bulk of writing assigned in school should address the purposes described below, other forms of writing—for example, personal reflections in prose or poem form, scripts of dramas or interviews—should have a place in the classroom as well. To develop flexibility and nuance in their own writing, students need to engage with a wide range of complex model texts (see Reading Literature Standard 10 and Reading Informational Text Standard 10) and study authors who have written successfully across genres (see [Appendix B: A Literary Heritage](#)).

1. Write arguments (e.g., essays, letters to the editor, advocacy speeches) to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
 - a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically in paragraphs and sections.
 - b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
 - c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence.
 - d. Establish and maintain a style appropriate to audience and purpose (e.g., formal for academic writing).
 - e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

In “Animal Rights: Give them a Voice,” on [Massachusetts Writing Standards in Action](#), a seventh grade student makes the claim for the rights of animals, giving vivid examples of the conditions under which they are raised for food and experimentation. Acknowledgment and rebuttal of the opposing claim as well as discussion of a practical compromise alternative demonstrate the writer’s understanding of the complexity of the issue. (W.7.1, W.7.4, W.7.9, RI.7.1, L.7.2, L.7.3, L.7.5)

2. Write informative/explanatory texts (e.g., essays, oral reports, biographical feature articles) to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
 - a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information in paragraphs and sections, using strategies such as definition, classification,

comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include text features (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

- b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
- c. Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
- d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- e. Establish and maintain a style appropriate to audience and purpose (e.g., formal for academic writing).
- f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

*The theme, “Fear can turn human beings into monsters” is explored in a literary analysis essay on [Massachusetts Writing Standards in Action](#) that examines Rod Serling’s teleplay, “The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street,” from the early television series, *The Twilight Zone*. (RL.7.1, RL.7.2, W.7.2, W.7.4, L.7.3, SL.7.2)*

- 3. Write narratives to develop experiences or events using effective literary techniques, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured sequences.
 - a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an appropriate narrative sequence.
 - b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
 - c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
 - d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and figurative and sensory language to establish a mood that evokes an emotion, to capture action, and to convey experiences or events.
 - e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

The narrative mode is used with imagination and skill in two seventh grade examples on [Massachusetts Writing Standards in Action](#). In the first example, “The Great Escape: from the Amazing Adventures of Bunny Foo Foo,” the point of view is that of a pet rabbit, just on the edge of finding freedom from its cage, and the story is told with a playful tone as a first person narrative. “The Tale of a Leaf,” the second example, is a poem that uses vivid sensory and figurative language and symbolism to impart a sense of joy and wonder to the autumn flight of a falling leaf. Both examples are aligned to Standards W.7.3, W.7.10, W.7.4, L.7.1, L.7.2, and L.7.5.

Production and Distribution of Writing

- 4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

For example, students studying the genre of mystery stories write narratives in which they introduce a variety of characters with distinctive traits, create plausible yet mysterious events, use vivid descriptions to create mood, use foreshadowing clues that point to the solution of the mystery, and resolve the mystery with an explanation by one of the characters. (RL.7.10, W.7.3, W.7.4)

5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
 - a. Demonstrate command of standard English conventions (as described in Language Standards 1–3 up to and including grade 7).
 - b. Demonstrate the ability to select accurate vocabulary appropriate for audience and purpose (as described in Language Standards 4–6 up to and including grade 7).
6. Use technology, including current web-based communication platforms, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.
8. When conducting research, gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support written analysis, interpretation, reflection, and research, applying one or more grade 7 Standards for Reading Literature or Reading Informational Text as needed.

Range of Writing

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 discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Grade 7 Speaking and Listening Standards [SL]

The following standards for grades 6–12 offer a focus for instruction in each year to help ensure that students gain adequate mastery of a range of skills and applications. *Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.*

Comprehension and Collaboration

1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 7 topics, texts, and issues*, building on others' ideas and clearly expressing their own.
 - a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion. (See grade 7 Reading Literature Standard 1 and Reading Informational Text Standard 1 for specific expectations regarding the use of textual evidence.)
 - b. Follow rules for collegial discussions, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
 - c. Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed.
 - d. Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.

2. Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study.
3. Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

4. Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate vocabulary, eye contact, volume, and pronunciation. (See grade 7 Language Standards 4–6 for specific expectations regarding vocabulary.)
5. Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points.
6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grade 7 Language Standards 1 and 3 for specific expectations.)

Grade 7 Language Standards [L]

The following standards for grades 6–12 offer a focus for instruction each year to help ensure that students gain adequate mastery of a range of skills and applications. Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades. *For example, though conventions of pronoun usage may receive the most attention in grade 7, more nuanced discussions of pronouns should develop throughout the upper grades as students continue to analyze speakers' and authors' choices of words, work toward precision in speaking and writing, and more.*

Conventions of Standard English

1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking; retain and further develop language skills learned in previous grades. (See grade 7 Writing Standard 5 and Speaking and Listening Standard 6 on strengthening writing and presentations by applying knowledge of conventions.)
Sentence Structure, Variety, and Meaning
 - a. Use phrases and clauses to communicate ideas precisely, with attention to skillful use of verb tenses to add clarity.
 - b. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (those that have unclear or ambiguous antecedents).¹
 - c. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person in sentences with multiple clauses and phrases.
 - d. Recognize that changing the placement of a phrase or clause can add variety, emphasize particular relationships among ideas, or alter the meaning of a sentence or paragraph.¹⁷
2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
 - a. Use a comma to separate coordinate adjectives (e.g., *a fascinating, enjoyable movie*).

¹ These skills are particularly likely to require continued attention in higher grades as they are applied to increasingly sophisticated writing and speaking. See the table in the Grades 6–12 resource section in this Framework.

- b.** Spell correctly, recognizing that some words have commonly accepted variations (e.g., donut/doughnut).

Knowledge of Language

- 3.** Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
 - a.** Maintain appropriate consistency in style and tone while varying sentence patterns for meaning and audience interest.
 - b.** Recognize variations from standard or formal English in writing and speaking, determine their appropriateness for the intended purpose and audience, and make changes as necessary.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

- 4.** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 7 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
 - a.** Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
 - b.** Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., *belligerent*, *bellicose*, *rebel*).
 - c.** Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.
 - d.** Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
- 5.** Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
 - a.** Interpret figures of speech (e.g., literary, biblical, mythological allusions) in context.
 - b.** Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., synonym/antonym, analogy) to better understand each of the words.
 - c.** Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., *refined*, *respectful*, *polite*, *diplomatic*, *condescending*).
- 6.** Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; independently research words and gather vocabulary knowledge. (See grade 7 Reading Literature Standard 4 and Reading Informational Text Standard 4 on applying knowledge of vocabulary to reading; see grade 7 Writing Standard 5 and Speaking and Listening Standard 4 on strengthening writing and presentations by applying knowledge of vocabulary.)