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Colorado Academic Standards

Reading, Writing and Communicating

Sixth Grade – Eighth Grade

COLORADO
Department of Education

ALL STUDENTS • ALL STANDARDS

Reading, Writing, and Communicating Standards Review and Revision Committee

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English Language Arts District Curriculum
Coordinator
St. Vrain Valley School District

Secondary Team Lead/Co-Chair
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Teacher/Instructional Coach
Montrose County School District RE-1J

Elementary Team Lead/Co-Chair
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Teacher
Cheyenne Mountain School District 12

Members

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Instructional Coach
Adams 14/Commerce City

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Teacher
District 49

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Senior Instructor
University of Colorado Colorado Springs

Jessica Keigan
Teacher
Adams 12 Five Star Schools

Thomas Fitzgerald
Teacher
Cherry Creek Schools

Erica Moore
Teacher
Adams 12 Five Star Schools

Shawna Fritzler
Parent
Jefferson County Schools

Courtney Parker
Teacher
Cheyenne Mountain School District 12

Amy Hansen
Teacher
Moffat County School District RE 1

Kimberlee Reed
Teacher
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Purpose of Reading, Writing, and Communicating

"Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested...."

--Francis Bacon

"If you cannot write well, you cannot think well, and if you cannot think well, others will do your thinking for you."

--George Orwell

A strong command of the language arts (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) is vital for being a successful student and ultimately a productive member of the 21st century workforce. Language skills have always been fundamental for academic and professional success. However, students in the 21st century are now facing more complex challenges in an ever-changing global society. These challenges have created the need for rigorous state standards in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Literacy – meaning the ability to construe a written, linguistic, alphabetic symbol system – is arguably the most important skill students acquire in preschool through twelfth-grade education because it makes all other forms of higher-order learning, critical thinking, and communication possible.

The study of reading, writing, and communicating is therefore essential to all other study in early childhood education, primary school, and secondary school. Such study comprises not only the fundamental knowledge and skills of language arts (reading, writing, speaking, and listening), but also the knowledge and skills of discourse (dialogue and discussion) and rhetoric (the ability to make arguments and to think critically about arguments made by others) and the knowledge and skills involved in responding to imaginative literature.

Language skills are necessary for academic success in all disciplines. The ability to integrate reading, writing, speaking, and listening effectively builds understanding across all academic subjects as well as allowing for the development of 21st century skills within the context of these subjects. Critical thinking and reasoning, information literacy, collaboration, self-direction, and innovation are vital 21st century skills.

Standards for reading, writing, and communicating in all grades must be clear and rigorous so that our public educational system gives students the skills, knowledge, and confidence they need to succeed in postsecondary education and the workforce, to be well-informed and responsible citizens, and to lead more fulfilling personal lives.

The Colorado Academic Standards in reading, writing, and communicating were written for all students using the content, concepts, skills and language conventions and structures found within the English language. This does not mean students must be native English speakers, nor fluent English proficient, but by utilizing the Colorado English Language Proficiency standards (Office of Culturally and

Linguistically Diverse Education) in tandem with the Colorado Academic Standards, qualified and well prepared educators can ensure that all English Learners receive appropriate support to ensure all students successfully meet the expectations in the standards.

Prepared Graduates in Reading, Writing, and Communicating

1. Collaborate effectively as group members or leaders who listen actively and respectfully; pose thoughtful questions, acknowledge the ideas of others; and contribute ideas to further the group's attainment of an objective.

2. Deliver effective oral presentations for varied audiences and varied purposes.

3. Read a wide range of literary texts to build knowledge and to better understand the human experience.

4. Read a wide range of informational texts to build knowledge and to better understand the human experience.

5. Understand how language functions in different contexts, command a variety of word-learning strategies to assist comprehension, and make effective choices for meaning or style when writing and speaking.

6. Craft arguments using techniques specific to the genre.

7. Craft informational/explanatory texts using techniques specific to the genre.

8. Craft narratives using techniques specific to the genre.

9. Demonstrate mastery of their own writing process with clear, coherent, and error-free polished products.

10. Gather information from a variety of sources; analyze and evaluate its quality and relevance; and use it ethically to answer complex questions.

Standards in Reading, Writing, and Communicating

The Colorado Academic Standards in reading, writing, and communicating are the topical organization of the concepts and skills every Colorado student should know and be able to do throughout their preschool through twelfth-grade experience. The four standards of reading, writing, and communicating are:

1. **Oral Expression and Listening**

Learning of word meanings occurs rapidly from birth through adolescence within communicative relationships. Everyday interactions with parents, teachers, peers, friends, and community members shape speech habits and knowledge of language. Language is the means to higher mental functioning, that which is a species-specific skill, unique to humans as a generative means for thinking and communication. Through linguistic oral communication, logical thinking develops and makes possible critical thinking, reasoning, development of information literacy, application of collaboration skills, self-direction, and invention.

