

English Language Arts Standards - Elementary (P-5) Best Practices

The following best practices were included as part of the 2023 summer professional learning sessions of the new English Language Arts standards. Additional resource links have been included in some instances to provide additional information.

Speaking and Listening Strand	
Do This	Not That
Students listen and speak throughout the day/class	Students only listen and the teacher only speaking
Students engage in low- and high-risk speaking tasks	Students only speak during formal presentations or when called upon

Reading Strand	
Do This	Not That
<p>Have students read complex text (<i>with scaffolding when needed</i>)</p> <p><i>*Complex Text Articles:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On Climbing a Mountain: Four Ways Not to Deal with Complex Text • Eight Ways to Help Kids Read Complex Text 	<p>Have students read leveled text or be locked into reading one level (e.g., <i>Fountas and Pinnell, Guided Reading</i>)</p>

<p>Have students practice effective reading with a purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How Should Students Practice Reading 	<p>Provide time for Silent Sustained Reading (SSR) (e.g. Drop Everything and Read (DEAR), free reading, independent reading time)</p> <p>Only the teacher reading</p>
<p>Provide explicit and systematic instruction (I do, we do, you do)</p>	<p>Teach skills with worksheets</p> <p>Skip parts of explicit instruction</p>
<p>Teach readers how to build and use knowledge to make connections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read texts to answer essential questions • Provide text sets • Create literature circles 	<p><i>Teach the Book</i> (e.g., teaching <i>The Outsiders</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read texts to complete tasks • Read only whole-class novels for weeks and weeks
<p>Teach science, social studies, arts, etc. - Knowledge Matters</p>	<p>Avoid or skip teaching the other content areas</p>
<p>Infuse reading throughout the day</p>	<p>Read only during the ELA block</p>
<p>Dive deeper into topics (DOK 2 & 3)</p>	<p>Skim topics (DOK 1)</p>
<p>Teach phonics of regular and irregular words</p>	<p>Teach students to memorize sight word/HFW flashcards or lists</p>
<p>Explicitly and systematically teach phonics and phonological awareness</p> <p>*Why 3-cueing doesn't work</p> <p>*Sold a Story Podcast</p>	<p>Teach three-cueing, also known as MSV, an acronym that stands for each of the three sources of information: meaning, structure/syntax, and visual.</p>
<p>Explicitly teach the sound/symbol relationship (uppercase and lowercase, the sound, and how to write them at the same time), then practice</p>	<p>Teach one letter a week</p> <p>Teach the sounds and symbols separately</p>

Writing Strand	
Do This	Not That
Explicitly teach the foundational skills of writing (e.g., handwriting/typing, phonics/spelling, sentence building) beginning in preschool	Read a book and assign a writing prompt
Teach grammar as an integrated component of reading, writing, speaking & listening instruction	Teach isolated grammar instruction (i.e., Daily Oral Language [DOL], grammar worksheets)
Focus on teaching and grading only 1-2 writing elements at a time	Focus and grade everything or only grammar & conventions
Have students select “best of” for final evaluation and grading	Grade everything
Provide feedback throughout the writing process	Provide feedback only on the final writing product(s)
Have students write for a variety of purposes, audiences, and tasks (not all writing is equal)	Require all student writing to go through the entire writing process
Explicitly teach writing in every grade	Teach writing only in grades 5 and 8