

## Module 1:

Instructional Implications of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects.  
Session 2: Informational Text, Grades K–5



### Session Description

Participants will examine the K-5 grade-specific Reading Informational Text Standards of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects.

### Expected Outcomes

- Become familiar with the K-5 CCSS Reading Informational Text Standards.
- Identify standards that may be new or represent a new emphasis for Oregon teachers.
- Become aware of relevant resources in the ODE document *K-12 Teachers: Building Comprehension in the Common Core*.

### Agenda

- Welcome and Introduction (5 minutes)
- CCSS Reading Informational Text Standards ( 25 minutes)
  - Partner activity – Progression of difficulty
  - Partner activities – What's new? and ideas to approach these standards
- Resources from *K-12 Teachers: Building Comprehension in the Common Core* and the *Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework* (5 minutes)
- Reflection (10 minutes)
  - Partner activity – How did we do?
  - What's next?
  - Reflection

### Time

- 45 minutes

### Audience

- Designed to be used with groups of K–5 leaders and teachers working with grade-level partners.

### Materials

- Handout copy of PowerPoint slides (suggested 6 slides per page)
- Handout Reading Informational Text Standards K-5 (provided with this session)
- Handout Reflections Module 1, Session 2 ELA & Literacy (provided with this session)

### Resources/References

- Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects  
[http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI\\_ELA%20Standards.pdf](http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_ELA%20Standards.pdf)
- *Oregon Literacy Plan—K-12*, *K-12 Teachers: Building Comprehension in the Common Core*  
<http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/subjects/elarts/reading/literacy/have-you-ever.pdf>
- *Oregon Literacy Plan—K-12*, Chapter 3: Instruction, *Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework*  
<http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/subjects/elarts/reading/literacy/chapter-3-instruction.pdf>

### **Slide 1**

**Welcome** participants and suggest they sit with partners who teach the same subject and grade level(s).

**Introduce** the subject for today and **check** to see that everyone has the materials.

**For instance, the facilitator might say,**

“Implementing the Common Core State Standards will mean an increased emphasis on teaching students to understand and interact with informational text.

From viewing the results of the ‘fourth grade slump’ to reviewing research correlating science achievement with the ability to read informational text, we all can appreciate the importance – and challenge -- of teaching students to read complex informational text proficiently. The goal is for every student to graduate ready for the reading demands of college and career. Most of the required reading in college and workforce training programs is informational in structure and challenging in content. Postsecondary education programs typically provide students with both a higher volume of such reading than is generally required in K-12 schools and comparatively little scaffolding. However, traditionally, only a fraction of the texts students are exposed to in early grades are informational.”

### **Slide 2**

**Go over** the expected outcomes for this session.

**For instance, the facilitator might say,**

“Today we will take a look at the 10 Informational Text Reading Standards at grades K-5, looking a bit more closely at some that may be less familiar, either because they have not been included in Oregon’s standards before at particular grade levels or because they now represent higher levels of rigor at given grades.

Also, remembering that the Standards depict WHAT students should know and be able to do, we want to highlight some of the relevant resources in the K-12 Teachers: Building Comprehension in the Common Core document on the ODE website suggesting HOW to support our students in successfully reaching these standards. This document is the ‘bridge’ between the CCSS and the very comprehensive Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework, also accessible on the ODE website.”

### **Slide 3**

**Explain** that the CCSS call for a “balance” of literature and informational text: 50% informational text and 50% literature.

**For instance, the facilitator might say,**

“One of the most significant instructional impacts of the CCSS is the increase in the quantity of literacy materials and amount instructional time devoted to informational text, so that it equals the time and weight given to literature.

Recent studies have shown that as little as 7 to 15% of elementary reading instruction time is devoted to informational text.

The CCSS call for a ‘balance’ of literature and informational text at every grade level, K-5. In other words, 50% of reading instruction will be devoted to supporting students at every grade level become proficient at reading increasingly complex, high quality informational text.”

#### **Slide 4**

**Explain** that the National Assessment of Educational Progress has taken the lead in assigning relative weight to literary and informative text.

**For instance, the facilitator might say,**

“The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading test, given every two years, uses a balance of literary and informational text at the elementary level. The CCSS follows NAEP’s lead in calling for 50% of the texts students read to be informational, starting from the very beginning in kindergarten.”

#### **Slide 5**

**Explain** that the CCSS document defines informational text as literary nonfiction as well as historical, scientific, and technical texts.

**Point out** that the emphasis is on text structure other than narrative.

**Invite** participants to work with their partner(s) to think of texts where their students are likely to encounter these text structures. Invite participants to share.

**For instance, the facilitator might say,**

“The term *literary* in the previous slide may be a bit confusing. For the purposes of the Standards, *literature* is broadly defined to include stories (including myths, legends, folk tales), drama, and poetry. Biography, autobiography, speeches, etc. – commonly referred to as *literary nonfiction* – are included in *informational text*.

Students typically are more familiar with the narrative structure found in stories of various types and have difficulty with the text structures found in most informational text. So, it is important that the informational text selections chosen for students have a structure other than the more familiar narrative arc (rising action/conflict – climax – falling action/resolution).

