

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course: Common Core in ELA: Instructional Shifts for Effective Implementation, Grades K-2

Presenters: KDS

45 Hours

Course Overview

The Common Core State Standards originated in 2010 and have been adopted by the majority of states across the country. The standards aim to increase the rigor of instruction for all students in order to adequately prepare them for success in college and careers. In this course, participants will explore the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts (CCSS-ELA) in grades K-2 to understand the purpose for the standards, the foundations of the standards, what students are expected to know, and how this will impact teachers' approach to instruction. The course will address the six major shifts in instruction, how these shifts will impact classroom practice, as well as how to address the needs of diverse student populations. Through readings, classroom instructional videos, and other materials, participants will gain a strong understanding of the standards and their application. Participants will become more informed educators who can implement the standards with fidelity in their school or district.

Course Objectives

After completing this course, participants will understand that:

- The College and Career Ready (CCR) Anchor Standards are the foundation for the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts (CCSS-ELA).
- The CCSS-ELA address four domains of literacy instruction: reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language, each with grade-specific standards.
- The CCSS-ELA requires 6 major shifts in instructional approach.
- Content-area subject (History/Social Studies, Science, and technical subjects) learning is supported by the CCSS-ELA; instruction in K-2 is interdisciplinary.
- The learning needs of a diverse range of students (English Language Learners, students with special needs, and gifted and talented learners) should be embedded in instruction.
- Informal assessments should continuously inform instruction.
- Families need to be informed about the CCSS-ELA and how it will impact their children's learning.

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, participants will be able to:

- Communicate in family-friendly language what students are expected to know in a standards-aligned curriculum and explain why this is important.
- Build a classroom library with a standards-aligned balance of informational and literary texts.
- Build a standards-aligned "text set"
- Plan standards-aligned lessons for K-2 students using the six instructional shifts to guide best practices teaching and learning.



Unit 1: Introduction to the CCSS-ELA

In this introductory unit, participants explore the Common Core State Standards for ELA in grades K-2 (CCSS-ELA) to understand the purpose for the standards, the foundations of the standards, what students are expected to know and how this will impact teachers' approach to instruction. Participants will also set goals for the course to guide their personal learning experience.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, participants will know:

- Why the CCSS-ELA standards were developed.
- The four major domains of the College and Career Readiness (CCR) Anchor Standards as the structure for understanding the CCSS-ELA
- The structure of the CCR anchor standards.

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, participants will apply the following skills:

- Set two to three personal learning goals for the course
- Identify an instructional practice presented in one of the classroom scenarios presented that they are interested in applying in their classroom.
- Understand the organization of the CCSS-ELA, specifically how to read the standards horizontally to see the development of skills over time and vertically to appreciate the full range of skills that students need to learn in a specific grade.
- Understand how the standards move from broad categories to more discrete grade-level standards.
- Explore how the integration of multiple standards within a lesson provides greater rigor for students' learning.

Unit 2: Organization of the CCSS-ELA

In this unit, participants explore what the College and Career Anchor Standards for ELA are, what the grade-specific standards are, and how the standards are organized. Participants explore the standards to gain an understanding of grade level expectations and content within the ELA classroom. This unit provides an in-depth look at the standards documents, including the anchor standards and grade-level standards.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, participants will know:

- The structure and major components of the standards.
- How the CCR anchor standards support rigor in students' learning.
- How CCSS-aligned lessons incorporate multiple standards.

Student Learning Outcomes



After completing this unit, participants will apply the following skills:

- Identify the four strands of literacy addressed by the CCR anchor standards.
- Match the broad reading standards for reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language to the literacy strands addressed in the CCR anchor standards.
- Analyze the teaching and learning in a literary text lesson.
- Reflect on how the integration of multiple standards in a lesson will apply to their own work.

