

**Critique of the DECEMBER 2015 Draft
English Language Arts and Reading Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills
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1. Does each grade level or course follow a complete and logical development of English language arts and reading concepts?

IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE

2. Have the correct vocabulary and terminology been used throughout the TEKS?

NO WAY TO TELL

3. Is the level of rigor appropriate for each grade level?

NO WAY TO TELL. No sample titles are provided to indicate desired reading levels at every grade level.

4. Are the student expectations (SEs) clear and specific? **NO**

5. Are the TEKS aligned horizontally and vertically? If not, what gaps should be addressed?

THE DOCUMENT MUST FIRST BE TRANSLATED INTO DECENT ENGLISH PROSE WITH SUB-GROUPINGS IN EACH SILO, AND THEN ALIGNED VERTICALLY ALLOWING READERS TO SEE IF THERE ARE ANY PROGRESSIONS AT ALL.

6. Can all student expectations reasonably be taught within the amount of time typically allotted for the grade level or high school course prior to the end of the school year or prior to a state assessment?

IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE

7. Are there student expectations that can be eliminated in order to streamline the standards?

YES. ELIMINATE ALL REPETITIONS. THERE ARE MORE REPETITIONS THAN GRADE-UNIQUE STANDARDS.

8. Are there specific areas that need to be updated to reflect current research?

VOCABULARY STANDARDS NEED TO BE REWRITTEN TO ADDRESS PAST 100 YEARS OF RESEARCH.

9. Are the College and Career Readiness Standards adequately and appropriately addressed throughout the TEKS?

NOT POSSIBLE TO DETERMINE

10. Do you have any other suggestions for ways in which the English language arts and reading TEKS can be improved?

HERE ARE THE MOST URGENT ONES:

1. Eliminate the requirement for “integrated standards” wherever it appears. One can’t require integration of standards and then give teachers a meaningless collection of silo standards. See #12 for strands that can be integrated for research processes.

Eight Silos in Current Draft

foundational skills
comprehension
response
collaboration
multiple genres
author’s purpose and craft
composition and presentation
research and inquiry

2. Use meaningful titles for strands, with subtitles for sub-groupings that vary across the grades, and then show developmental progressions across grades in each of the major genres, as in my first outline.

3. Eliminate all repeated objectives/sub-standards. Do not count verb changes. Never repeat a standard. Simply tell teachers in each grade to build on earlier standards. In each grade, teachers should address new standards that incorporate earlier objectives. As examples of the problem, the standards below appear in every grade and usually in the same order.

Kindergarten

Comprehension

- (E) use text features, elements and structure to make and confirm predictions;
- (D) generate questions about text to deepen understanding and gain information;
- (C) visualize sensory images to interpret and analyze texts;
- (B) search for and use connections to personal experiences, to ideas in other texts and to the larger community;

Grade 2

Comprehension

- (A) combine information from the text and the readers’ schema in order to create new understanding;
- (B) use text features, elements and structure to make and confirm predictions, ...
- (C) generate questions about text to deepen understanding and gain information;
- (D) visualize sensory images to interpret and analyze texts;
- (E) search for and use connections to personal experiences, to ideas in other texts and to the larger community;

Grade 6

Comprehension

- (A) combine information from the text and the readers schema in order to create a new understanding;
- (B) use text features, elements, and structure to make and confirm predictions;
- (C) generate questions about text to deepen understanding and gain information;
- (D) visualize to create sensory images to interpret and analyze text;
- (E) search connections to personal experiences, ideas in other texts, and to the larger community

English I

Comprehension

- (A) combine information from the text and the reader’s schema in order to create a new understanding;
- (B) use text features, elements, and structure to make and confirm predictions;
- (C) generate questions about text to deepen understanding and gain information;
- (D) visualize to create sensory images to interpret and analyze text;
- (E) search connections to personal experiences, ideas in other texts, and to the larger community;

English II

Comprehension

- (A) combine information from the text and the reader’s schema in order to create a new understanding;

