



Essential Standards Extended Guide

English Language Arts Kindergarten

Guiding Information:

In response to requests from schools and districts for guidance on essential standards, committees of educators from around Idaho collaborated in the summer of 2024 to categorize ELA standards into four groups:

- **Essential standards** are **explicitly taught, assessed more than once, and intervened upon** if students have not yet reached proficiency.
- **Supporting standards** are taught to support the learning of essential standards and may or may not be formally assessed.
- **Teacher Guidance standards** are core processes that should be used as guidance for teachers in the development and choice of instructional materials, unit design, and learning opportunities. An example of a learning opportunity would be infusing oral language into daily instruction, providing a rich oral language environment where students engage in meaningful and collaborative discussions, asking and answering questions, and making connections. These conversations help build foundational literacy skills by fostering vocabulary development, comprehension, and critical thinking, all of which support positive reading and writing outcomes.

This guidance helps LEAs prioritize the most critical standards, recognizing that not all standards are of equal importance. This document serves as a resource—not a mandate—to assist local efforts. Importantly, this work did not remove or revise any of the adopted Idaho Content Standards and is intended to refocus time and effort.

Given the skills-based nature of ELA, the standards can be grouped flexibly to meet student needs and support various instructional materials. To assist educators, the committees created a step-by-step process, outlined on page 6 of this document. This guide can help educators develop scope and sequence for their instructional time and district-specific courses and provide a starting point for building formative and summative assessments around the standards.

Teacher Guidance Standards

These standards provide direction for teachers in developing instructional materials, designing units, and creating learning opportunities.

K.RC.V.2: Regularly engage in listening to a series of texts related to the topics and themes being studied to build knowledge and vocabulary.

K.VD. AV.3: With support, use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading, and listening to texts.

Teacher Guidance Standards

These standards provide direction for teachers in developing instructional materials, designing units, and creating learning opportunities.

K.RS.DR.2: Listen to a series of texts organized around a variety of conceptually related topics to build knowledge about the world.

K.ODC.OC.1: Engage in collaborative discussions about grade-level topics and texts with peers by following agreed upon rules for discussions; listening to others and taking turns speaking through at least two exchanges.

Essential Standards

Standards are to be explicitly taught, assessed more than once, and intervened upon in this cluster of standards.

K.FR.PC.1a: Locate a printed word on a page.

K.FR.PC.1b: Recognize that spoken words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters.

K.FR.PC.1c: Know that print (not pictures) is what we read, and text holds meaning.

K.FR.PC.1d: Follow words from left to right with return sweep at the end of each line.

K.FR.PC.1e: Read left to right, top to bottom, and page by page.

K.FR.PC.1f: Understand that words are separated by spaces in print.

K.FR.PC.1g: Recognize the distinguishing features of a sentence (e.g., first word, capitalization, ending punctuation).

K.FR.PC.1h: Identify and name all upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet.

K.FR.PA.2b: Count, pronounce, blend, delete, and segment syllables in spoken words.

K.FR.PA.2c: Blend and segment onsets and rimes of single syllable spoken words.

K.FR.PA.2d: Isolate and pronounce the initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in spoken three-phoneme (consonant-vowel-consonant, or CVC) words and say the resulting word (Note: This does not include CVCs ending with /l/, /r/, or /x/).

K.FR.PA.2e: Add, substitute, and delete individual sounds (phonemes) in simple, one-syllable words to make new words.

K.FR.PH.3a: Demonstrate knowledge of one-to-one letter-sound correspondences by producing the most frequent sound for each consonant letter.

Essential Standards

Standards are to be explicitly taught, assessed more than once, and intervened upon in this cluster of standards.

K.FR.PH.3b: Associate the long and short sounds for the five major vowel letters.

K.FR.PH.3c: Read common high-frequency words with automaticity by sight (e.g., the, of, to, you, she, my, is, are, do, does).

K.FR.PH.3d: Distinguish between similarly spelled CVC words by identifying the sounds of the letters that differ.

K.RC.L.5a: Retell key details of familiar stories, poems, and nursery rhymes heard.

K.RC.NF.6a: Retell key details of texts heard.

K.VD.WB.1a: Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.

K.VD.WB.2b: Demonstrate understanding of frequently occurring verbs and adjectives by relating them to their synonyms and antonyms.

K.W.RW.1: Routinely write or dictate writing for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

K.W.HWK.2: Print all uppercase and lowercase letters of the alphabet. Write left to right and top to bottom with appropriate spaces between letters.

K.GC.GU.1d: Produce and expand complete sentences in shared language activities.

K.GC.GU.2: Recognize and name end punctuation.

K.GC.M.3: Spell words phonetically, drawing on knowledge of sound-letter relationships.

Supporting Standards

Standards that support the Essential Standards. These standards will be taught but may or may not be formally assessed.

K.FR.PC. 1: Demonstrate understanding of the basic features of print.

K.FR.PA.2: Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds.

K.FR.PA.2a Identify and produce rhyming words.

K.FR.PH.3: Use knowledge of grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.

K.RC.TE.3: Ask and answer questions about key details in texts heard.

K.RC.RF.4: Read emergent-reader texts (e.g., rhymes, songs, simple poems) with purpose and understanding.