Unit 3: Balancing Informational and Literary Text

In this unit, participants explore the instructional shifts teachers have to make in order to help students read a true balance of informational and literary text. In this unit, participants explore the differences between these genres, why it is important to achieve this balance, and how teachers can move toward this balance for purposes of all students being career and college ready.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, participants will know:

- The differences between narrative and informational text.
- What is meant by a “50-50% balance of literary and informational text”.
- How to explain the shift in balance in types of texts through the grade bands.
- Specific examples of the genres of literary and informational text.
- Practical ways in which he/she can start to gather appropriately balanced classroom resources for this instructional shift.
- Ways in which informational text becomes increasingly complex through K-5.

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, participants will apply the following skills:

- Explain the differences between literary and informational text.
- Explain how to approach creating a standards-aligned ratio of information to literary text in the K-2 classroom.
- Explain the ways in which informational text becomes increasingly complex through K-5.



Unit 4: Using Texts to Inform Disciplinary Knowledge

In this unit, participants build an understanding of the second shift in CCSS-ELA instructional practices. This shift focuses on the use of texts, content-rich informational text and literacy texts, as central to learning. This shift impacts all teachers, as the focus of instruction centers on students and their use of text to learn versus the traditional teacher role as the “distributor of knowledge.” This shift highlights the importance of students at the center of the learning process, text as a critical source of knowledge about the world, and the use of text as central to critical thinking, learning, discussion, and writing.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, participants will know:

- Why a K-2 teacher must consider the use of content-rich texts across the disciplines.
- A range of strategies used to make text central to learning in a CCSS-aligned classroom.
- The characteristics of a content-rich “text-set”.

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, participants will apply the following skills:

- Explain why a K-2 teacher must consider the use of content-rich texts across the disciplines.
- Describe a range of strategies used to make text central to learning in a CCSS-aligned classroom.
- Plan for the establishment of at least one best practice with respect to the use of texts as central to learning.
- Describe the characteristics of a content-rich “text-set”

Unit 5: Staircase of Text Complexity

In this unit, participants learn to understand text complexity in order to build a “text set” which not only focuses on content, but also focuses on multiple measures of text complexity. Participants learn how the standards call for shifts in instruction and materials to support a “staircase of complexity.” Participants apply their understanding of measures of text complexity to analyze currently used grade-level texts for their appropriateness based on a three-part model. Once participants have compiled and analyzed their list of grade-level texts, they then create a “text set” (layers of text) to represent a range and variety of quality, complex texts.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, participants will know:

- The meaning of a “staircase of complexity” and why it is vital to students being college and career ready.
- The qualitative rubrics for informational and literary rubrics as well as the *Reader and Task Considerations* as tools to help determine the complexity of text.

Student Learning Outcomes



After completing this unit, participants will apply the following skills:

- Describe what is meant by “staircase of complexity” and explain why complex text is vital to students being college and career ready.
- Analyze the key ideas associated with the instructional shift of text complexity.
- Explain the qualitative rubrics for informational and literary rubrics as well as the *Reader and Task Considerations* as tools to help identify the complexity of texts.
- Construct a standards-aligned text set.

Unit 6: Academic Vocabulary

In this unit, participants consider the instructional shifts teachers have to make in order to help students' master academic vocabulary, an additional variable that adds to text complexity. Academic vocabulary applies across all content areas and includes high-utility words that help students become career and college ready.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, participants will know:

- The instructional shift towards building students' academic vocabulary within grade-appropriate complex text.
- Explicit strategies and less-explicit best teaching practices for teaching of academic vocabulary.
- Examples of the three tiers of vocabulary words and the CCSS focus upon teaching Tier 2 (Academic Words) and Tier 3 (Content Specific Words).
- Four best instructional practices with respect to academic vocabulary.

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, participants will apply the following skills:

- Describe the need for explicit and less-explicit teaching of academic vocabulary, referencing the CCSS Vocabulary Acquisition Anchor Standards .
- Identify the three tiers of vocabulary words and an understanding of the focus in CCSS to teach Tier 2 (Academic Words) and Tier 3 (Content Specific Words).
- Identify best practices for introducing academic vocabulary in the classroom.



