

MEMORANDUM



REVIEW OF DRAFT OKLAHOMA ACADEMIC STANDARDS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND MATHEMATICS

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Date: September 11, 2015

This memorandum presents the results from CSAI's review of the draft Oklahoma Academic Standards in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics as of August 11, 2015. This review was conducted at the request of the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) through the South Central Comprehensive Center (SC3).

Reviewers of the draft Oklahoma Academic Standards are content specialists in English Language Arts and mathematics in the Assessment and Standards Development Services program at WestEd, which houses the Center on Standards and Assessment Implementation. The content specialists associated with this work have specific expertise in the review, analysis, and alignment of state academic standards, with particular expertise in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Their curricula vitae are included in Appendix C of this memo.

Reviewers were directed to review the standards for each content area, focusing on the following three questions:

- Do the standards reflect an appropriate granularity (level of specificity) for the skill and grade level?
- Are the expectations across grade levels appropriate, and is the progression of learning skills appropriate to grade level and for the development of the standard?
- Are the standards generally consistent with college- and career-ready standards (CCRS)?

The following is a summary of the findings by content area.

English Language Arts

Do the standards reflect an appropriate granularity, i.e., not too specifically skill-oriented, but not too high-level and vague?

In terms of appropriate granularity, the Oklahoma ELA standards descriptors tend to be vague and may not be sufficiently granular to adequately describe the skills and abilities students should possess at each grade. Although the progression from one grade to another is largely logical and reasonable, the descriptors within each standard often lack depth, precision, and consistency. These standards should describe a measurable objective in clear and concise terms, and the state might consider including examples to specify what students are expected to do. The state might also consider organizing reading and writing separately, as reading and writing skills are not always developed in a lock-step manner. Receptive listening and reading skills will often outpace their speaking and writing counterparts. As such, it may be more productive to separate the two in developing standards.

Are the expectations across grade level appropriate for that grade level and for the progression needed for that standard?

In most cases, there is a logical and acceptable progression from one grade to the next, although there are instances where it is clear that two committees developed the standards separately. There are some discrepancies within the same standard; for example, in the Listening section of Standard 1, there is a clear and obvious progress in skills from grade 1 to grade 4, but the grade 5 descriptor more closely matches the grade 1 descriptor, rather than building on the grade 4 descriptor. There are also discrepancies in when certain skills are introduced in the standards. To address these discrepancies, the state may want to consider combining and condensing similar standards—e.g., Standards 3 (Vocabulary) and 5 (Language) as one, and Standards 2 (Reading and Writing Process), 4 (Critical Reading and Critical Writing) and 7 (Multimodal Literacies) as another. This can aid in avoiding discrepancies and reducing the number of redundant descriptors, while also streamlining and maintaining consistency in terminology across standards.

Are the standards generally consistent with college- and career-ready standards, and/or with expectations outlined in the NCTM/NCTE frameworks?

Overall, the standards are mostly consistent with what appears in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the Oklahoma PASS 2010, and are in keeping with the spirit of the National Council of Teachers of English Standards for the English Language Arts.

Mathematics

Do the standards reflect an appropriate granularity, i.e., not too specifically skill-oriented, but not too high-level and vague?

In the Kindergarten through Pre-Algebra strand, the level of granularity was found to be appropriate. The majority of these standards should function well for both classroom and assessment purposes. The granularity of the Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry standards was also found to be sufficient, and these standards would also function well for both classroom and assessment purposes.

Are the expectations across grade level appropriate for that grade level and for the progression needed for that standard?

In the Kindergarten through Pre-Algebra strand, the progression of concepts across grade levels is appropriate. There are some standards where more specificity in assessment limits is needed: Number and Operations, and Algebraic Reasoning and Algebra. For the Geometry and Measurement standards, there is an inconsistency on the border of grades 4 and 5 that needs to be addressed. Having angles be classified in grade 5 (Standard 5.GM.3.1) appears to be out of sequence, since triangles are classified by their angles in grade 4 (see 4.GM.1.1).

Are the standards generally consistent with college- and career-ready standards, and/or with expectations outlined in the NCTM/NCTE frameworks?

Overall, the standards are consistent with what appears in the CCSS. In particular, the Algebra II standards represent many of the CCSS standards that are designated as "beyond the common mathematics curriculum." In looking at the Pre-Algebra and Algebra I strands, there was some blurring of the lines when compared to CCSS, but most concepts that appeared in the Oklahoma standards also appeared in the CCSS.

Analysis Notes

Overall, the Mathematics standards are discrete, and the articulation of the standards clear, whereas the English Language Arts standards tend to be broader in both articulation and description. Because of this, the analysis notes following this summary are presented differently.

In ELA, content reviewers looked at the standard descriptors individually for wording as well as their progression vertically across the grades, paying particular attention to the “seam” between grades 4 and 5. Standard descriptors were also examined horizontally, across the eight standards and sub-sections to check for consistency and overlap. The results of the horizontal review reveal some gaps in coverage and repetition between standards, although not always in the same grade.

In Mathematics, the skills outlined in the standards are very discrete, and the progression of the skills as grade levels advanced were clear. As such, the reviewers' notes focus heavily on the standards themselves, and what may be missing or additional as compared with other college- and career-ready standards, and differences in grade-level assessments of common concepts from other CCRS.

For both content areas, analysts not only reviewed the content of the standards but the wording for clarity (i.e., enough specificity that the demonstrable skill is clear) and flexibility (i.e., allows for varying levels of cognitive complexity during instruction and assessment).

Appendix A includes the ELA review notes and Appendix B includes mathematics review notes.

Appendix A: Analysis of Individual Oklahoma ELA Standards

Standard 1: Speaking and Listening <i>Listening and Understanding / Reading</i>		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
Pre-K and K	"Guidance and support" noted at pre-K but not at K.	
K and 1st grade	No difference between the grades.	
1 st and 2 nd grade	At grade 2, students will "determine purpose for listening and paraphrase or describe key details."	
2 nd and 3 rd grade	Students "retell, paraphrase, and explain the main ideas and support details."	<p>Little difference between grades. Retelling likely a lower-level skill than paraphrasing but is mentioned only at the higher grade. (Paraphrasing appears in the CCSS Listening and Speaking standards at grade 4.) Primary difference appears to be the explicit reference to "main ideas," and "key details" are now "supporting details."</p> <p>Reference to "diverse media and formats including visually, quantitatively, and orally" does not appear to be grammatically well formed, as these are adverbs rather than adjectives. Perhaps it should be worded as "diverse visual, quantitative, and oral formats."</p>
3 rd and 4 th grade	Students "summarize major ideas and supportive evidence" at grade 4.	Summarizing appears in the CCSS Speaking and Listening standards at grade 4.
4 th and 5 th grade	Two separate descriptors at grade 5. No reference to specific academic skills, e.g., paraphrasing, retelling, summarizing.	Two separate descriptors at grade 5 but the skills described appear to have more in common with lower grades. "Students will be active speakers and listeners" could describe student at any grade, including Kindergarten. Second descriptor—"students will ask and answer questions in pairs, groups, and whole class settings"—is very similar to K-2 standard. Suggest including more detail as to what students are asking and answering questions

Standard 1: Speaking and Listening <i>Listening and Understanding / Reading</i>		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
		about (e.g., personal questions or content-based academic questions.)
5 th and 6 th grade	Wording is different but concept appears to be similar.	Not clear how the 2 nd descriptor at grade 6 differs from the descriptor at grade 5: Grade 5: Students will ask and answer questions in pairs, etc.” Grade 6: “Students will participate and contribute ideas to pairs, etc.” Also, how is this really different from the 1 st descriptor at both grades: “Students will be active speakers and listeners”?
6 th and 7 th grade	Addition of “building on the ideas of others” to 2 nd descriptor.	It’s not clear why “building on the ideas of others” is something that is not targeted at lower grades. Are these ideas intended to be more complex or academic? Although the intention of the standard seems to align with the CCSS Speaking and Listening standard at grade 7 (“Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions . . . on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly”) the CCSS standard provides more detail regarding what is expected of grade 7 students in terms of Speaking and Listening, e.g., “pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others’ questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas”
7 th and 8 th grade	Addition of “questioning the ideas of others.”	Minor elaboration to standard that mirrors what is expected at grade 7 in the CCSS.
8 th and 9 th grade	No difference between these grades.	
9 th and 10 th grade	Students “engage in discourse . . . to acquire, refine, and share knowledge.”	The change from “contribute to conversations” to “engage in discourse” appears to be more a case of wordsmithing than describing a real difference in listening skills, as conversation is discourse. In addition, students acquire, refine, and share knowledge verbally all throughout the school years; they don’t wait until 10 th grade to demonstrate these abilities.
10 th and 11 th grade	No difference between these grades.	
11 th and 12 th grade	No difference between these grades.	

Standard 1: Speaking and Listening <i>Writing / Speaking</i>		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
Pre-K and K	"Guidance and support" noted at pre-K but not at K.	
K and 1st grade	No difference in stated standard, except that "grade 1 topics" and texts replaces "kindergarten topics and texts."	
1 st and 2 nd grade	No difference in stated standard, except that "grade 2 topics" and texts replaces "kindergarten topics and texts."	
2 nd and 3 rd grade	Students now "engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions," rather than conversations, on grade 3 topics, "building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly."	The grade 3 standard notes that students engage in "collaborative discussions with diverse partners." The inclusion of "diverse partners" seems unnecessary. In which ways are these partners diverse? Ethnically? Culturally? The change from 'conversations' to "discussions" seems significant and should be more fully elaborated, either in the standards themselves or in a glossary that defines these terms. Discussions are more formal than conversations, and are thus more academic in nature. The grade 4 CCSS Speaking and Listening standards capture this in SL.4.6: "Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion); use formal English when appropriate to task and situation."
3 rd and 4 th grade	No difference in stated standard, except that "grade 4 topics" and texts replaces "kindergarten topics and texts."	
4 th and 5 th grade	Students give formal and informal presentations at grade 5. Noting grade-appropriateness of content stops at grade 4.	The grade 5 standard is a departure from the earlier standards in that they describe student expectations more specifically. And in specifying the type of discourse (presentations) and the qualities expected (well organized and appropriate content), the teacher is provided with focused, measurable criteria.

Standard 1: Speaking and Listening <i>Writing / Speaking</i>		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
5 th and 6 th grade	Addition of “vocabulary appropriate to audience.”	More elaboration might be helpful in terms of student expectations. The inclusion of vocabulary appears to mirror CCSS SL.6.6: “Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.”
6 th and 7 th grade	Students expected to “provide evidence to support a main idea.”	Reference to ‘evidence’ appears in the CCSS standards at grade 8: “present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence [emphasis added], sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.” The inclusion of multiple criteria described using adjectives help make the CCSS standard more concrete and measurable: “relevant evidence,” “valid reasoning,” “well-chosen details.” In addition, the paralinguistic skills of eye contact and adequate volume are also noted in the CCSS and are likely areas where students are graded when giving presentations. These skills are also noted in the Oklahoma PASS 2010 Oral Language skills at grade 5: “Speak articulately and audibly before a group using appropriate delivery (enunciation, volume, timing, and gestures) and language skills (pronunciation, word choice, and usage).”
7 th and 8 th grade	Evidence is described as being “textual and visual.”	Describing the type of evidence that students should be presenting helps make the standard clearer. This practice should be applied at all grades.
8 th and 9 th grade	No difference between these grades.	
9 th and 10 th grade	No difference between these grades.	
10 th and 11 th grade	No difference between these grades.	
11 th and 12 th grade	No difference between these grades.	

Standard 1: Speaking and Listening <i>Oral Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas</i>		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
Pre-K and K	“Guidance and support” noted at pre-K but not at Kindergarten. More academic skills are mentioned at Kindergarten, e.g., reciting poems, facing the audience, and speaking clearly.	
K and 1st grade	More explicit skills, both linguistic (“speak clearly with adequate volume” and paralinguistic (maintaining eye contact).	
1 st and 2 nd grade	Inclusion of “appropriate facts” and “descriptive details.”	Descriptor says that students speak “in coherent sentences.” This does not sound quite right. People write sentences; they do not speak them. The proper term for describing a spoken idea unit is an utterance. And it’s the discourse or narrative that’s coherent, not the individual utterances, which are cohesive. Although classroom instructors will understand the spirit of the standard—that students speak clearly, use grammatically well-formed language, and tell stories or recount experiences in a coherent manner—the wording of the descriptor should be clarified.
2 nd and 3 rd grade	Students report on a topic at grade 3 and speak at an “understandable pace.”	The primary progression here is that the students are beginning to speak more academically and formally, giving reports on topics. “Understandable pace” targets the student’s rate of speech.
3 rd and 4 th grade	Organization of speech and support for main ideas and themes noted at grade 4.	Although the implication is that the students are speaking in a more organized manner, this could be included in the ability to speak coherently, which involves organization at the level of ideas. That skill is noted at grade 2 but not at grade 3.

Standard 1 summary

Overall, the standard 1 descriptors are too vague and not specific enough to provide clear guidance for instructors. Differences between ‘conversations’ and ‘discourse’ should be explained or better differentiated so that a progression in skills and abilities between the grades is more readily apparent. Most ELA teachers have little formal training or background in applied linguistics, so their knowledge of listening and speaking skills is likely limited. It would be helpful to flesh out standard 1 using descriptors similar to those found in the Oklahoma PASS 2010 standards, e.g., “Deliver oral responses to literature that summarizes important events and details, demonstrates an understanding of several ideas communicated in the work, and uses examples from the literature to support conclusions” (grade 5). These skills are specific and measurable without being overly prescriptive.