- (B) use text features, elements, and structure to make and confirm predictions;
- (C) generate questions about text to deepen understanding and gain information;
- (D) visualize to create sensory images to interpret and analyze text;
- (E) search connections to personal experiences, ideas in other texts, and to the larger community;

English III

Comprehension

- (A) combine information from the text and the reader’s schema in order to create a new understanding;
- (B) use text features, elements, and structure to make and confirm predictions;
- (C) generate questions about text to deepen understanding and gain information;
- (D) visualize to create sensory images to interpret and analyze text;
- (E) search connections to personal experiences, ideas in other texts, and to the larger community;

English 4

Comprehension

- (A) combine information from the text and the reader’s schema in order to create a new understanding;
- (B) use text features, elements, and structure to make and confirm predictions;
- (C) generate questions about text to deepen understanding and gain information;
- (D) visualize to create sensory images to interpret and analyze text;
- (E) search connections to personal experiences, ideas in other texts, and to the larger community

4. Eliminate all incomprehensible and undoable statements.

For example, in Kindergarten:

- *self-select texts and reading independently for a sustained period of time
- *sort through information read to distinguish what is most important to understanding an author’s message

For example, in grade 3 for Inquiry and Research:

- *evaluate the validity and reliability of sources to include differentiating between copyright, paraphrasing, and plagiarism

For example, in grade 6:

- * explain how texts evoke personal response

For example, in English 2:

- *write argumentative essays utilizing genre characteristics and author’s craft;
- *develop an engaging idea reflecting depth of thought with specific details and relevance;
- *analyze the structure and elements of classical, traditional, contemporary, and diverse literature including universal theme and author’s message in different time periods;
- *analyze text from literary and expository genres as models to craft authentic writing;

5. Write all objectives in English so they are comprehensible to teachers and parents

For example, the follow statement in K-12 seems to mean “Find the main idea.”

(F) sort through information read to distinguish what is most important to understanding an author’s message. But who does the reading? The teacher or the student? What are K students to sort through?

6. Put all vocabulary objectives where they belong—with Comprehension, not word identification skills. 100 years of research shows that the essential component of reading comprehension is vocabulary. There is NO research supporting “use of context” to understand the meaning of unfamiliar words through the grades. Just because Common Core stresses use of context for acquiring new vocabulary doesn’t mean that this ridiculous diktat must be used in Texas. Nor has any mathematician or scientist ever said that using the vocabulary of their disciplines orally is a way to learn how to think like one.

7. Rewrite all introductory material in English and use only once—at the beginning.

8. Put all strand titles and descriptions into English. E.g., the following is unreadable: (8) Inquiry and Research: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing using Multiple Texts. Students engage in both short-term and sustained recursive inquiry processes for self-selected and assigned purposes.

9. Place the Research Process in a separate section, followed by the four major steps (and sub-steps) in a process for doing research. This allows teachers to use their judgment for what is appropriate for their students and the topic. The research process integrates reading, thinking, and writing activities.

- (1) Research planning;
- (2) Consulting appropriate sources,
- (3) Synthesizing relevant information, and
- (4) Organizing and presenting results

10. Provide guidelines for much more literary/historical content than is currently spelled out. Students must be prepared to read high school level material in high school if they are to be ready for college and career by grade 12 or to address the CCRS.

11. Provide an appendix (not a standard and sub-standards) on writing processes through the grades, just as there is one appendix on reading processes through the grades. The vertically aligned document has fine charts on the writing and reading process that should be in the grade-by-grade document. Writing Process does not belong among standards.

12. Use these 6 strands and sub-strands for grades 9-12. These will be integrated in the research process. For grades K-8, insert other foundational reading skills from 2008.

1. Vocabulary Development

2. Comprehension of Literary Texts

Poetry

Drama

Fiction

Literary Nonfiction

3. Comprehension of Informational Text

Expository Text

Persuasive Text

Procedural Text

4. Writing

Literary and Experience-Based Texts

Expository and Procedural Texts

Persuasive Texts

5. Oral and Written Conventions

Conventions

Handwriting

Spelling

6. Listening and Speaking

Listening

Speaking

Teamwork