Supporting Standards

Standards that support the Essential Standards. These standards will be taught but may or may not be formally assessed.

K.RC.L.5: With support, use evidence from literature read aloud to demonstrate understanding of grade-level texts.

K.RC.L.5b: Describe the connection between characters, settings, and major events in stories heard.

K.RC.L.5d: Define the roles of authors and illustrators in presenting the ideas or information in stories.

K.RC.L.5e: Compare and contrast the adventures or experiences of characters in familiar stories heard.

K.RC.NF.6: With support, use evidence from nonfiction works read aloud to demonstrate of grade-level texts.

K.RC.NF.6b: Describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in texts heard.

K.RC.NF.6c: Identify the front cover, back cover, and title page of nonfiction texts.

K.RC.NF.6d: Identify the reasons authors give to support points in texts heard.

K.RC.NF.6e: Identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts heard on the same topic.

K.VD.WB.1: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on kindergarten reading and content.

K.VD.WB.1b: Identify new meanings for familiar words and apply them accurately (e.g., discovering the verb “roll” is also a noun).

K.VD.WB.2: With support, explore word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

K.VD.WB.2a: Sort common objects into categories (e.g., foods, size) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent.

K.VD.WB.2c: Distinguish shades of meaning among verbs describing the general action (e.g., walk, march, strut, prance).

K.VD.WB.2d: Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., note places at home that are cozy).

K.ODC.OC.3: With support, ask and answer questions to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.

K.ODC.OC.4: Describe familiar people, places, things, and events with support.

K.GC.GU.1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

Supporting Standards

Standards that support the Essential Standards. These standards will be taught but may or may not be formally assessed.

K.GC.GU.1a: Form regular plural nouns orally by adding 's' or 'es' sound.

K.GC.GU.1b: Use interrogatives to ask questions in full sentences (e.g., who, what, where, when, why, how).

K.GC.GU.1c: Use frequently occurring prepositions (e.g., to, from, in, out, on, off, for, of, by, with).

Unit Planning with Standards

The Idaho Content Standards for English Language Arts have been grouped into four standard categories to acknowledge that the abundance of standards must be broken down for use in a classroom with students. This document provides guidance for educators to begin developing unit plans around the categorized standards.

Pre-Planning: Read through all the Teacher Guidance standards. These standards are necessary for teachers to consider and remember while completing the steps below.

Step	Description
Step 1	Begin by choosing 3-4 essential standards that can be grouped into a cohesive unit. You should choose these essential standards from different strands (writing, reading comprehension, research, oral and digital communication, vocabulary development, and grammar and conventions). You also need to consider the text(s) you have available or might use with your students to teach, support, practice, and assess these standards.
Step 2	Choose supporting standards. After identifying your essential standards, you should choose 2-3 supporting standards to use and potentially assess alongside your essential standards. When choosing these supporting standards, consider which ones might lend themselves to the work your students will do with the essential standards and what skills might be necessary to complete assessments. Remember, these standards may or may not be formally assessed in your classroom as you work through the unit.
Step 3	Create or find summative assessments for each essential standard. For every essential standard, you need to have a goal in mind and then work backward to meet that goal. Daily lessons and practice, formative assessments, and interventions should work towards these summative assessments of your essential standards. At this point, you should have 3-4 summative assessments that directly assess each of your essential standards.
Step 4	At this point, you should have 3-4 essential standards identified, 2-3 supporting standards identified, and 3-4 summative assessments tied to essential standards with potential connections to your supporting standards. You should now work to create formative assessments for all essential standards while using the supporting standards to help guide students and their learning. Consider creating/finding formative assessments that will lead to or practice the same types of work as your summative assessment. What might your students need to try and receive feedback on from your essential standards before they reach their summative assessment?

Step	Description
Step 5	Identify which additional standards you will use when/if there is time or need in your unit. These should be standards that might extend or enhance the grouping of standards and assessments you have already identified. Consider what blends well with the type of assessment you have created/found and what might benefit your students from learning once they are proficient with your essential and supporting standards.

Sample Unit Outline 1

Essential Standards	Supporting Standards	Teacher Guidance/Additional Standards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K.FR.PA.2d • K.FR.PH.3a • K.W.HWK.2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K.FR.PA.2 • K.FR.PA.2a • K.VD.WB.2d 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K.ODC.OC.1 • K.RC.V.2

Potential Assessment(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K.FR.PA.2d: Phoneme Isolation • K.FR.PH.3a: Phoneme-Grapheme Matching Assessment • K.W.HWK.2: Grapheme/word dictation

Rationale
<p>The essential, supporting, and teacher guidance standards were chosen to reflect the reciprocal and ongoing relationship between oral language, phonemic awareness, letter-sound correspondence, and writing. Listening to a variety of texts and engaging in discussions builds vocabulary and comprehension, while phonemic awareness helps students isolate sounds and supports one-to-one letter-sound correspondence for reading fluency. Writing further reinforces these skills by connecting phonemes to</p>

Rationale

graphemes, solidifying both phonological and orthographic processing. Together, these standards form a cohesive framework for developing strong early literacy foundation for reading and writing abilities.

For Questions Contact

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