Equally important is that students receive explicit instruction and support in understanding these other text structures and using that knowledge to help them comprehend the text itself. Among the Standards we will be taking a closer look at is Standard 5, which deals specifically with text features at K – 3 and text structure at 4 – 5.

Listed here are some common informational text structures. Take a few minutes with your partner to think of texts where your students are likely to encounter these text structures." [*Invite participants to share some of these.*]

#### **Slide 6**

**Direct** participants’ attention to the Handout “CCSS Reading Informational Text Standards K-5” and suggest that they work with partners who teach the same grade(s).

**Note** that on the handout the standards requiring multiple texts have been set off with additional borders.

**Explain** that the standards represent a continuum of proficiency from a very beginning level at K to the college and career readiness level depicted in the CCR Anchor Standards. Remind participants that each step up in task difficulty defined by the Standards is matched by a “step up” in text complexity not reflected in the individual grade-level standards themselves.

**Invite** participants to work with partners to identify the “step up” in task difficulty at each grade for several standards.

**Allow** about 5 minutes for partners to work.

**Invite** participants to report out on some.

**For instance, the facilitator might say,**

“Let’s take a look at the Handout ‘CCSS Reading Informational Text Standards K-5.’ This document has been set up to show the K-5 progression for each of the 10 standards. Those standards requiring multiple texts have been set off with additional borders since they may necessitate some extra planning effort in identifying suitable texts. Later in this session, we’ll note an online resources that will be very helpful in identifying suggested works.

The Standards, as we have seen, are arranged around a framework of the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards and have been written using a ‘back-mapping’ strategy, identifying where students need to be on the learning progression by the end of each grade in order to make the end-point attainable. So, the standards at each subsequent grade level incorporate a ‘step up’ in task difficulty (as well as the ‘step up’ in the complexity of the texts).

With your partner(s), examine several of these K—5 progressions to identify how the tasks become more difficult at each grade. Sometimes this takes quite a close read, and some of the ‘steps’ seem larger than others.”

### **Slide 7**

**Draw** participants’ attention to Standard 9 and how the task difficulty “steps up” at each grade level.

**Note** that some of the steps appear bigger than others: The jump here between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade for example.

**Ask** participants if they identified other places where the “step up” between grades was quite substantial. *[In Standards 3, 5, 8, for example.]*

**For instance, the facilitator might say,**

“Let’s look at how the standards ‘step up’ the level of task difficulty from grade to grade in Standard 9 first. If we look at these steps, I think we will agree that the step between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades represents a ‘bigger step’ than the other increments. In this case, it requires an integrated approach to the strands.

Where else did you find relatively big jumps in cognitive demand? These are worth noting because they may prove a bit more challenging for us.

Yes, Standards 3 and 8 ask students in grade 3 to begin using the language of the logical connections of time, sequence, cause/effect, comparison. That seems like a relatively big jump. How about Standard 6? *[from grades 1 to 2 to 3 to 4. A level of self-awareness is necessary at the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level, etc.]*

And Standard 5 goes from focusing on text features (which are visible) to text structure (which is not) in grade 4.”

### **Slide 8**

**Invite** partners to look closely at the Informational Text standards at their own grade level(s) and identify elements that are new or new in emphasis.

**Allow** about 10 minutes for group work.

**Invite** participants to share what they found and ideas they have about instructional approaches they might use.

**For instance, the facilitator might say,**

“With partners or in small groups, read through the K-5 continuum for several of the standards and think about current classroom practice at your grade level(s).

Identify standards that represent new content, new emphasis, or a new level of rigor at your grade level(s). Then, brainstorm some possible instructional strategies and approaches you might consider using in addressing these. *[Allow time to work and report out some examples.]*

Since all students read the central, grade appropriate text around which instruction is centered, appropriate scaffolding and supports will be necessary for students reading below grade level. We will take a look at ideas for scaffolding instruction from the *Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework* towards the end of this session.

### **Slide 9**

**Explain** that a “crosswalk” comparing Oregon’s current ELA standards and the Common Core State Standards showed a number of changes which participants may have noted. Explain that the crosswalk is available on the ODE website at the address indicated and can be accessed by searching the ODE website for “crosswalk reading.”

**Note** that these may or may not be the changes from current classroom practices, but reflect changes to the standards.

#### **For instance, the facilitator might say,**

“A ‘crosswalk’ comparing Oregon’s current ELA standards and the CCSS revealed a number of changes – applying more significantly to informational text than to literature, as one might guess. Here are a few of the more prominent ones. Remember, these are some of the additions to the standards, not necessarily to classroom practice.

- In some instances (Standard 2, 5, and 9, for example) we see the CCSS standards extending back to earlier grades (in these cases, identifying main topic/details; discerning text structure, and comparing texts).
- In others (Standards 3 and 6) we see corresponding Oregon standards that apply to literature, but none that apply to informational text.
- Still others (Standard 8, for instance) apply a higher level of rigor to the content: Whereas Oregon’s comparable standards ask students to identify text types (argument, for instance), the CCSS asks students at an early age to begin identifying reasons and logical connections within the argument.”