It would also help to combine, or place, all of the standards together instead of separating them into distinct fields or tables. It seems odd that giving presentations first appears in the Writing/Speaking section starting with grade 5 but is more clearly described at the lower grades in a completely separate, pre-K to grade 4-only section devoted to oral presentations. Unlike Reading and Writing, Listening and Speaking tends to occur simultaneously, in real-time, as speakers become listeners and listeners become speakers on the fly, co-constructing and negotiating meaning and discourse collaboratively. The CCSS follow this practice: Speaking and Listening are grouped together, whereas Reading and Writing are separate standards. Organizing them as the CCSS does will make the presentation of the standards easier for teachers to grasp.

Standard 2: Reading Process / Writing Process		
Grade(s)	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Pre-K and K	Almost no difference between pre-K and Kindergarten. Note that, at Pre-K, students apply comprehension skills “during and after reading” but at Kindergarten, the descriptor states students apply skills only during reading.	It’s not clear whether the texts are read to students, although at this age, it is highly likely that they are. There is a significant amount of overlap between standard 1 and 2, which would be expected when texts are read aloud. Standard 2 provides much more elaboration than standard 1 in terms of the description of what students should be able to do with language. The last bulleted item is vague (“respond to text”) and needs further clarification. In what ways do students respond to text? Also, the penultimate bullet point uses the wrong form of the verb (“connects” instead of “connect”).
K and 1st grade	Use of pre-reading skills at grade 1. Descriptor notes genre (literary, informational, and digital text) at grade 1. Students identify narrators in stories. Students begin to monitor their own comprehension (reading strategy).	Although there are notable differences between Kindergarten and 1 st grade, some differences appear to be more a matter of description rather than substance. For example, the inclusion of genre (“literary, informational and digital texts”) really adds little to the standard, since just about all storybooks either read by or read to Kindergarten and grade 1 students could be classified into one of these broad categories. Suggest adding genre to Kindergarten as well. Another example: “ask and answer questions about texts” (K) and “ask and answer questions about characters, setting and events in the story” (1 st grade). Other than being more explicit and descriptive, how do the descriptors differ? In asking questions about a text, Kindergarten students could be asking about characters, setting, or events.
1 st and 2 nd grade	Students identify genre at grade 2, make connections between text and illustrations, explain how characters react to events, and self-monitor comprehension.	The differences between grades 1 and 2 appear well within the expectations of grade 2 students, who are increasingly becoming more independent readers.

Standard 2: Reading Process / Writing Process		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
2 nd and 3 rd grade	At grade 3, students are introduced, with support, to inferential questions, describe how characters' actions affect events, identify point of view, and summarize major events in a story.	Students begin to draw inferences and ask inferential questions at grade 3, albeit with support. Although this skill is not introduced in the CCSS until grade 4, it is appropriate here because of the clarification that the student is receiving guidance and support. Noting that students "ask and answer literal questions using the text to support answers" does not seem significantly different than what students are expected to do at grade 2: "ask and answer questions about who, what, where, when, how, and why."
3 rd and 4 th grade	Students independently ask inferential questions	Independently asking and answering inferential questions is really the only major change between grades 3 and 4. Although some descriptors are worded differently than what appears at grade 3, the true differences are slight. For example, "identify characters in a story and how their motives and actions affect the plot of the story" is conceptually similar to what appears at grade 3: "identify and describe characters and how their actions affect the events in the text." There are also a few descriptors that could be removed from the standards, as they add little to describing the more advanced reading skills 4 th grade students should demonstrate, e.g., "explain how the illustrations support aspects of the text."
4 th and 5 th grade	Students are expected to provide an objective summary, including main ideas, at grade 5. (Note that summarizing is listed at grade 3, but not at grade 4.)	There are only two descriptors offered at grade 5, and one is mostly a revision of a grade 4 descriptor. By comparison, there are nine (9) descriptors at grade 4.
5 th and 6 th grade	Students expected to paraphrase and draw conclusions at grade 6.	The addition of drawing conclusions is noteworthy, although it appears much earlier in the Oklahoma PASS 2010 standards (grade 2). It first appears in the CCSS at grade 5. Paraphrasing is mentioned at grade 4 in the Oklahoma PASS 2010 standards and in the grade 5 Writing standards in the CCSS. It would seem to be more appropriate as part of a set of Writing descriptors

Standard 2: Reading Process / Writing Process		
Grade(s)	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
		rather than Reading descriptors, although comprehension of the original text is obviously a prerequisite to paraphrasing.
6 th and 7 th grade	Generalization, with support, expected at grade 7.	Minor addition of generalization appears at grade 7.
7 th and 8 th grade	Little difference between these two grades.	The differences between grades 7 and 8 appear to be more a matter of style rather than substance. The verb form of 'summary' ("summarize") is used in the grade 8 descriptor, and support is dropped for generalizing at grade 8. Compared to the Oklahoma PASS 2010 standards, the ability to generalize comes quite late in a student's school life in these standards. The PASS 2010 standards contain this descriptor at grade 4: "Support ideas, arguments, and generalizations by reference to evidence in the text."
8 th and 9 th grade	Students expected to synthesize texts and cite thorough evidence. Addition of third descriptor describing the types of works that students are expected to read and comprehend (American, British, and world literature).	The changes here are more a matter of degree—"thorough" evidence cited from the text (grade 9) rather than simply "evidence." Although "logical" has been added to modify "inferences," this adds little to the description. Students have been drawing inferences independently for three years, and we expect that they are increasingly logical.
9 th and 10 th grade	No difference between the grades.	
10 th and 11 th grade	No major change between grades 9 and 10. Additional modifier ("specific") added to "thorough evidence."	
11 th and 12 th grade	No difference between the grades.	

Standard 2: Phonological Awareness		
Grade(s)	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Pre-K and K	Guidance included at Pre-K but independence expected at Kindergarten. Kindergarten students expected to produce pairs of rhyming words and not just identify them. Kindergarten students identify both beginning and ending sounds whereas Pre-K students only identify beginning sounds.	The last descriptor in Kindergarten is somewhat puzzling. It states that students can “segment and blend sounds (phonemes) in one syllable words” whereas at Pre-K, they “segment and blend sounds (phonemes) in words with 2 or 3 sounds.” One-syllable words could consist of 2 or 3 sounds (e.g., “tub”), so it is unclear how these descriptors differ.
K and 1 st grade	1 st grade students discriminate and identify middle sounds in addition to beginning and ending sounds and add, delete or substitute phonemes in a word.	
1 st and 2 nd grade	No difference between the grades.	There is only one descriptor for grade 2 and it is identical to the last descriptor (e) in grade 1.

Standard 2: Print Concepts		
Grade(s)	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Pre-K and K	Guidance included at Pre-K but independence expected at Kindergarten. Kindergarten students expected to identify and name all uppercase and lowercase letters.	
K and 1 st grade	Students expected to print their names, words, and sentences legibly and track print to match voice.	The first descriptor—printing their name, words and sentences—does not match the definition of Print Concepts as provided in the Oklahoma PASS 2010: “the ability to understand how print works. This includes knowing that the print on the page represents the words that can be read aloud and distinguishing between various forms and purposes of print. . . .” The first descriptor would be better placed with Writing than with Print Concepts.

Standard 2: Decoding Phonics, Word Recognition and Structural Analysis		
<i>Grade(s)</i>	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Pre-K and K	Students use decoding skills at Kindergarten independently and decode phonetically regular words.	The Pre-K standard includes a descriptor that students, with guidance and support, will write (print) letters of the alphabet. This seems out of place in the Decoding Phonics section of standard 2. Unlike with the other sections of standard 2, where the primary difference between Pre-K and Kindergarten is the presence of guidance and support at Pre-K, the descriptions vary significantly here. No other descriptor in the Decoding Phonics section references the writing of words or letters. Suggest moving the writing of letters at Pre-K to the Writing Process section of standard 2.
K and 1 st grade	Students expected to apply their decoding skills to decode long vowels, vowel digraphs, consonant blends, and r-controlled vowels. In addition, 1 st grade students are expected to read common, irregularly spelled sight words.	There is a strong but reasonable progression between Kindergarten and 1 st grade. The descriptors are detailed but not overly prescriptive.
1 st and 2 nd grade	2 nd grade students expected to decode diphthongs and read abbreviations.	The bulleted lists at grades 1 and 2 are not parallel, even though they contain much of the same information. Suggest reformatting grade 2 to match grade 1. Also, differences in wording between some of the grade 1 and grade 2 descriptors should be reconciled. At grade 1, students use “knowledge of the major syllable patterns.” At grade 2, they use “knowledge of the six major syllable patterns to decode two syllable words independent of context.” How do these two descriptors differ? Are grade 1 students expected to know fewer syllable patterns? Or are they expected to use the syllable patterns to decode only one-syllable words, since the expectation at grade 2 is to decode two syllable words? (The CCSS Foundational Skills standards state that grade 1 students should “Decode regularly spelled one-syllable words” and that grade 2 students should be able to “Decode regularly spelled two-syllable words with long vowels.”)

Standard 2: Decoding Phonics, Word Recognition and Structural Analysis		
<i>Grade(s)</i>	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
2 nd and 3 rd grade	Grade 3 students expected to decode multi-syllabic words and use knowledge of common roots and affixes to decode words.	The grade 3 standards include a descriptor that students will “decode and read words in common word families,” which is very similar to a descriptor that appears at grade 1 (but not at grade 2): “students will read words in common word families.” If the skill is assumed at 1 st grade (thus it does not appear at grade 2), then it should be removed from grade 3 as well. If not, then it should be included at grade 2. If there is a difference between the grades in applying this skill, that should be noted. The difference in phrasing between the two is more a matter of style than substance. To read words, the student must first decode the sound-symbol relationships that comprise the word, so the grade 2 descriptor does not really provide any new or additional information. Similarly, at grades 1 and 2, “students will read common, irregularly spelled sight words” but at grade 3, they “recognize and read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words.” It is assumed that all words the students encounter are grade appropriate, so the grade 3 descriptor does not provide a true distinction between the grades.
3 rd and 4 th grade	Students expected to read unfamiliar words.	The Oklahoma PASS 2010 standards do not include decoding skills at grade 4, and perhaps that should be considered here as well. In the descriptors, for example, references to using morphology to read words “both in and out of context” blur the line from merely sounding out and recognizing words, to understanding and deriving meaning from them. Thus, the spirit of the standard is somewhat lost at grade 4.

Standard 2: Decoding Phonics, Word Recognition and Structural Analysis		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
1 st and 2 nd grade	The only noted difference is that the complexity of texts will increase, due to the texts being “grade-appropriate.	
2 nd and 3 rd grade	The only noted difference is that the complexity of texts will increase, due to the texts being “grade-appropriate.	
3 rd and 4 th grade	The only noted difference is that the complexity of texts will increase, due to the texts being “grade-appropriate.	

Standard 2: Writing Process / Writing		
Grade(s)	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Pre-K and K	At Kindergarten, students expected to write most letters of the alphabet correctly.	Note that the ability to “write most uppercase (capital) and lowercase letters of the alphabet” is very similar to what appears in the Decoding Phonics section for Pre-K students: “print the majority of letters in their first name and many uppercase and lowercase [sic].” It’s been noted that the Pre-K descriptor is out of place in the Decoding Phonics section and should be removed.
K and 1st grade	Grade 1 students expected to write all letters legibly and space letters appropriately between words. They will also, with guidance, begin to use the writing process (prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing).	
1 st and 2 nd grade	Grade 2 students expected to use the writing process independently.	The first descriptor at grades 1 and 2 have the same content but are worded differently. It is best to rephrase descriptors to show the differences between grades rather than just using different words to express the same idea.
2 nd and 3 rd grade	No notable difference between the grades.	The first descriptor at grades 2 and 3 have the same content but are worded differently. That might raise some confusion.
3 rd and 4 th grade	Students begin to write cursively.	

Standard 2: Writing Process / Writing		
Grade(s)	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
4 th and 5 th grade	Students expected to write in more varied genres, with an emphasis on narratives.	Only one descriptor at grade 5. It lacks precision and does not differ much from earlier grades. In the PASS 2010 standards, students begin to write narratives as early as grade 1.
5 th and 6 th grade	Students expected to write opinion pieces at grade 6.	In the CCSS standards and the PASS 2010 standards, students begin to write narratives, informational texts, and opinion pieces starting in grade 3.
6 th and 7 th grade	Focus is on informational texts.	As with all other standards starting at grade 5, there is only one descriptor at grade 7. See note above that compares when students begin to write narratives, informational, and persuasive texts in the CCSS and the PASS 2010.
7 th and 8 th grade	Introduction of argumentative writing at grade 8.	Both the CCSS and the PASS 2010 mention the writing of argumentative texts at grade 6. By comparison, that type of written text is introduced quite late here.
8 th and 9 th grade	Wording is different in the lone descriptor, but the expectations are drawn from previous grades.	
9 th and 10 th grade	Wording is different in the lone descriptor, but the expectations are drawn from previous grades.	
10 th and 11 th grade	Synthesis of different modes introduced at grade 11.	
11 th and 12 th grade	No difference between grades.	

