

## An Overview of the Big Shifts in the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

February 14, 2012

<b>Appropriate Text Complexity</b>	Students have extensive opportunities to engage with complex texts. Teachers consider qualitative and quantitative measures as well as reader and task when selecting texts.
<b>Increased Reading of Informational Texts</b>	Throughout the school day, students at K-5 read a balance of 50% literature and 50% informational texts. By grade 12, at least 70% of texts read throughout the day should be informational texts. ELA classrooms at grades 6-12 will focus on literary nonfiction. At the secondary level, texts shift from narrative structures to those written to convey information, explanation, and points of view.
<b>Disciplinary Literacy</b>	Students read, write, and speak about discipline-related topics to build content knowledge. In the early grades, students read informational texts that include historical, scientific, and technical texts to prepare for the demands of reading discipline-specific texts in later grades. At grades 6-12, students grapple with discipline-specific complex texts that deepen their understanding of a topic and develop an understanding of the norms and conventions of each discipline; they demonstrate mastery by applying that knowledge when writing or speaking.
<b>Close Reading</b>	Students should read and reread texts of sufficient complexity to draw meaning from them. After students fully understand the text, they will be able to make appropriate connections and/or comparisons to other texts. For younger students or those needing additional help, the first reading of a text may be done by the teacher.
<b>Text-dependent Questions</b>	To gain deeper understanding of a text, students respond to high-quality questions about its content, structure, and language, including questions that ask students to make inferences and draw conclusions based on textual evidence. At least 80%-90% of questions about a text should be text-dependent.
<b>General Academic and Domain-specific Vocabulary</b>	Students acquire general academic vocabulary (Tier Two words) to comprehend complex texts that cross disciplines and domain-specific vocabulary (Tier Three words) that enables students to comprehend language specific to a discipline. Students demonstrate mastery by using both types of vocabulary when speaking and writing.
<b>Argumentative Writing</b>	Throughout the school day, all students write about topics or texts, some of which have differing viewpoints. In grades K-5, 30% of student writing should be writing opinions. In grades 6-8, 35% of student writing should be writing arguments in which they support claims with reasons and evidence. In grades 9-12, 40% of student writing should be well-developed arguments.
<b>Short and Sustained Research Projects</b>	Students conduct research, both short and long term, in which they synthesize information from many sources, construct knowledge, use technology when appropriate, and present findings in a variety of formats.