### **Slide 10**

**Draw** participants’ attention to these three standards, and invite them to share instructional ideas for approaching these standards, starting at Kindergarten.

**Invite** them to reflect back on one or two of these standards, thinking about how to apply strategies discussed in subsequent slides.

#### **For instance, the facilitator might say,**

“Here are three standards that represent changes at virtually all the K-5 grade levels, and each of them represents a pretty high cognitive demand.

Standard 3 at 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, for instance, asks students to distinguish their own point of view from that of the author. This is a completely new standard for Oregon. What ideas did you come up with that would help children become aware of their own point of view and then differentiate it from an author’s?

Did you come up with other ideas to approach any of these standards? *[Continue with some examples from other grades and standards.]*

As we look at some of the strategies discussed in the *Framework*, I invite you to reflect back to this task and think about how you might apply them to one or two of these standards at your grade level.”

### **Slide 11**

**Explain** that the *Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework* presents strategies for instruction and assessment to ensure that students who are at risk of not meeting the grade-level expectations will be able to meet them, and that students who are reading at grade level or above will continue to make commensurate progress.

#### **For instance, the facilitator might say,**

“The *Framework*, adopted by the State Board in 2009, features a comprehensive approach to reading using a differentiated instructional model, **Response to Intervention (RTI)**, based on student data. In addition to guidance on setting reading goals, assessing, leadership, and professional development, the *Framework* includes a lengthy chapter (Chapter 3: Instruction) which includes specific strategies and resources for providing explicit comprehension and vocabulary instruction and utilizing effective teacher delivery.”

### **Slide 12**

**Explain** that the *K-12 Teachers: Building Comprehension in the Common Core* document provides research-based approaches to helping students reach reading proficiency in informational text.

#### **For instance, the facilitator might say,**

“The ODE document *K-12 Teachers: Building Comprehension in the Common Core* provides a bridge between the *Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework* and the *Common Core State Standards*. Here are some research-based suggestions relating specifically to informational text.

First, the belief that children should first learn to read in K-3, and not until later, at about 4<sup>th</sup> grade, ‘read to learn’ is not supported by research.”

### **Slide 13**

**Draw** participants’ attention to the instructional strategies and practices that support struggling readers.

#### **For instance, the facilitator might say,**

“Research indicates that just because informational text has text features that make it more challenging doesn’t mean young children cannot handle informational text or learn content from it.

Here are several instructional strategies and practices supported by research.

Think about the standards you focused on in Slide 10. How might these instructional strategies be applied to them?”

### **Slide 14**

**Explain** that research indicates that young student’s reading preferences are closely connected to the classroom context and how they have experienced informational texts.

#### **For instance, the facilitator might say,**

“No research evidence supports the notion that children don’t like informational text. Rather, it is important to put student text preference within the context of classroom instructional activities. In other words, how texts are used in the classroom is more centrally related to how children form attitudes about texts.”

### **Slide 15**

**Explain** that this is a sampling of the “classroom snapshots” in the *K-12 Teachers: Building Comprehension in the Common Core* document.

**For instance, the facilitator might say,**

“If one were to visit an elementary classroom that was supporting all children in attaining the Reading Informational Text Standards, what would it look like? What would it sound like?”

One of the extensive and specific resources in the *K-12 Teachers: Building Comprehension in the Common Core* document is a series of ‘classroom snapshots.’ Here is a sampling of what the visitor would see. The document includes graphic organizers for various grade levels and text types, an several ‘core sets of questions’ for various topics for students and teachers to ask, and so forth.

Also on the ODE website is a link to *Common Core Curriculum Maps: ELA*, a free resource at <http://commoncore.org/free/> with thematic units linked to grade-specific standards. For each grade, there are six units that include suggested objectives, instructional materials, sample activities and assessments and more. Remember the standards that require multiple texts on the same topic? This website is a good place for suggestions: Each thematic unit includes about a dozen relevant literary works and a dozen informational texts, as well as art and music connections.”

### **Slide 16**

**Explain** that this is a sampling of the “classroom snapshot” depicting what a visitor would hear in a classroom teaching informational text literacy.

**For instance, the facilitator might say,**

“Here is a sampling of what the visitor might hear. Additional resources (specific before-during-after reading activities, for instance) are referenced in the *Oregon K-12 Literacy Framework*.

I invite you to take a look at these two resources as you continue to explore the Common Core State Standards and prepare your instruction.”

### **Slide 17**

**Invite** participants to turn to their partners and give short answers to the questions.

**For instance, the facilitator might say,**

“So how did we do? Our goals for today were 1) to become more familiar with the CCSS Reading Informational Text standards, 2) identify some of the standards that are new (or new in emphasis) at our grade level, and 3) become aware of some of the resources on the ODE website.

Let’s practice a little active learning for a minute or two. Please turn to your partner and recall a few details from the session as you discuss these four questions. We know they are more likely to stay with us that way.”

### **Slide 18**

**Show** the slide and suggest the activities listed as possible follow-ups to this session.

**Invite** participants to fill out the Reflections page.