Standard 2 summary

Standard 2 is the most complex standard in that it includes, in addition to Reading and Writing, Phonological Awareness, Print Concepts, Decoding Phonics, and Fluency at the lower grades (Pre-K–4). As with standard 1, some of the grade-level descriptors are vague or provide only scant information about the skills students are expected to have at particular grades. For example, there are nine (9) Reading Process descriptors at grade 4 but only two at grades 5–12, and these tend to be vaguely worded. There are also instances where skills seem to be incorrectly placed. For example, the Pre-K Decoding Phonics section includes a descriptor that students, with guidance and support, will write (print) letters of the alphabet. No other descriptor in the Decoding Phonics section references the writing of words or letters. In the Writing Process section, however, there is a Kindergarten descriptor that students will “write most uppercase (capital) and lowercase letters of the alphabet.” It can be confusing to know at which point students should print letters of the alphabet and where this skill is classified. Decoding Phonics does not seem to be the best place to articulate this skill.

There are other instances where the primary difference between the skills described at two adjacent grades is more a matter of style than substance. For example, “ask and answer questions about texts” (K) and “ask and answer questions about characters, setting and events in the story” (1st grade). Other than being more explicit and descriptive, how do the descriptors differ? In asking questions about a text, Kindergarten students could be asking about characters, setting, or events. Another example appears in the grade 9 standards, where “logical” has been added to modify “inferences,” but this adds little to the description. Students have been drawing inferences independently for three years at this point, and we expect that they are making increasingly logical ones.

The Writing standards are similarly vague, particularly at the higher grades, where the differences between adjacent grades are in terms of written genre (i.e., narrative, informational, and argumentative) rather than actual writing skills. At grade 9, for example, the descriptor notes that students “focus on narrative and informational” writing, but this is merely a rephrasing from earlier grades (focus on narrative writing at grade 5 and informational writing at grade 7). Compared to the PASS 2010 and the CCSS writing standards, where these genres are introduced as early as grade 3, the current standards seem to lack comparable expectations.

Standard 3: Vocabulary		
Grade(s)	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Pre-K and K	At Kindergarten, students begin to use inflections and affixes as clues to the meaning of unknown words.	Consistent with the expectations described in the CCSS Language standards at Kindergarten, although affixes are mentioned in the CCSS starting at grade 1.
K and 1st grade	Students begin to use context clues and text features to identify new words, and begin to use common roots to derive meaning of unknown words.	Do 'new words' imply unknown words?
1 st and 2 nd grade	Students begin to use decoding skills and context clues independently, identify relationships among words, including antonyms and synonyms, and use, rather than just identify, root words and use them as clues to the meaning of unknown words.	Consistent with grade-level expectations described in the CCSS and PASS 2010 for grade 2.
2 nd and 3 rd grade	Students begin to use homographs and homonyms, and begin to distinguish literal from non-literal or figurative language.	Descriptor stating, "students will apply knowledge of vocabulary to understand text" describes the reading process and offers little, if any, insight into vocabulary acquisition or comprehension.
3 rd and 4 th grade	Students expected to use "more complex homographs, homonyms, synonyms, and antonyms."	Some of the skills noted in earlier grades are combined with other descriptors, so although this changes the descriptor, it add little to its content. For example, at grade 3, "Students will use decoding skills, context clues, and text features to identify new words" and "Students will use a known word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root, and identify when an affix is added to a known root word." At grade 4, these two descriptors have largely been merged into one, with minor differences: "Students will use a known word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root, and identify when an affix is added to a known root word." The descriptor that describes distinguishing literal from non-literal and figurative language does not appear at grade 4. Compare to the CCSS, where literal/non-literal appears at grade 3

Standard 3: Vocabulary		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
		and explaining similes and metaphors appears at grade 4. This type of progression is missing here. Also, identifying “relationships between multiple meaning words” appears at grade 4 and at grade 2, but not at grade 3.
4 th and 5 th grade	Students expected to use word origins at grade 5.	<p>There are only three descriptors at grades 4 and 5, and all have flaws. The first descriptor is incomplete as stated: “Students will use context clues, word origins, and word parts (affixes, roots, stems).” This descriptor should have “to identify new words” inserted to match the wording at lower grades.</p> <p>The second descriptor provides only slight progression in vocabulary skills from previous grades: “Students will recognize words with multiple meanings.” Compare to grade 4: “Students will identify relationships among words with multiple meanings”</p> <p>The third descriptor is very vague and provides little insight into the acquisition of vocabulary (“Students will apply knowledge of vocabulary to deepen understanding of text.”).</p>
5 th and 6 th grade	Grade 6 students understand as well as recognize multiple-meaning words.	Note that the CCSS Language standards expect students to begin determining the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words as early as grade 1, and the PASS 2010 refers to using “context clues (the meaning of the text around a word) to distinguish and interpret the meaning of multiple meaning words” at grade 4. Although the reader can assume that, as the student reads more complex texts, that the complexity of the multiple-meaning words will increase as well, this needs to be stated in the standards. The CCSS accomplishes with the phrase “based on grade [X] reading and content.”
6 th and 7 th grade	Students recognize and understand connotation and denotation at grade 7.	Recognizing connotation and denotation is mentioned in the CCSS starting at grade 6 but not until grade 9 in the PASS 2010. It would be helpful throughout these standards to include grade-level examples so that educators can better visualize the expectations. For example, in the CCSS Language standards:

Standard 3: Vocabulary		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
		<p>L.6.5.c: Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., <i>stingy</i>, <i>scrimping</i>, <i>economical</i>, <i>unwasteful</i>, <i>thrifty</i>).</p> <p>L.7.5.c: Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., <i>refined</i>, <i>respectful</i>, <i>polite</i>, <i>diplomatic</i>, <i>condescending</i>).</p>
7 th and 8 th grade	Wording of descriptors vary from grade 7, but expectations remain the same. There is little difference between these grades.	
8 th and 9 th grade	Students explain the effect of an author's word choice	<p>The expectation here is similar to what appears in the CCSS at grade 6:</p> <p>RL.6.4: "analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone." The skill is noted in the Comprehension standard, not the Vocabulary standard, in the PASS 2010: "Examine the way in which clarity of meaning is affected by . . . word choice in the text" (grade 11).</p>
9 th and 10 th grade	Students expected to analyze diction, connotation and denotation and to critique and evaluate an author's word choice.	
10 th and 11 th grade	Wording of first descriptor varies from grade 10, but expectations remain the same. There is little difference between these grades.	
11 th and 12 th grade	No difference between these grades.	

Standard 3: Writing		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
Pre-K and K	No difference between these grades.	The descriptor does not really address vocabulary. The emphasis is mostly on writing complete sentences, which would be more appropriate in standard 5.

Standard 3: Writing		
Grade(s)	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
K and 1st grade	Students use grade-level words and domain-specific vocabulary.	There should be a closer alignment between the Reading and Writing descriptors, as one is the reception of vocabulary and the other the production of it. For example, “Students will acquire new academic and content-specific grade-level vocabulary, relate to prior knowledge, and apply in new situations,” although appearing in the Reading section at Kindergarten, could also apply to Writing.
1 st and 2 nd grade	Students expected to independently apply knowledge of words, word parts, and domain-specific words.	
2 nd and 3 rd grade	No difference between the grades.	There needs to be more elaboration on how students use vocabulary differently between these grades, specifically in how they demonstrate language growth. For example, the CCSS standards at 1 st grade (L.1.1.e) note that students “Use verbs to convey a sense of past, present, and future (e.g., <i>Yesterday I walked home; Today I walk home; Tomorrow I will walk home</i>)”; at 2 nd grade, students, “Use adjectives and adverbs, and choose between them depending on what is to be modified.” (L.2.1.e) Thus, using adverbs to modify verbs (e.g., “walked quickly home”) demonstrates a more complex control of vocabulary.
3 rd and 4 th grade	No difference between the grades.	See comment above.
4 th and 5 th grade	Students expected to use figurative language starting at grade 5.	First descriptor at grade 5 notes that students use vocabulary to “provide coherence in writing.” This does not seem to be an accurate description of the role of vocabulary. Although at its core, all reading and writing can be reduced to the comprehension and use of vocabulary, cohesion refers to the interrelatedness and consistency of ideas. Note that students begin to comprehend figurative language starting at grade 3. Although reception typically occurs before production, students might begin using figurative language at grade 4. That would make its introduction consistent with the

Standard 3: Writing		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
		PASS 2010 (“Write creative stories and poems using figurative language . . .”) at grade 4.
5 th and 6 th grade	Idioms included with figurative language.	Are idioms inherently more complex or difficult than other forms of figurative language, such as metaphors and similes?
6 th and 7 th grade	No significant difference between the grades.	Addition of “to achieve a desired effect” adds little to the second descriptor. Doesn’t that apply to most uses of figurative or idiomatic language?
7 th and 8 th grade	Analogies added to types of word choices students are expected to use.	It needs to be clarified which definition of ‘analogy’ applies here. Is it lexicological, e.g., <i>cavalcade-motorcade</i> , or rhetorical, e.g., cats are to dogs as mustard is to ketchup? If the latter, it would appear to be misplaced in the Vocabulary standard.
8 th and 9 th grade	No significant difference between the grades.	Descriptors have been combined into one, but besides the addition of expanding on ideas, there is no other stated difference between the standards. Although an expanded, more elaborate text will naturally include more words, they do not necessarily have to be forms of idiomatic or figurative language. In short, the addition of ‘expand’ does not really describe a difference in students’ use of vocabulary. Descriptors more in keeping with the CCSS would be helpful here, e.g., “Use precise words and phrases . . . and sensory language to . . . convey experiences and events.” (W.7.3.d)
9 th and 10 th grade	Grade 10 students expected to use allusions.	It would be helpful to provide examples of the types of allusions students should begin to use. Although this is a worthy goal of instruction, note that, unlike the CCSS and PASS 2010, there is no reference to students comprehending literary allusions. If students are expected to produce them, they should be expected to understand them as well.
10 th and 11 th grade	No difference between these grades.	
11 th and 12 th grade	No difference between these grades.	

Standard 3 summary

As with standards 1 and 2, the standard 3 descriptors are often vague and lack the precision necessary to be useful to classroom teachers and to describe the differences and progressions between grades. The Writing section is particularly vague, with usually only one difference—e.g., the inclusion of idioms in addition to figurative language (of which idioms are a part)—distinguishing one grade from another. Also, some descriptors are too overarching or general to be of much guidance or help. An example appears in the Reading section: “Students will apply knowledge of vocabulary to understand text” (grade 4) and “Students will apply knowledge of vocabulary to deepen understanding of text” (grades 4–12). These descriptors do not provide an adequate description of how this skill can be approached, taught, or measured. There also seems to be some disconnection between the two sections that comprise standard 3. Whereas one (Reading) is supposed to be the receptive side and the other (Writing) the productive side, they should, in many or most cases, discuss similar traits; however, they do not. For example, the Reading descriptors, particularly at the lower grades, focus on the comprehension of words (e.g., “Students will acquire content-specific grade-level vocabulary, relate to prior knowledge, and apply in new situations”); but the emphasis shifts to sentences in the Writing section (“... students will produce and expand complete sentences in shared language activities.”) There is also a fair amount of rewording of the descriptors that mostly repeat the same content or add little to an understanding of how students progress, e.g.:

“Students will use figurative language to develop ideas.” (grade 5)

“Students will use word choice (including figurative language and idioms) to develop ideas.” (grade 6)

If using figurative language (which includes idiomatic language) is a more advanced skill, it would seem logical that literal word choice would precede it. Another example from the Writing section appears between grades 4 and 5:

“Students will apply knowledge of word parts and domain specific vocabulary to communicate ideas.” (grade 4)

“Students will apply knowledge of word parts and domain- specific words to provide coherence in writing.” (grade 5)

This does not seem to be an accurate description of the role of vocabulary. Although at its core, all reading and writing can be reduced to the comprehension and use of vocabulary, cohesion refers to the interrelatedness and consistency of ideas. Producing coherent writing involves much more than just the correct use of vocabulary: it involves text organization and structure as well. Because the skills cannot be neatly packaged into discrete categories, and since a number of descriptors, particularly in the Writing

section, deviate from actual vocabulary use, a solution could be to combine these descriptors with another standard or standards, such as standard 4 and/or standard 5.

Standard 4: Critical Reading & Critical Writing / Reading		
Grade(s)	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Pre-K and K	NA	
K and 1st grade	Students independently identify author's purpose at 1 st grade. There are also expected to make comparisons between story elements.	It would be helpful to define story elements and how students compare them. Are story elements individual characters or the concept of characterization? Do students compare two characters or compare characterization and setting? PARCC, for example, considers story elements to be setting, characterization, and plot, and to address the CCSS standard that addresses their relationship, the comparison must be between elements, not within them. In other words, the comparison cannot be between two characters but must be between plot and character or plot and setting. Also, how do "ask and answer questions about texts" (standard 2, Kindergarten) and "Students will ask questions to extend their understanding of a topic" (standard 4, Kindergarten) differ?
1 st and 2 nd grade	Comparison of story elements extended to two texts.	See comment above regarding what is meant by 'story elements.'
2 nd and 3 rd grade	At grade 3, students are expected to identify theme or moral of a story, compare their own point-of-view with that of the narrator or characters, and identify the structure and main idea of a text.	Introduction of theme identification consistent with PASS 2010 and CCSS. Suggest organizing the descriptors as they appear at the higher grades; that is, separated by genre (literary or informational). It would also be helpful to describe what is meant by the student's point of view in comparison to the narrator or characters' point of view. Does point of view here mean opinion, or the angle in which the story is told (i.e., first person, third person)?
3 rd and 4 th grade	Students expected to determine theme or moral independently at grade 4 and compare and contrast characters and themes across multiple texts, and the structure of narrative and informational texts.	Requiring students to compare between texts at grade 4 is consistent with the CCSS standards.