Unit 7: Text-Based Answers

In this unit, participants explore the creation of text-dependent questions to engage students in close reading of complex text. The Common Core State Standards call for text to be at the center of teachers' instruction and student learning. Therefore, teachers are charged with creating text-based or text-dependent questions to help students closely read, analyze, and critique the text.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, participants will know:

- Why an emphasis on text-based questions with text-dependent answers is an important instructional shift.
- Strategies associated with close reading of text using text-based questions.

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, participants will apply the following skills:

- Encourage a close reading of grade-level appropriate text using text-dependent questions.

Unit 8: Writing from Sources

In this unit, participants build on their growing knowledge to consider writing. They explore the instructional shifts teachers have to make in order to help students write using evidence from sources to inform or make an argument. Although narrative writing is one of the three genres of writing emphasized in the CCSS, because of the typical focus on narrative writing in K-2, this unit focuses upon writing to inform or to make an argument and how to help students garner evidence from text to do these types of writing well.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, participants will know:

- What is meant by using evidence from sources to write an informational piece or construct a written argument and will be able to explain why doing these tasks is important for career and college readiness.
- The textual characteristics of informational and opinion-based writing.
- Best practices for using evidence from the text to inform informational and opinion-based writing in the classroom.

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, participants will apply the following skills:

- Describe the need for the teaching of writing from sources, referencing the CCSS writing anchor standards and ELA standards.
- Identify the characteristics of informational and opinion writing in the K-2 grade band.
- Recognize best practices for using evidence from the text to inform informational and opinion-



based writing in the classroom.

Unit 9: Working with Diverse Learners

In this unit, participants explore ways to meet the needs of ALL students in the classroom not just those at grade level. This unit will begin to prepare participants to implement the Common Core State Standards with students including English Learners, students with special needs, and gifted and talented students.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, participants will know:

- The unique needs of English Learners, students with special needs, and gifted and talented students with regards to implementation of the CCSS.
- Strategies to support CCSS-aligned instruction of all students, particularly English Learners, students with special needs, and gifted and talented students.

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, participants will apply the following skills:

- Begin to support all learners in achieving the standards through the application of strategies to support CCSS instruction of all students, particularly English Learners, students with special needs, and gifted and talented students.

Unit 10: Epilogue

In this unit, the presenter revisits the promise of the Common Core State Standards, and participants reflect on next steps for incorporating what they've learned into their classroom practice.

Methods of Instruction

- Videos (consisting of lecture, interviews, and classroom footage)
- Readings
- Reflection questions (open-ended questions at intervals throughout the video presentations where participants are asked to reflect on the course content, their own practice, and their intentions for their practice)
- Quizzes (selected-response quizzes to assess understanding of the video presentations)



Plagiarism Policy

KDS recognizes plagiarism as a serious academic offense. Plagiarism is the passing off of someone else's work as one's own and includes failing to cite sources for others' ideas, copying material from books or the Internet (including lesson plans and rubrics), and handing in work written by someone other than the participant. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade and may have additional consequences. For more information about plagiarism and guidelines for appropriate citation, consult plagiarism.org.

Percentage of Course Credit

- Reflection questions 60%
- Quizzes 40%
- Midterm 25%
- Final 35%

In order to complete the requirements of the course, the participant must complete all course work (e.g., reflections, quizzes), including watching all videos. We do not award partial credit.

Grading Policy

A: 3.4 – 4.0
B: 2.7 – 3.3
C: 2.0 – 2.6
F: >2.0



Reflection/Quiz Rubric

Activity	Distinguished (4)	Proficient (3)	Basic (2)	Unsatisfactory (1)
Quizzes	90-100%	80-89%	70-79%	69% or below
Reflection Question	Participant has provided rich detail and supporting examples from the course content. Participant has made responses to prompts personally meaningful and relevant to his or her teaching practice.	Participant has included appropriate content from the course content. Participant has made thoughtful comments in direct response to the prompts.	Participant has included little that indicates consideration and comprehension of course content. Participant has answered most questions directly but some too briefly.	Participant has included little to no content indicating consideration and comprehension of course content. Participant has not addressed the specific questions posed. Participant has not responded to all reflection questions. Participant has copied from the course transcript without synthesis or analysis.