Standard 4: Critical Reading & Critical Writing / Reading		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
4 th and 5 th grade	Students begin to use reading strategies and analyze effect of point of view, simile, and metaphor.	The descriptors are separated into Literary and Informational beginning with grade 5. It is unclear what “sound devices” mean. The assumption is that it refers to rhyme and alliteration—which seems out of place here and more aligned with standard 3. The second descriptor (“identify author’s purpose and compare and contrast characters and events”) appears to mix the genres. Suggest splitting this into two and placing the former in B. Informational and the latter in A. Literary.
5 th and 6 th grade	At grade 6, students expected to analyze informational texts and draw inferences using the author’s evidence.	The only change between grades 5 and 6 is the change of the lone informational text descriptor, from identify the structure of a text (which was first introduced at grade 4) to analyzing what the text says explicitly and drawing inferences from it. This closely mirrors CCSS RI.5.1: “Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.”
6 th and 7 th grade	7 th grade students are expected to explain author’s purpose instead of simply identifying it, and expected to recognize errors in reasoning. Grade 7 students are also introduced to irony, symbol, theme, and tone.	Students expected to compare and contrast themes but this skill appears at grade 4, so unless the comparison is somehow different, it can likely be removed at grade 7, or added to the grades in between 4 and 7. Author’s purpose appears twice, which seems unnecessary. Recognizing errors in reasoning is introduced at grade 6 in the PASS 2010.
7 th and 8 th grade	Students provide a summary at grade 8 that includes how an author responds to conflicting evidence and viewpoints.	The introduction of providing summaries would best be included with the Writing standards. And its appearance here is quite late: CCSS notes this ability at grade 6, and the PASS 2010 is consistent with this as well. Also, students determining the main idea of a text appears at grades 3–5 and then reappears at grade 7. How it differs at grade 7 from lower grades should be explained.
8 th and 9 th grade	9 th grade students are expected to evaluate the purpose and historical, cultural or global significance of a text, analyze texts for	Although <i>author’s purpose</i> is not mentioned at grade 9, students are expected to evaluate the <i>text’s purpose</i> . The difference or differences between these purposes, if any, should be explained.

Standard 4: Critical Reading & Critical Writing / Reading		
<i>Grade(s)</i>	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
	character development and archetypes, and analyze the development of claims over the course of a text. Grade 9 students also interpret how themes are connected across texts.	The inclusion at grade 9 of the descriptor noting that students “interpret how themes are connected across texts,” echoes a descriptor that appears at grade 4: Students will compare/contrast . . . themes, point of view and styles of multiple texts.” How these are different—or if the difference is just that the texts are more complex at grade 9—should be explained. (The PASS 2010 introduces the concept at grade 8.)
9 th and 10 th grade	The only difference is the analysis of counterclaims in texts.	The inclusion of counterclaims appears to be a rewording of a descriptor that appears at grade 8: “how an author responds to conflicting evidence and viewpoints.”
10 th and 11 th grade	11 th grade students are expected to evaluate the effectiveness of an author’s argument.	
11 th and 12 th grade	Few differences between the expectations of 11 th and 12 th grade students.	The grade 12 descriptors are arranged and organized very differently than grades 5–11. Gone is the distinction between literary and informational texts and the number of descriptors has been reduced to three. That said, there appears to be only minor changes in the actual content of the descriptors, which have been combined but add little new information. This departure from earlier grades creates confusion and makes it difficult to discern differences between the two grades. Instead of rephrasing the same expectations using different words, it might serve the purpose of the standards to combine the grades, as they do in the CCSS (i.e., grades 9–10 and grades 11–12).

Standard 4: Critical Reading & Critical Writing / Writing		
<i>Grade(s)</i>	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Pre-K and K	Kindergarten students expected to tell a story, share information, and express an opinion.	
K and 1 st grade	No difference between K and 1 st grade.	

Standard 4: Critical Reading & Critical Writing / Writing		
<i>Grade(s)</i>	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1 st and 2 nd grade	2 nd grade students expected to write narratives and informational and opinion pieces.	These three modes of writing reflect what is described in the CCSS.
2 nd and 3 rd grade	More elaborate forms of narrative, informational, and opinion pieces expected at grade 3.	The grade 3 expectations are consistent with the requirements stated in the CCSS. Although the modes of writing do not change or expand, the complexity of the student writing does.
3 rd and 4 th grade	Minor differences between grades 3 and 4.	The stated differences seem arbitrary, e.g., narratives are supposed to have a problem/solution and informational writing should have a 'clear' main idea rather than just a 'main idea.' More elaboration would be helpful in better understanding the progression of writing skills.
4 th and 5 th grade	5 th grade students expand their narrative skills to include setting, conflict, and plot structure. They also use evidence to support informational texts, and show relationships between facts, opinions, and supporting details in opinion pieces.	The B informative descriptor includes a reference to using transitions and appropriate vocabulary. No other descriptor mentions word usage until grade 7 for narrative writing (sensory language) and grade 11, when references appear with argumentative texts. Under the current structure, these should be placed in the Vocabulary or Language standards.
5 th and 6 th grade	6 th grade students are expected to add a concluding statement to their opinion pieces.	Conclusions are noted as early as grade 4 for informational texts so it seems to be an oversight that conclusions do not make an appearance until grade 6 in opinion writing. The CCSS note that opinion pieces have conclusions as early as grade 2. There are differences between the narrative descriptor at grades 5 and 6 but although the words are different, the content remains largely the same, i.e., "techniques of character development" (grade 6) vs. techniques of . . . character" (grade 5).
6 th and 7 th grade	7 th grade students are expected to use dialogue, pacing, and sensory language when writing narratives and maintain a formal style for informational texts. Opinion pieces become argumentative writing at grade 7, and students introduce and organize claims	Argumentative writing introduced at grade 6 in the CCSS. Mentioning 'sensory language' in the narrative descriptor seems misplaced under the current structure. Should be classified with Vocabulary.

Standard 4: Critical Reading & Critical Writing / Writing		
Grade(s)	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
	and show the relationship among the claims, reasons, and evidence.	
7 th and 8 th grade	Grade 8 student narratives incorporate point of view, and argumentative texts recognize counterclaims and opposing viewpoints.	Incorporating counterclaims is introduced a grade earlier (grade 7) in the CCSS but a grade later (grade 9) in the PASS 2010.
8 th and 9 th grade	Grade 9 students write non-fiction narratives (memoirs), and introduce multiple claims in their argumentative writing.	The descriptors imply that up until grade 9, student narratives have been fiction, rather than nonfiction. The CCSS standards note that narratives can be either as far back as grade 2: “Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events [emphasis added]” If writing a non-fiction narrative is more complex or difficult, then the reasons why should be included in the grade-level descriptors.
9 th and 10 th grade	10 th grade students write, “narratives embedded in other modes” and introduce precise claims to their argumentative writing.	It is unclear what is meant by “narratives embedded in other modes.” Assume it refer to using narrative techniques in, e.g., argumentative writing.
10 th and 11 th grade	Grade 11 students expected to more skillfully organize their argumentative writing, and provide “the most relevant evidence to develop balanced arguments using credible sources.”	The primary change is with argumentative writing, where the organization and quality of evidence increases. The progression of skills is consistent with the progression described in the CCSS.
11 th and 12 th grade	No difference between grades.	

Standard 4 summary

There is a great deal of overlap between standards 2 and 4; so much so, that combining the two standards should be considered. This is especially true in the Writing section. There are few, if any, skills stated in standard 2 are not repeated and made more explicit in standard 4. Although, as the NCTE standards document points out, some overlap in ELA standards is to be expected, here, the overlap is such that it creates confusion when related content is spread across multiple standards. For example, the B Informative descriptor in the standard 4 Writing section (“informational” in the Reading section of standard 4; the discrepancy should be resolved) includes a reference to using transitions and appropriate vocabulary. Under the current standard structure, this reference should be placed in the Vocabulary or Language standards. (And those two standards could also be logically combined.)

Unlike earlier standards where the number of descriptors at the lower grades outnumbered the ones at the higher grades, standard 4 reverses that trend. The Reading section, for example, separates Literary and Informational descriptors at the higher grades, and that is a useful tactic and helps make the intention of the standard clearer. It should be applied at the lower grades as well to maintain consistency. There seems to be an overemphasis on sound devices at the higher grades—they are not mentioned, for example, in the CCSS after grade 7—and unless their importance can be explained, should give way to more complex or grade-appropriate literary techniques, such as analyzing the impact of an author’s word choices on meaning and tone.

In addition, the Writing section has some weaknesses that should be addressed. The shift in the Narrative descriptor from fiction to non-fiction at grade 9 seems odd and implies that non-fiction narrative writing is somehow more complex or requires more skilled writing than fiction. And the Informative descriptor remains unchanged from grades 7–12. The differences at the higher grades for these two modes need to be developed and articulated so that there is a clear understanding of what students are expected to produce.

Standard 5: Language / Reading		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
Pre-K and K	NA	
K and 1 st grade	NA	
1 st and 2 nd grade	Grade 2 students begin to show metacognitive awareness regarding language by explaining the different functions verbs serve.	The grade 1 descriptor seems misplaced, as it refers to the production of sentences. It belongs in the Writing section, not the Reading section.
2 nd and 3 rd grade	The parts of speech students are expected to understand expand to include nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and adverbs. In addition, students are expected to use verb tense to identify times and sequences.	The second descriptor is faulty: "Students will use verb tense to identify setting, times and sequences in text." Verb tense deals with time and sequence, not setting. Would appear that the ability to use verb tense to identify time and sequence comes earlier in a student's academic career. The CCSS notes this ability in grade 1: "Use verbs to convey a sense of past, present, and future (e.g., <i>Yesterday I walked home</i> ; <i>Today I walk home</i> ; <i>Tomorrow I will walk home</i> ."
3 rd and 4 th grade	Little difference between the grades.	
4 th and 5 th grade	5 th grade students are expected to explain the function of conjunctions, prepositions, and interjections and their effect in sentences.	Although there is a logical expansion in the parts of speech, conjunctions and prepositions, as minor parts of speech, tend to add function rather than meaning, to sentences.
5 th and 6 th grade	6 th grade students are expected to recognize English variations.	The introduction of variations in speech at grade 6 is consistent with its introduction in the CCSS. However, the changes that appear in the other descriptors are confusing. Students "explain the function of pronouns" at grade 6, but this was introduced at grade 3. Although three types of pronouns—subjective, objective, and possessive—are noted in the grade 6 descriptor, these are the ones most likely to have been introduced at the lower grades. And the expectation that 6 th grade students should "recognize simple and compound sentences to signal differing relationships among ideas" seems more a matter of reading comprehension than language awareness. Although the descriptor strongly echoes L.7.1.b in the CCSS, the primary difference is the choice of

Standard 5: Language / Reading		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
		verb: “Choose among simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences to signal differing relationships among ideas.” “Choose” suggests that the student is selecting and producing text and not recognizing and comprehending it.
6 th and 7 th grade	7 th grade students expected to recognize complex sentences and how they signal different relationships among ideas, and recognize and correct misplaced and dangling modifiers.	As with the grade 6 descriptor, a concept introduced earlier (grade 5) is reintroduced here—explaining the function of prepositions. Although the reference is changed to prepositional phrases, they are not conceptually much different than prepositions. More elaboration or the inclusion of examples would help see how they are different. (Explaining prepositional phrases appears in the CCSS at grade 5. See L.5.1.a.) The new descriptor that appears at grade 7, “recognize and correct misplaced and dangling modifiers,” itself appears misplaced, and should be moved to the Writing section.
7 th and 8 th grade	8 th grade students are expected to recognize and use the passive voice and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense.	The descriptor referencing the passive voice, while grade appropriate, belongs in the Writing section of standard 5. The recognition and correction of inappropriate shifts in verb tense also belongs in the Writing section. Note that this ability appears in the CCSS at grade 5 and, more importantly, in the Writing section of standard 5 at grade 5 as well.
8 th and 9 th grade	9 th grade students are expected to explain the function of parallel structure and various types of phrases and clauses. 9 th grade students are also expected to explain the function of the passive voice.	As a general rule, reception precedes production, but the expectation here suggests that students should be able to “recognize and use [emphasis added] the passive voice” at 8 th grade, but only explain the passive at grade 9. Using the passive at grade 8 is consistent with the CCSS. (The PASS 2010 lists using the passive voice as a grade 9 skill.)
9 th and 10 th grade	Few differences between the grades.	
10 th and 11 th grade	Few true differences between the grades.	The focus of the standard shifts from the specific to the general and seems out of place in relation to the other descriptors in the Reading section. The grade 11 descriptor (there is only one) could apply to standard 3 (Vocabulary) since the skills described include analyzing rhetorical style, which likely involves the author’s

Standard 5: Language / Reading		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
		choice of words. And how or in what ways the students “refine their knowledge of grammar” is not made clear. On the other hand, it is the descriptor that comes closest to matching the definition and intent of the standard: “Students will apply knowledge of grammar and rhetorical style to reading and writing.”
11 th and 12 th grade	No differences between the grades.	

Standard 5: Language / Writing		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
Pre-K and K	NA	
K and 1 st grade	1 st grade students expected to produce simple sentences independently, use verbs to convey the past, present, and future, and use frequently occurring adjectives and conjunctions.	In the Reading section of standard 5, it is noted that “standards in this category begin in first grade,” although they start in Kindergarten in the Writing section.
1 st and 2 nd grade	2 nd grade students expected to use irregular past tense verbs and possessive nouns and pronouns.	
2 nd and 3 rd grade	3 rd grade students use abstract nouns and correct forms of regular and irregular plural nouns.	The descriptor noting that students will create sentences that include “correctly formed simple verb tenses” is vague and does not explain how this differs from the 1 st grade descriptor: “use verbs to convey a sense of past, present, and future.” Is it a matter of accuracy?
3 rd and 4 th grade	4 th grade students expected to use relative and reflexive pronouns, use the progressive form of verbs, and use the correct form of commonly confused words.	Although the use of relative pronouns is consistent with its introduction in the CCSS, the CCSS standards introduce reflexive pronouns in grade 2. Note that verbs are not classified as “progressive verbs”; it’s the verb <i>form</i> that is progressive. Two grade 4 descriptors contradict each other: “Students will compose grammatically correct sentences when writing texts” and “Students will recognize and correct incomplete sentences.”

Standard 5: Language / Writing		
Grade(s)	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
4 th and 5 th grade	5 th grade students identify and use the eight parts of speech and use the perfect aspect.	In previous grades, the specific parts of speech were noted—e.g., verbs, nouns, conjunctions, etc.—but now the parts of speech are used collectively, and it creates a discrepancy between the Reading and Writing sections of standard 5. In the Reading section, interjection and preposition are introduced at grade 5, but participial is not mentioned until grade 8. Also, identifying is more of a metacognitive skill, and something that seems better placed in the Reading section, where the conscious comprehension of language is described. Also, why the focus at grade 5 on verb tense? It was originally introduced at grade 1. And to split a hair: the perfect is not a verb tense. There are only two tenses in English: non-past, or present, and past. Everything else is aspect, since the future and progressive require modal “helping” verbs to express events that have yet to happen, are happening right now, or are happening concurrently.
5 th and 6 th grade	6 th grade students focus on the use of pronouns.	The use of pronouns appears in grade 1 and then disappears until grade 6. Why the emphasis at the higher grades on single parts of speech? Is there a reason why the study of verbs precedes the study of pronouns? And the descriptor explaining that students will “form and use simple and compound sentences to signal differing relationships among ideas” is somewhat puzzling. While it acts as the precursor to a grade 7 descriptor (and which, in turn, mirrors the CCSS at grade 7), it is unclear how it differs from the expectations of students at the lower grades, e.g., “Students will compose simple, grammatically correct sentences with proper mechanics” (grades 1–3). As the focus of the standard is on structure and syntax rather than meaning and semantics, there should be a distinction of how the sentences composed at the lower grades lack the complexity or sophistication of the ones at the higher grades.

Standard 5: Language / Writing		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
6 th and 7 th grade	7 th grade students are expected to form simple, compound, complex, and compound complex sentences.	The expectation is consistent with the CCSS. Odd that the number of descriptors suddenly drops, from six to two. As with grades 5 and 6, there is a focus at grade 7 on a specific part of speech (prepositions). It would be good to know the reasons for this.
7 th and 8 th grade	8 th grade students are expected to use verbals, use both the active and passive voices, and the conditional and subjunctive moods.	Whereas verb tense was the concentration at grade 5, the shift in grade 8 is to verb forms, e.g., infinitives and participles. Although gerunds are referenced, they would probably be best classified as nouns, as that is how they function in sentences as. There is some extraneous or unnecessary information contained in these descriptors: the reference to active voice (since there are only two voices in English, it can be assumed that students have been using the active voice until now), and the reference to the use of verbs to form the indicative, imperative, and interrogative, since the same, simple verb form can be used in all three: "Is today Tuesday?" "Today is Tuesday." "Today is Tuesday!"
8 th and 9 th grade	9 th grade students use parallel structure and various types of phrases.	Introduction of parallel structure is consistent with its appearance in the CCSS and the PASS 2010 standards. The descriptor describing phrasal usage does not seem correctly placed here. For example, prepositional phrases have already been introduced and were a featured part of speech at grade 7, and other listed phrase types, such as appositives, are very simple in construction and likely acquired during elementary school. If the idea is to focus on their use to "convey specific meanings," then it needs further elaboration, since the point of a phrase—and the larger sentences that they comprise—is to convey specific meanings.
9 th and 10 th grade	Little difference between the grades—the descriptor notes different types of phrases (noun, verb, and absolute) than the ones noted at grade 9.	Students have certainly been using noun and verb phrases well before grade 10, so their explicit reference here seems odd.

Standard 5: Language / Writing		
<i>Grade(s)</i>	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
10 th and 11 th grade	11 th grade students “refine their use of Standard American English, grammar, mechanics, and usage . . .”	The lone descriptor at grade 11 parallels the Reading descriptor at grade 11, but says very little about how or in which ways students refine their use of American English. And this lack of specifics is at odds with the other grade-level descriptors, where e.g., particular parts of speech or types of phrases are explicitly noted.
11 th and 12 th grade	No difference between the grades.	

Standard 5 summary

There are numerous discrepancies and inconsistencies in standard 5 that should be addressed. The Reading section, for example, states the standards begin at grade 1, but in the Writing section, they begin in Kindergarten. There is also a lack of refinement, or explanation, as to why certain grammatical features are introduced at one grade, are not mentioned at a subsequent grade, and then reappear several grades later. The Reading section in particular is prone to descriptors that describe writing, or producing language, rather than reading, or comprehending it:

“Students will expand simple and compound sentences.” (grade 1)

“Recognize and correct misplaced and dangling modifiers.” (grade 7)

“Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense.” (grade 8)

In addition, the grade 8 descriptor above also appears the Writing section—but at grade 5, not at grade 8. Although many grammatical concepts are introduced at grade levels consistent with the CCSS and PASS 2010 standards, there are no logical reasons or explanations why others are introduced or made the focus of a particular grade, thus giving the impression of arbitrary, picked-out-of-a-hat decisions. For example, why is there a “focus on verb tense” in grade 5 when the concept of using verbs to “convey a sense of past, present, and future” has been introduced in grade 1? And why the emphasis on prepositional phrases at grade 7? There is also a sudden shift in focus of the descriptors, both in Reading and Writing, occurring at grade 11, where, instead of describing specific grammar or stylistic concepts, the descriptor broadens: “Students will refine their knowledge of grammar and rhetorical style” (Reading) and “refine their use of Standard American English grammar, mechanics, and usage.”

As with other standards—most notably, standards 3 and 4—it might best serve the interest of the standards to combine standard 5 with standard 3. This is the approach the CCSS standards took: Language consists of Conventions of Standard English, Knowledge of Language, and Vocabulary Acquisition and Usage. This might also help clarify the parallels and distinctions inherent in reading and writing that the standards are attempting to articulate. Unfortunately, all too often, in their current version, the overlap blurs the line too much, and creates confusion rather than clarification, as writing skills get placed alongside descriptions of reading comprehension skills.

Standard 6: Research / Reading		
<i>Grade(s)</i>	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Pre-K and K	Kindergarten students are expected to identify pictures, charts, and grade-appropriate texts independently.	
K and 1 st grade	1 st grade students are expected to decide who can answer specific questions about a topic and organize information found during group or individual research.	Who are the “local experts” students are supposed to consult to locate and gather information? Librarians? If so, it should be stated as such, or examples given of the types of local experts students are expected to consult. If not confined to librarians or school officials, the expectation seems unrealistic. The students are in the first grade. They’re five or six years old. Should they really be expected to “consult a local expert” on a topic?
1 st and 2 nd grade	2 nd grade students are expected to generate their own questions on a topic and determine the accuracy and relevance of information pertaining to their topic, with guidance and support.	
2 nd and 3 rd grade	3 rd grade students are expected to determine the accuracy and relevance of information on their selected topic independently, and locate information in reference texts.	
3 rd and 4 th grade	Little difference in expectations between grades 3 and 4.	The only noted difference is that 4th grade students should use organizational features to locate information.
4 th and 5 th grade	5 th grade students are expected to record and organize information from a variety of texts.	This skill was introduced at grade 1 and was then dropped in subsequent grades. As this is the only descriptor at grade 5, it would be helpful to know how it differs from what students did at the lower grades. The assumption is that the texts are more complex, but is that the only difference?
5 th and 6 th grade	No difference in the research skill noted. The only change is the explicit reference to primary and secondary sources of information.	Assuming that some of the texts located and organized at previous grades are primary sources, there does not appear to be much, if any, progression in skills between grades 5 and 6.

Standard 6: Research / Reading		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
6 th and 7 th grade	7 th grade students are expected to evaluate resources and follow ethical and legal guidelines for collecting and recording information.	Assume this pertains to plagiarism and copyright violations, but it would be useful to have this confirmed or explained. Although science studies often have to follow ethical guidelines, especially in their treatment of humans and animals, this type of research would not be expected at grade 7.
7 th and 8 th grade	No significant difference between the grades.	
8 th and 9 th grade	No significant difference between the grades.	
9 th and 10 th grade	10 th grade students are expected to synthesize information from primary and secondary sources.	This is similar to the standard 2 descriptor at grade 9: "Students will identify genre, connect and respond to texts, summarize, paraphrase, generalize, and synthesize texts." Thus, there would appear to be a discrepancy when students should be expected to synthesize texts. Although the CCSS describes it as a grade 9 skill the PASS 2010 mention it as early as grade 3: "Locate, organize, and synthesize information from a variety of print and nonprint and technological resources."
10 th and 11 th grade	No difference between the grades.	
11 th and 12 th grade	12 th grade students are expected to comprehend as well as evaluate, select, and synthesize texts.	It seems odd to include 'comprehension' in the grade 12 descriptor. If students are expected to evaluate and synthesize texts at grade 10, then it's a given that they must be able to comprehend them as well.

Standard 6: Research / Writing		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
Pre-K and K	Kindergarten students "talk about information learned in print."	This descriptor is very similar to, and could be more logically placed, in standard 1.
K and 1 st grade	1 st grade students are expected to make informal presentations.	This descriptor could also be combined with standard 1, since the focus is on oral presentations. Note that the first reference to oral presentations in standard 1 occurs at grade 5 ("Students will give formal and informal presentations . . .").
1 st and 2 nd grade	2 nd grade students are expected to target and generate questions about an individual topic	Summarizing appears at grade 3 in standard 2 as a Reading skill.

Standard 6: Research / Writing		
Grade(s)	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
	of interest and summarize and present their information both orally and in writing.	
2 nd and 3 rd grade	Little difference between grades 2 and 3.	
3 rd and 4 th grade	4 th grade students are expected to generate a viable research question, record pertinent sources, cite all quoted words, and introduce them in one's own words.	Considering that there was little, if any, difference in skills between grades 2 and 3, there are a number of differences at grade 4. Citing information is noted in the CCSS starting at grade 6, although the occurrence here mirrors its first appearance in the PASS 2010. Paraphrasing, or, as it is described here, "introducing [quoted words] in one's own words," is introduced at grade 4 in both the CCSS and the PASS 2010. Note, however, that it is introduced earlier, at grade 3, in standard 1. In the third descriptor, it is unclear who does the evaluation: the student, on the student's own work, or the student on another student's research.
4 th and 5 th grade	No significant differences between the grades.	The descriptors are worded differently but carry the same primary content as described at grade 4. The 2nd descriptor at grade 5—"students will record main idea and supporting details . . ." is very similar to a grade 5 standard 4 descriptor: "Students will identify the . . . main idea, and author's use of evidence."
5 th and 6 th grade	No significant differences between the grades.	Although the descriptors at grade 6 have been tweaked, adding "clearly" does not significantly mark a change in student expectations. Nor does the addition of paraphrase and summarize to the third descriptor, as these expectations have been introduced at earlier grades (grades 2 and 4).
6 th and 7 th grade	7 th grade students are expected to develop a thesis statement and avoid plagiarism.	In the PASS 2010 standards, students develop thesis statements beginning in 5 th grade ("establish and support a central theme or idea with a thesis statement.").
7 th and 8 th grade	No significant differences between the grades.	The only noted difference is that thesis statements are "well-developed." That is not descriptive enough to mark a change between the grades.

Standard 6: Research / Writing		
<i>Grade(s)</i>	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
8 th and 9 th grade	No significant differences between the grades.	The 2 nd descriptor states that students “will record supporting details and information from more complex sources.” The reference to complex sources seems odd and out of place in the writing section. Just because a source is more complex does not mean it is more viable or provides better information than a source that is less complex. Is the reference intended to imply that students use primary as opposed to secondary sources, which, particularly with historical documents, are generally more complex? If so, then it should mirror the introduction of using “primary and secondary sources” that appear in the Reading section, which occurs at grade 6, not grade 9.
9 th and 10 th grade	No significant differences between the grades.	The only difference of note is that 10 th grade students are expected to integrate findings, which implies using multiple texts.
10 th and 11 th grade	No significant differences between the grades.	The second descriptor has one added feature: students “will document and integrate supporting details and information” and not simply “document supporting details.” This reflects the inclusion of “integrate” in the first descriptor, but it seems that the two have so much in common now that the second descriptor is unnecessary. Note that “integrate” appears in the first descriptor at grade 9 but not in the second descriptor until grade 10.
11 th and 12 th grade	No significant differences between the grades.	The first descriptor and the third descriptor have been largely combined at grade 12, yet the third descriptor remains intact, as it appears in grades 7–11. If there are true differences between these descriptors (besides avoiding plagiarism) they need more elaboration.

Standard 6 summary

A common pattern found throughout the analysis of these standards is how they overlap and the need to either combine or better differentiate between them. Standard 6 is no exception. Many of the grade-level descriptors could be combined with other standards, most notably, standards 1, 2, and 4. Which begs the question: does Research really require its own standard? If so, how are the skills distinctly different from what has previously been described? If the standard remains, then it should be compared with other standards and discrepancies amongst them reconciled. For example, the third descriptor at grade 6 in the Writing section includes the ability to paraphrase and summarize; however, not only have these skills been previously introduced in standard 6 at grades 2 and 4, in standard 2, summarizing appears as a Reading skill at grade 3.

Although the progression of skills is fairly even and unremarkable, there is a noticeable leap in expectations between grades 3 and 4 in the Writing section, and the number of descriptors jumps from two to five. The descriptors themselves need refinement; adding an adjectival or adverbial phrase—“well-developed” or “clearly report”—and otherwise leaving a descriptor intact from grade to grade does not clarify or explain the progression of complexity, sophistication, or quality of the targeted skill. There are numerous cases where synonyms are used to differentiate descriptors, but that does not sufficiently describe a difference in the content or expectations. Compare these two descriptors:

Grade 4	Grade 5
Students will generate a viable research question about a specific topic.	Students will formulate a viable research question and report findings.

Is there a true distinction between *generating* and *formulating* a viable research question? Or is the difference supposed to be that grade 5 students report their findings? If that’s the case, how do we rectify that with this descriptor at grade 4, which does not have a grade 5 equivalent: “Students will present the research project and evaluate how completely, accurately, and efficiently the major research question was explored or answered.”

The real difference seems to be more a matter of style than substance: grade 4 separates these skills—generating a research question and presenting the findings—into two descriptors whereas grade 5 combines them into one. In other words, the grade-level descriptors are different and vary in wording and in number, but these differences do not explain or show how the underlying expectations increase from one school year to the next.

Standard 7: Multimodal Literacies / Reading		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
Pre-K and K	Kindergarten students “demonstrate understanding of valid information” and “use multiple formats of print and digital texts.”	It is unclear what Kindergarten students are expected to do, as “use multiple formats of print and digital texts” is vague and not specific in terms of how these texts are used. And since it appears verbatim at grades K–4, the descriptor should be revised to show a progression or range of multimodal literacy skills. Also, in the first descriptor, who determines the validity of the information—the teacher or the student?
K and 1 st grade	No difference between the grades.	The adjective ‘valid’ has been dropped from the 1 st grade standard. It should be deleted from Kindergarten as well.
1 st and 2 nd grade	2 nd grade students are expected, with guidance and support, to locate, organize, and evaluate information from print and digital resources, and to generate questions.	The expectations are very similar to what has already been stated in standard 6; however, 2 nd grade students locate texts and generate questions independently in standard 6.
2 nd and 3 rd grade	3 rd grade students are expected to locate, organize, and evaluate information from print and digital resources independently, and to generate questions.	Very similar to what has been described in standard 6.
3 rd and 4 th grade	No differences between the grades.	
4 th and 5 th grade	5 th grade students are expected to identify the characteristics and effectiveness of a variety of written and digital texts.	The focus of the standard appears to shift here from locating and evaluating specific information in texts, to identifying the characteristics and overall effectiveness of the text format, e.g., print vs. digital. Note that evaluating the effectiveness of digital media is introduced in the PASS 2010 at grade 8.
5 th and 6 th grade	6 th grade students are expected to compare and contrast the effectiveness of a variety of written and digital texts.	
6 th and 7 th grade	A shift from comparing and contrasting the overall effectiveness of texts, to comparing and contrasting the <i>techniques</i> used to make the text effective.	There should be further elaboration on the significance of the change from identifying how texts are effective to a focus on the techniques used to achieve that effectiveness.

Standard 7: Multimodal Literacies / Reading		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
7 th and 8 th grade	8 th grade students are expected to “analyze and evaluate” the effectiveness of techniques used in written and digital texts, with emphasis on argumentative texts.	The focus on argumentative texts is consistent with the focus stated in the standard 2 Writing section. It’s unclear which techniques are the focus here: the techniques of argumentation, or the techniques used to create a visual or digital text. It might serve the purposes of the standards better to combine these descriptors with similar ones found in standard 2 and 4.
8 th and 9 th grade	9 th grade students are expected to “determine the tools and techniques” used to achieve intended purposes in written and digital texts.	It’s unclear what is meant by ‘tools,’ and the descriptor could use some examples to make the concept clear. Digital tools? Rhetorical tools?
9 th and 10 th grade	10 th grade students are expected to analyze the tools and techniques used in written and digital texts.	
10 th and 11 th grade	11 th grade students are expected to analyze the tools and techniques used by ‘visual image-makers’ to construct arguments.	The inclusion of “digital image-makers” in this descriptor is puzzling, since the descriptor still references written and oral texts, in addition to digital, non-verbal, and interactive ones. “Visual image-maker” would appear to be a synonym for a film or documentary director or creator, a photographer, or an artist, but how the latter “construct arguments” through their visual medium is also unclear.
11 th and 12 th grade	12 th grade students are expected to analyze texts so that they can draw conclusions and defend arguments.	The skills of drawing conclusions and supporting arguments appear in standard 2 at grade 7, so there is an inconsistency here with their appearance at grade 12. Also gone is the reference to “visual image-makers.” Suggest deleting it from the grade 11 descriptor as well.

Standard 7: Multimodal Literacies / Writing		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
Pre-K and K	No differences between the grades.	Unclear what is meant by “students will practice safe behaviors when communicating” and how this relates to multimodal literacies. Also unclear how students “use

Standard 7: Multimodal Literacies / Writing		
Grade(s)	Difference between grades	Comments
		appropriate digital tools to communicate with others," especially since these are Pre-K students.
K and 1 st grade	No differences between the grades.	
1 st and 2 nd grade	2 nd grade students expected, with support, to create a "visual message that effectively communicates an idea."	Unclear what the definition of 'visual message' is. Is it a drawing or picture or does the concept include charts, tables, and maps? Since students are still learning to form letters and space words appropriately (standard 2), there needs to be an explanation of what constitutes a grade-appropriate visual message. The change in the first descriptor from prior grades renders the second descriptor unnecessary, unless the second descriptor is intended to describe the actual use of digital tools, e.g., software applications, to help create the visual message. If that's the case, the descriptor should be edited and revised to make the distinction clearer.
2 nd and 3 rd grade	Third grade students are expected to create visual messages independently.	
3 rd and 4 th grade	No difference between grades.	
4 th and 5 th grade	No difference between grades.	The second descriptor has been removed at grade 5. It should also be removed from grades 2, 3, and 4 as well.
5 th and 6 th grade	6 th grade students are expected to create a text with a "combination of visual messages" that effectively communicates an idea.	The standard is sorely lacking in detail as to the form or complexity of these messages and the relationship or ratio of visual images to written text. Do charts, tables, and graphs qualify as visual messages, or are these messages primarily artistic?
6 th and 7 th grade	7 th grade students are expected to "select, organize, or produce" multimedia texts.	The descriptor is unclear as to what it is the students are selecting. Is it evidence or details to include in multimedia texts that they subsequently create? The descriptor is vague and open to interpretation, but seems to imply that the multimedia texts consist of visual images and written text (although the phrase 'visual images,' which is noted in the 8 th grade descriptor, is not included at grade 7).

Standard 7: Multimodal Literacies / Writing		
<i>Grade(s)</i>	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
7 th and 8 th grade	8 th grade students are expected to produce “visual images, messages, and meanings that encompass different points of view.”	How do “visual images” differ from “visual messages?” Or do they? The focus on different points of view is consistent with the emphasis on persuasion and argument in the Reading section of grade 8, but the nature of the finished product is unclear. At grade 7, the phrase “multimedia texts” is used to describe student work, but there is no such description at grade 8. Also, there is a conceptual flaw in the series described in the descriptor: “visual images” and “messages” are modes of communication, but “meanings” are not. Meanings are contained in or expressed by the modes.
8 th and 9 th grade	9 th grade students are expected to create “multimedia products.”	There appears to be a reduction in the requirements at grade 9 from what is stated at grade 8. The requirement at grade 9 is merely to create a multimedia product that engages a specific audience. The complexity or purpose of the product—e.g., to encompass different points of view (grade 8), or extend the meaning of a topic (grade 7)—is not noted.
9 th and 10 th grade	10 th grade students are expected to investigate, critique, and present the sources of a multimedia presentation.	This descriptor seems incorrectly placed in the Writing section. As it involves investigating and critiquing sources, the description is more aligned with the descriptor in the Reading section: “Students will analyze the tools and techniques used to achieve the intended purpose in written, oral, visual, digital, non-verbal, and interactive texts.” This descriptor is also a movement away from the production of multimedia to the examination of it.
10 th and 11 th grade	11 th grade students are expected to design and develop multimedia.	The expectations shift back to the production of multimedia; how these texts differ from grade 9, if indeed they do, is unclear, and should be clarified.
11 th and 12 th grade	No significant difference between the grades.	

Standard 7 summary

Anytime a standard lists only one or two descriptors per grade level, it suggests that either the standard itself is not robust enough to stand on its own as a separate standard, or that it has not been adequately conceptualized. This results in descriptors that sorely lack elaboration, consistency, detail, and specific examples that help demonstrate the development, over time, of knowledge, skills, and abilities. A case in point is the second descriptor at grades K–4: “Students will use multiple formats of print and digital texts.” What will students “use” these texts for? And what are some of the “multiple formats of print and digital texts” that students will use? The lack of specifics, not only in terms of what students do with texts, but also what specific types of digital and print texts they use, leaves the standard open to wide and varied interpretation. There is also a lack of consistency in terminology throughout the standard:

Reading	Writing
“ . . . multiple formats of print and digital text.” (K-4)	“ . . . digital tools . . .” (K-4)
“ . . . print and digital resources . . .” (K-4)	“ . . . visual message . . .” (2-5)
“ . . . written, oral, visual, digital, non-verbal, and interactive texts.” (5-12)	“ . . . visual image . . .” (grade 8)
	“ . . . multimedia texts . . .” (7, 11-12)
	“ . . . multimedia products . . .” (9-10)
	“ . . . multimedia presentation or production . . .” (grade 10)

Do “multimedia texts” and “multimedia products” refer to the same types of digital documents? If not, or if “products” include multimedia texts along with additional types of digital texts, what are these additional types of texts? Especially when discussing technology, where some teachers may not be up to date in terms of their knowledge of digital formats, the standards should include specific examples and maintain consistent use in terminology, so that the intention of the standard is clear and the expectations of students are consistent and comprehensible.

Standard 8: Independent Reading / Reading		
<i>Grade(s)</i>	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Pre-K and K	No difference between grades	
K and 1 st grade	1 st grade students are expected to read independently for academic and personal purposes, and select appropriate texts for specific purposes.	
1 st and 2 nd grade	No difference between grades	
2 nd and 3 rd grade	No difference between grades	
3 rd and 4 th grade	No difference between grades	
4 th and 5 th grade	No difference between grades	Reference to reading for “academic and personal purposes” deleted from grade 5 descriptor. Should be added to maintain consistency with previous grades.
5 th and 6 th grade	No difference between grades	See note above regarding the deletion of “academic and personal purposes.”
6 th and 7 th grade	No difference between grades	See note above regarding the deletion of “academic and personal purposes.”
7 th and 8 th grade	No difference between grades	See note above regarding the deletion of “academic and personal purposes.”
8 th and 9 th grade	No difference between grades	See note above regarding the deletion of “academic and personal purposes.”
9 th and 10 th grade	No difference between grades	See note above regarding the deletion of “academic and personal purposes.”
10 th and 11 th grade	No difference between grades	See note above regarding the deletion of “academic and personal purposes.”
11 th and 12 th grade	No difference between grades	See note above regarding the deletion of “academic and personal purposes.”

Standard 8: Independent Reading / Writing		
<i>Grade(s)</i>	<i>Difference between grades</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Pre-K and K	No difference between grades	
K and 1 st grade	1 st grade students are expected to write independently.	
1 st and 2 nd grade	2 nd grade students are expected to vary the writing mode to suit the audience and the writing task.	
2 nd and 3 rd grade	No difference between grades	
3 rd and 4 th grade	No difference between grades	
4 th and 5 th grade	No difference between grades	
5 th and 6 th grade	No difference between grades	
6 th and 7 th grade	No difference between grades	
7 th and 8 th grade	No difference between grades	
8 th and 9 th grade	No difference between grades	
9 th and 10 th grade	No difference between grades	
10 th and 11 th grade	No difference between grades	
11 th and 12 th grade	No difference between grades	

Standard 8 summary

Standard 8 adds very little to an understanding or description of what students should be expected to know or do across the grades. It is very similar to standard 10 in the CCSS in terms of content and aim and, like standard 10, varies little from grade 2 through 11-12. As such, it is more of a higher-level goal than a specific ability or skill that is distinct enough to require its own individual standard. The two descriptors found at most grades could easily be combined into one and the result inserted into another standard (e.g., standard 2, 4, or 6), or incorporated into a general, overarching goal for ELA.

Appendix B: Analysis of Individual Oklahoma Mathematics Standards

Number and Operations

<i>Grade/Subject</i>	<i>Standard</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1 st	1.D.1.2	Creating picture graphs and bar graphs appears at grade 1 in the OK standards, whereas it appears in grade 2 in the CCSS.
2 nd	2.N.1.5	Rounding whole numbers appears in grade 2 in the OK standards, whereas it appears in grade 3 in the CCSS.
2 nd	2.N.2.1	Assessment parameters question: are addition and subtraction facts within 100? What is the upper limit for magnitude?
3 rd	3.N.2.2	Assessment parameters question: are addition and subtraction facts within 10,000? 100,000? What is the upper limit for magnitude?
4 th	4.N.1.1	Requires fluency of multiplication facts up to 12x12, but there is no similar standard for grade 3 that requires fluency of multiplication facts up to 10x10 (or within 100).
4 th	4.N.1.5	Assessment parameters question: are multi-digit whole numbers within 1,000,000? What is the upper limit for magnitude?
4 th	4.N.2.7	Assessment parameters question: are decimals permitted to the tenths place? The hundredths place? What is the limit for place value?
5 th	5.N.1.2	Assessment parameters question: are the number of digits in the multi-digit whole numbers for the dividend and divisor restricted? 4-digit divided by 2-digit? What is the upper limit for magnitude?
5 th	5.N.1.3	Assessment parameters question: are multi-digit whole numbers greater than 1,000,000 allowed? What is the lower or upper limit for magnitude?
5 th	5.N.3.3	Assessment parameters question: are fractions limited to like denominators, or can unlike denominators be used?
7 th	7.N.2.4	Raising whole numbers to exponents appears in grade 7 in the OK standards, whereas it appears in grade 8 in the CCSS.

Algebraic Reasoning and Algebra

Grade/Subject	Standard	Comments
3 rd	3.A.2.1	Assessment parameters question: are number sentences limited to facts within 100 (or 10x10)? What is the upper limit for magnitude?
4 th	4.A.1.2	Assessment parameters question: are pattern rules limited to one step/operation (see 4.A.2.2), or are two steps/operations allowed?
4 th	4.A.2.2	Assessment parameters question: are number sentences limited to facts within 144 (or 12x12) (see 4.N.1.1)?
5 th	5.A.1.1	Assessment parameters question: for pattern rules, are two steps/operations allowed?
5 th	5.A.2.3	Evaluating expressions when specific values of variables are given appears in grade 5 in the OK standards, whereas it appears in grade 6 in the CCSS.
7 th	7.A.4.1	Generating equivalent expressions with whole number exponents appears in grade 7 in the OK standards, whereas it appears in grade 8 in the CCSS.
Pre-Algebra	PA.A.4	No standards related to the introduction to solving systems of 2-variable linear equations are found in the OK standards at this grade level, whereas similar standards appear in grade 8 in the CCSS.

Geometry and Measurement

Grade/Subject	Standard	Comments
K	K.GM.3	Standards relating to introductory time concepts are found in the OK standards at this grade level, whereas no similar standards appear in the CCSS.
1 st	1.GM.2.3	Measuring with units of different lengths appears in grade 1 in the OK standards, whereas it appears in grade 2 in the CCSS.
3 rd	3.GM.1.1	Identifying parallel/perpendicular lines appears in grade 3 in the OK standards, whereas it appears in grade 4 in the CCSS.
3 rd	3.GM.2.4	Standards related to measuring temperature/reading a thermometer are found in the OK standards at this grade level, whereas no similar standards appear in the CCSS.
4 th	4.GM.2.1	Standards relating to introductory transformational concepts are found in the OK standards at this grade level, whereas no similar standards appear in the CCSS.
4 th	4.GM.3.2	Determining the area of a 2D figure by tiling with unit squares and determining the area of rectangles using formulas appear in the OK standards at grade 4, whereas they appears in grade 3 in the CCSS.
4 th	4.GM.3	No standards related to understanding how fractions relate to circles and their 360° angle measure are found in the OK standards.
5 th	5.GM.1.1	Standards related to describing 3D figures by their attributes are found in the OK standards at this grade level, whereas no similar standards appear in the CCSS.
5 th	5.GM.1.2	Drawing/using nets for 3D figures appear in the OK standards at grade 5, whereas it appears in grade 6 in the CCSS.
5 th	5.GM.2.2	Decomposing shapes into triangles to determine area appears in the OK standards at grade 5, whereas it appears in grade 6 in the CCSS.
5 th	5.GM.3.1	Seems out of sequence that angles would be classified in grade 5, when triangles are classified by their angles in grade 4 (see 4.GM.1.1).
6 th	6.GM.2.1	Using angle relationships formed by intersecting lines appears in the OK standards at grade 6, whereas it appears in grade 7 in the CCSS.

6 th	6.GM.2.2	Using properties of triangles to solve for a missing measure appears in the OK standards at grade 6, whereas a similar concept appears in grade 7 in the CCSS.
6 th	6.GM.3.1	Unit conversion appears in the OK standards at grade 6, whereas introductory and similar standards appear in grades 4 and 5 in the CCSS.
7 th	7.GM.1.4	Graphing translations and reflections on a coordinate plane appears in the OK standards at grade 7, whereas it appears in grade 8 in the CCSS. Graphing rotations and dilations do not appear in the OK standards CCSS but also appear in grade 8 in the CCSS.
7 th	7.GM.3.1	Determining volume of a rectangular prism with unit cubes appears in the OK standards at grade 7, whereas it appears in grade 5 in the CCSS. (Additionally, should the standard read that square units are used to wrap a figure to determine surface area instead of cubic units?)
7 th	7.GM.3	No standards related to slicing 3D figures and the resulting plane shapes are found in the OK standards.
Pre-Algebra	PA.GM.1.2	Using a coordinate plane and coordinates for vertices to determine side length are found in the OK standards in grade PA, whereas similar standards appear in grade 6 in the CCSS.
Pre-Algebra	PA.GM.2.1	The relationships between slopes of parallel and perpendicular lines appear in the OK standards at grade PA, whereas they appear in HS geometry in the CCSS.
Pre-Algebra	PA.GM.2.2	Determining lines through a point that are parallel/perpendicular to a given line appears in the OK standards at grade PA, whereas it appears in HS geometry in the CCSS.
Pre-Algebra	PA.GM.3.1	Determining volume of a rectangular prism using formulas appears in the OK standards at grade PA, whereas it appears in grade 5 in the CCSS.
Pre-Algebra	PA.GM.3.2	Determining volume of cylinders appears in the OK standards at grade PA, which is consistent with the CCSS, however volume of cones and spheres are also assessed at grade 8 in the CCSS.

Data and Probability

Grade/Subject	Standard	Comments
K	K.D.1.2	Venn diagrams appear in the OK standards in grade K, whereas they do not appear in the CCSS.
1 st	1.D.1.2	Creating picture graphs and bar graphs (1-to-1 correspondence) appears in the OK standards at grade 1, whereas it appears in grade 2 in the CCSS.
5 th	5.D.1.1	Determining statistical measures appears in the OK standards at grade 5, whereas it appears at grade 6 in the CCSS. Determining mode appears in the OK standards but not in the CCSS.
5 th	5.D.1.2	Creating double bar graphs and line graphs appears in the OK standards at grade 5, but does not appear in the CCSS.
6 th	6.D.1.2	Determining the sample space for an experiment appears in the OK standards at grade 6, whereas it appears in grade 7 in the CCSS.
6 th	6.D.2.2	Comparing relative frequencies with known probabilities appears in the OK standards at grade 6, whereas it appears in grade 7 in the CCSS.
7 th	7.D.1.2	Displaying and interpreting data in circle graphs appears in the OK standards at grade 7, whereas it does not appear in the CCSS. Displaying data in histograms appears in grade 6 in the CCSS.
Pre-Algebra	PA.D.2	Calculating experimental probabilities and making predictions appear in the OK standards at grade PA, whereas they appear in grade 7 in the CCSS.
Pre-Algebra	PA.D	No standards related to creating or interpreting two-way tables appear in the OK standards.

Algebra I and II

Grade/Subject	Standard	Comments
Algebraic Reasoning and Algebra	A1.A.3.3	Interpreting the meaning of slope and y-intercept in context appears in Alg I in the OK standards, whereas it appears in grade 8 in the CCSS.
Functions	A1.F.2.1	Distinguishing between linear and nonlinear functions appears in Alg I in the OK standards, whereas introduction to distinguishing between linear and nonlinear functions, by equation, appears in grade 8 in the CCSS.
Functions	A1.F.4.2	Translating between representations of linear functions appears in Alg I in the OK standards, whereas it appears in grade 8 in the CCSS.

Appendix C. Content Analyst Curricula Vitae



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MATT RUDOFF

SUMMARY OF RELATED EXPERIENCE

Matt Rudoff is the English/Language Arts Assessment Development Manager in the Assessment & Standards Development Services (ASDS) program at WestEd. In this role, Mr. Rudoff develops, coordinates, and leads English language arts (ELA) and English language learner (ELL) K–12 assessment projects. He has experience in all phases of assessment project development, including blueprint design, item and passage development, item selection, forms pulling, scoring guide development, and selection of anchor papers to support scoring activities. He also has experience in supporting standard setting. Mr. Rudoff facilitates at content and bias review and data review meetings, as well as contributes to research-oriented studies in relation to ELLs. He has thorough knowledge of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and is highly experienced at developing assessments, including innovative items and performance-based tasks, to the rigor of the CCSS.

Prior to employment at WestEd, Mr. Rudoff worked at a major assessment development company as a Content Editor/Supervisor, where he specialized in developing adult basic education and ELL assessment products. In San Francisco, he taught high school English and private language school English as a second language (ESL). Mr. Rudoff also worked in Japan as an Assistant Language Teacher, teaching English to K–12 students in public schools, and as an English teacher to professional car engineers, soldiers, and the local community.

EDUCATION

- | | |
|------|---|
| 2000 | Advanced CTEFL (Certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language), Transworld Schools, San Francisco, CA |
| 1998 | M.A., Writing, University of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA |
| 1990 | B.A. (Honors), English (Teacher Education Emphasis), San Jose State University, San Jose, CA |

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 2013–
Present | <i>ELA Assessment Development Manager</i> , Assessment & Standards Development Services (ASDS), WestEd, San Francisco, CA |
|------------------|---|

Manages a variety of ELA and ELL assessment projects, including acting as project lead on reading assessment item development for the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). Also acts as project lead on state assessment programs, including the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and Keystone end-of-course literature assessment. Supervises and coordinates ELA team of content specialists and editors. Responsible for development and project coordination for ELA and ELL assessments, developing and implementing editorial processes, training writers and editors, and assisting in

the development of ELL research projects. Responsibilities include supervision of ELA personnel, both internal and external, and hiring of new editors and writers.

2007–
2013 *ELA/ELL Content Specialist*, Assessment & Standards Development Services (ASDS), WestEd, San Francisco, CA

Supervised and coordinated ELA team of content specialists and editors. Responsible for developing and coordinating projects for ELA and ELL assessments, developing and implementing editorial processes, training writers and editors, and assisting in the development of ELL research projects. Responsibilities included leading and coordinating ELA item development for the multistate PARCC consortium and for state assessment programs, including Pennsylvania item development (PSSA and Keystone) and the Arizona English Language Learner Assessment (AZELLA).

2004–
2007 *Development Supervisor and Content Editor (Adult/ESL)*, Publishing CTB/McGraw-Hill, Monterey, CA

Responsibilities included the supervision, coordination, and development of adult basic education assessments and curriculum materials. Supervised and was content lead for development and production of *TABE CLAS–E*, an ELL assessment suite for the TABE product line. Supervised and was content lead for the 2008–09 California English Language Development Test (CELDT).

2002–
2003 *Assistant Language Teacher (ALT)* (Omaezaki Board of Education, Shizuoka-ken) Interac Co., Japan

Taught English structures and functions to junior high and elementary school students. Created activities that focused on speaking and listening skills. Responsible for lesson planning. Also taught for the Omaezaki Social Education course and the local Self-Defense Force base.

2002–
2003 *Language Consultant* (Suzuki Company, Shizuoka-ken) Interac Co., Japan

Taught intermediate-level English language structure and functions to thirteen car engineers in a 40-week, 60-hour course.

2000 *ESL and TOEFL Teacher*
English School of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA

Taught multilingual classes at beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels for children and adults. Responsible for lesson planning and material selection.

2000 *Web Editor*
Classroom Connect, Brisbane, CA

Researched and updated websites integral to Classroom Today features; rewrote language arts lessons as needed. Determined and assigned educational standards, learning goals, and teacher assessments to content.

1998– *English Teacher*

1999 Balboa High School, San Francisco, CA

Responsibilities included curriculum design and implementation, student evaluation, classroom management, and administration and evaluation of state and district exams; assisted school faculty and administration in obtaining WASC accreditation, English Department curriculum and budget decisions, and community outreach.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT)

SUMMARY OF RELATED EXPERIENCE

John Thorpe is an English Language Arts/English Language Learner (ELA/ELL) Content Specialist in the Assessment & Standards Development Services (ASDS) program at WestEd. He specializes in content and item development of K–12 assessments, with an emphasis on development for English language learner populations. He has extensive knowledge and experience working with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), with assessments based on the principles of evidence-based design, and with the development of innovative item formats, technology-enhanced items, and performance-based tasks—in particular, those developed for the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). In addition to ten years of progressively more responsible experience in language assessment, Mr. Thorpe has more than 18 years of experience teaching English as a second or foreign language in both the United States (California, Oregon, Washington, and Nevada) and Japan.

EDUCATION

- 2004 M.A., Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, Monterey Institute of International Studies, Monterey, CA
- 2004 Certificate, Language Program Administration, Monterey Institute of International Studies, Monterey, CA
- 1984 B.A., English, University of California, Berkeley, CA

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2011– Present *ELA/ELL Content Specialist*, Assessment & Standards Development Services (ASDS), WestEd, San Francisco, CA

- 2012–Present *Content Lead*, Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)

Responsibilities include participating in the selection of authentic texts for use in assessment at grades 7–9; ensuring that selected texts are sufficiently complex and rich in content, and that they meet all bias and sensitivity guidelines; creating and editing a variety of assessment items for use in an online testing environment (item formats used include selected response, multiple-select selected response, constructed response, evidence-based selected response, and technology-enhanced constructed response); and ensuring that items

align to targeted Common Core State Standards and depth-of-knowledge levels.

2011–Present *Content Specialist*, Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)

Responsibilities include editing and revising test items to ensure that they meet item specifications, and ensuring that items align to targeted standards, are fair and equitable, and are free of bias.

2011–Present *Co–Content Lead*, Arizona English Language Learner Assessment (AZELLA)

Responsibilities include developing, editing, selecting, and assembling items and reading passages for operational test forms across all grades/grade spans (K–12); ensuring that items and passages meet all content and psychometric requirements; editing administrative manuals and test instructions; and confirming test maps for accuracy.

In addition, designed and developed the Arizona KPT (Kindergarten Placement Test), a pre-kindergarten assessment intended to identify English language learners, and guided Arizona state instructors in the creation of proficiency level descriptors across all grade spans and language domains (Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking).

2009–
2010 *English Instructor* (adjunct)
Clark Community College, Vancouver, WA

Taught reading and writing courses to adult English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. Courses focused on literacy skills needed for everyday life, such as reading newspapers and magazine articles and writing a variety of formal and informal letters and notes.

2004–
2011 *Senior Assessment Editor, Development Supervisor, and Lead Content Editor*
CTB/McGraw-Hill, Monterey, CA

As a Senior Assessment Editor, was responsible for item and test development of English language arts (ELA), ESL, and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) assessments. Responsibilities also included creating test specifications and blueprints for high schools, middle schools, and technical schools in the United Arab Emirates and China, and supervising the development of ELA and ESL test items and passages to ensure that they met test specification requirements.

As a Development Supervisor, was responsible for supervising item development of the CELDT (California English Language Development Test), a K–12 ESL assessment created specifically for the California Department of Education (CDE). These duties included creating test specifications; developing item-writing training materials; supervising content editors in the review of newly created items; managing the configuration and development of 99 different test and answer books and four scoring guides; ensuring that items selected for operational use were statistically valid,

met the selection requirements determined by the Research Department, and met the approval of the CDE; and overseeing the creation of comprehensive training materials for test administrators.

As a Lead Content Editor, developed the Listening subtest for the TABE CLAS–E (Test of Adult Basic Education Complete Language Assessment System–English), a four-level ESL assessment designed in accordance with the National Reporting System for Adult Education Programs (NRS). Responsibilities included drafting test specifications and editing test items for content validity, bias, and gender and ethnic distribution; overseeing the creation of the TABE CLAS–E Locator Test, the Speaking Scoring Guide, and multiple-criteria scoring rubrics used to score the Speaking subtest; and leading the development of the TABE CLAS–E supplemental Teacher’s Guide.

2004 *English Instructor*
Monterey Institute of International Studies, Monterey, CA

Designed syllabus and materials and taught a content-based course on the use of Microsoft PowerPoint to students participating in the Nagoya University of Foreign Studies Intensive English Program. Created customized tutorials to meet student needs. Assessed final presentations.

2003– *English Instructor (adjunct)*
2005 Monterey Institute of International Studies, Monterey, CA

Taught practical language skills and seminar on contemporary issues to diplomats from the South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT). Created program curriculum and authentic instructional materials emphasizing improvement of listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills through learner-centered instruction. Designed, created, and maintained MOFAT course website.

2003 *English Instructor*
Monterey Institute of International Studies, Monterey, CA

Designed and taught courses on multimedia presentations and community observation to students participating in the Shimane University Summer Intensive English Program. Created original content-based material that developed multimedia-based presentation skills and knowledge of the basic principles of good graphic design. Assessed student progress and final program presentations.

1995– *Guest Lecturer (adjunct)*
1999 Bunkyo Women’s College, Tokyo, Japan

Taught English conversation to university and junior college students. Used role play and various group and pair work activities to capture and maintain student interest. Designed assessment instruments to assess learner development.

1995– *Guest Lecturer (adjunct)*
1998 Toho University, Funabashi, Japan

Taught English conversation to freshman and sophomore university students. Created and developed all classroom materials. Used a variety of stimulating and challenging information exchange and jigsaw activities that appealed to students' stated interests.

1991– *Guest Lecturer (adjunct)*
1993; Yachiyo International University, Yachiyo, Japan

1995– Taught English conversation and practical writing to freshmen and sophomores. Selected
1996 course textbooks. Created additional materials in areas where texts were deemed insufficient for course needs.

1990– *English Teacher*
1993 Iidabashii Foreign Language Institute, Tokyo, Japan

Taught English conversation, reading, and speech communication to vocational school students. Took a learner-centered approach to sustain student interest in learning English. Directed and managed school summer home-stay program.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Thorpe, J., & Landers, S. (2010, March). *Creating test items that are reliable, valid, and useful*. Presentation at the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Conference, Boston, MA.

Landers, S., & Thorpe, J. (2005, May). *Professional needs and authentic materials: An EPP current events curriculum*. Presentation at the Content-Based Instruction Conference, Monterey, CA.

Bailey, K., Nunan, D., Landers, S., Springer, S., Thorpe, J., & Wong, L. (2005, March). *Teaching researching, researching teaching*. Presentation at the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Conference, San Antonio, TX.

Thorpe, J., & Landers, S. (2004, April). *Investigating pedagogical options through student-driven teacher research*. Presentation at the California Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (CATESOL) Conference, Santa Clara, CA.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)

SUMMARY OF RELATED EXPERIENCE

Scott Firkins is Associate Director of Mathematics Development and Interim Manager of Social Studies Development in WestEd's Assessment & Standards Development Services (ASDS) program. He supervises editorial and item-writing staff working on item development for WestEd's large-scale mathematics and social studies assessment projects. Mr. Firkins has served as mathematics content lead on assessment projects for the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) as well as for state-level projects in Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Utah, and West Virginia. As content lead for PARCC, he oversaw development of items assessing the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for Mathematics in grades 3–8 and high school. As content lead for Kentucky, he oversaw development of items assessing the CCSS for Mathematics in grades 3–8 and high school. Mr. Firkins also edits and reviews mathematics test items for other assessment projects, including that of Nevada, and constructs test forms, develops item specifications, and facilitates content reviews and data reviews with teacher committees. He has developed assessment items and facilitated their review by teacher committees for alternate assessments based on modified academic achievement standards, including the Kansas Assessment of Modified Measures (KAMM) and the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment–Modified (PSSA-M), and has developed assessment items for the Keystone Exams, Pennsylvania's end-of-course assessments. Mr. Firkins oversees social studies item development for a project with College Board's AP Insight program. Additionally, Mr. Firkins contributes to alignment studies for standards and assessments. He served as lead analyst in a comparison study between the CCSS for Mathematics and the Louisiana Big Ideas, and also served as a lead analyst for the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium Common Core State Standards Analysis — Defining Eligible Content for the Summative Assessment. Prior to joining WestEd, Mr. Firkins was a middle school and high school math teacher for more than nine years, and a curriculum supervisor and director of curriculum and assessment for more than three years.

EDUCATION

- | | |
|------|---|
| 1998 | Certification: Rank I in Supervision K–12, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, KY |
| 1993 | M.A., Secondary Education, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, KY |
| 1989 | A.B., Mathematics, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, KY |

PROFESSIONAL HISTORY

- 2014–
Present *Interim Manager of Social Studies Development, Assessment & Standards Development Services (ASDS), WestEd, San Francisco, CA*
- Responsibilities include supervising editorial and item-writing staff working on WestEd’s large-scale assessment projects.
- 2008–
Present *Associate Director of Mathematics Development, ASDS WestEd, San Francisco, CA*
- Responsibilities include supervising editorial and item-writing staff working on WestEd’s large-scale assessment projects, developing mathematics test items for large-scale assessment projects, and contributing to alignment studies for standards and assessments.
- 2003–
2008 *Mathematics Content Specialist, ASDS WestEd, San Francisco, CA*
- Responsibilities included developing mathematics test items for WestEd’s large-scale assessment projects, including Kansas, Kentucky, Nevada, and Pennsylvania, and contributing to alignment studies for standards and assessments.
- 2002–
2003 *Freelance Education Consultant Lexington, KY*
- Responsibilities included developing state-level assessments through contracted work with WestEd, San Francisco, CA; training schools to implement Paideia Active Learning; and serving as a member of the National Paideia Faculty.
- 2002 *Director of Assessment, Research & Curriculum Development Daviess County Public Schools, Owensboro, KY*
- Responsibilities included managing the district assessment program, including Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) testing; consulting on curriculum, instruction, and assessment for middle and high schools; chairing the Curriculum Team; administering initiatives including Paideia, Consolidated Planning component, Secondary New Teacher Development, and Character Education; and continuing responsibilities of the Secondary Curriculum Supervisor position.
- 1998–
2002 *Secondary Curriculum Supervisor Daviess County Public Schools, Owensboro, KY*
- Responsibilities included coordinating K–12 math and science programs; providing staff development opportunities; and administering initiatives from district Curriculum Team and district committees, including Paideia Implementation, Consolidated Planning, Secondary New Teacher Development, Gifted & Talented, and Character Education.
- 1997–
1999 *Teacher Apollo High School, Daviess County Public Schools, Owensboro, KY*
- Responsibilities included teaching Algebra I & II and geometry and involvement in writing of Consolidated Plan, Assessment Committee, and School Mathematics Leader Program.

1990–
1997 *Teacher*
F.T. Burns Middle School, Daviess County Public Schools, Owensboro, KY

Responsibilities included teaching mathematics, grades 6–8, with emphasis on gifted math, including grade 8 Algebra I.

1989–
1990 *Teacher*
Barren County High School, Barren County Schools, Glasgow, KY

Responsibilities included teaching a variety of mathematics courses, grades 9–12.



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RACHEL BAKER

SUMMARY OF RELATED EXPERIENCE

Rachel Baker is a Senior Mathematics Editor in WestEd's Assessment and Standards Development Services (ASDS) program. In this role, Ms. Baker reviews and edits mathematics test items for WestEd's large-scale general mathematics assessment projects, including Kansas, Kentucky, Nevada, and Pennsylvania. Ms. Baker also reviews, edits, and modifies mathematics test items for alternate assessments based on modified achievement standards, including the Kansas Assessment of Modified Measures (KAMM) and the Pennsylvania System of School Assessments–Modified (PSSA-M), and facilitates item review meetings with teacher committees. Additionally, she contributes to the development of test specifications, the selection of items for test forms, and alignment studies for standards and assessments, including those for special populations and English language learners. Prior to working at WestEd, Ms. Baker honed her editorial skills working as a freelance copy editor.

EDUCATION

2005 Certificate, Copy Editing, UC Berkeley Extension, Berkeley, CA

2001 B.A., English, University of California, Berkeley, CA

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2007–
Present *Senior Mathematics Editor*, Assessment and Standards Development Services (ASDS)
WestEd, San Francisco, CA

Responsibilities include developing mathematics test items for WestEd's large-scale assessment projects, including Kansas, Kentucky, Nevada, and Pennsylvania; facilitating item review meetings with teacher committees; developing test specifications; and contributing to alignment studies.

2005–
2007 *Program Assistant/Editorial Assistant II*
WestEd, San Francisco, CA

Developed mathematics test items for WestEd's large-scale assessment projects, including Kansas, Kentucky, Nevada, and Pennsylvania. Facilitated item review meetings with teacher committees.

2004–
2005 *Proofreader*
WestEd, San Francisco, CA

Proofread for WestEd's Kentucky assessment project to ensure that all test forms were accurate, consistent, and error-free upon delivery to client. Subjects included mathematics, reading, science, arts and humanities, and practical living and vocational studies.

2001–
2004 *Freelance Copy Editor*
Home office, CA

Read and copyedited manuscripts for deadline-driven publishers on an as-needed basis. Researched accuracy of subject matter and ensured that manuscripts followed style guidelines.