Oral language foundation and written symbol systems concretize the way a student communicates. Thus, students in Colorado develop oral language skills in listening and speaking, and master the written language skills of reading and writing. Specifically, holding Colorado students accountable for language mastery from the perspectives of scientific research in linguistics, cognitive psychology, human information processing, brain-behavior relationships, and socio-cultural perspectives on language development will allow students to master 21st century skills and serve the state, region, and nation well.

2. **Reading for All Purposes**

Literacy skills are essential for students to fully participate in and expand their understanding of today's global society. Whether they are reading functional texts (voting ballots, a map, a train schedule, a driver's test, a job application, a text message, product labels); reference materials (textbooks, technical manuals, electronic media); or print and non-print literary texts, students need reading skills to fully manage, evaluate, and use the myriad information available in their day-to-day lives.

3. **Writing and Composition**

Writing is a fundamental component of literacy. Writing is a means of critical inquiry; it promotes problem solving and mastering new concepts. Adept writers can work through various ideas while producing informational, persuasive, and narrative or literary texts. In other words, writing can be used as a medium for reasoning and making intellectual connections. As students arrange ideas to persuade, describe, and inform, they engage in logical critique, and they are likely to gain new insights and a deeper understanding of concepts and content.

4. **Research Inquiry and Design**

Effective researching involves critical thinking, thoughtful inquiry, and consideration of multiple points of view on a given topic. Students will generate engaging research questions and gather data, expert testimony, and information to support their analyses and conclusions.

Individually and in collaboration with others, students will learn the skills necessary to consider biases, evaluate sources, synthesize information, and defend their positions. In addition, as students' progress, they will consider opposing perspectives and address counterarguments to their claims and the evidence they provide in support of their argument.

The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects include a separate standard for Language. In this document, those Language expectations are integrated into the four standards above as appropriate.

Instructional Implications with the Revised Standards

The Colorado Academic Standards identify the student expectations for year-end mastery of the skills and knowledge in each discipline. As we consider these student outcomes, we need to be aware of the instructional implications inherent in the Standards. Teacher behavior precedes student behavior, so we must be deliberate in our planning and classroom practices to achieve the desired student learning outcomes.

Proportion of Informational Text to Literary Text

The proportion of literary text and expository/informational text will change throughout a student's academic career. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) suggests that by 4th Grade, students read a 50/50 proportion of literary and informational texts. In addition, the What Works Clearinghouse, in its publication *Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade*, encourages teachers to use informational texts so students gain the academic language necessary to succeed across content areas (p.7). In addition, paired texts -- whether nonfiction and nonfiction; nonfiction and fiction; nonfiction and poetry – has instructional payoff as students work with texts within and across genres to explore topics and themes.

The proportion of informational text to literary text in 8th grade is approximately 55% informational and 45% literary. By 12th grade, students should be reading and studying approximately 70% of informational texts and 30% literary texts.

This progression, particularly in grades 6-12, is seen across the curriculum **throughout the students' school day and academic life**. That is, English language arts teachers should maintain a robust reading list of literary works. In addition, teachers in other academic disciplines – social studies, science, the arts, computer science, health, and technical areas – should bolster their instruction with engaging and complex informational texts. The commitment to **disciplinary literacy** reinforces the importance to provide deliberate and intentional instruction that honors the language and types of texts found in all content areas. At year's end, a student will have received multiple and ongoing opportunities to engage in complex texts in all academic disciplines.

Early Literacy: Kindergarten through Third Grade

The importance of developing a strong foundation in early literacy cannot be refuted.

Evidence Outcomes in Standard 1: Oral Expression and Listening and in Standard 2: Reading for all Purposes marked with an asterisk (*) are the minimum competencies identified in the READ Act. The Standards, as represented by the minimum skills competencies, move students through the foundational skills to establish the strong foundation for proficient readers in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary. Ultimately, the end goal is for readers to be able to comprehend texts of varying levels of complexity, and in later grades, in all content areas.

Teachers of reading in elementary schools throughout Colorado should teach students academic language skills, develop awareness of the segments of sounds, teach students to decode words and analyze word parts, and ensure that each student reads connected text every day to support reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension. While there is an abundance of instructional resources available to teachers, beginning with their own basal readers in their schools and districts, the What Works Clearinghouse has two very rich practice guides: *Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade* and *Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade.*

"Close Reading" Practices and Other Instructional Approaches

Instructional practice should include establishing context for the reading, setting a purpose, and frontloading vocabulary to support students working with texts of varying levels of complexity. While "close reading" of complex texts is a valuable practice, teachers should use a range of strategies to develop strong readers in all disciplines. Developing effective question-generation strategies, writing text-dependent questions, using reciprocal teaching methods, and frontloading vocabulary are all worthy practices to engage students in reading materials in all content areas.

The Teaching of Writing

Teachers in primary and intermediate grades should pay particular attention to the skills identified in Grade Level Expectations (GLE) 3 in Writing and Composition (Standard 3). Our younger writers will benefit from direct instruction in conventions to develop a written vocabulary, command over syntactical structures and rich sentences, logical ordering of sentences in paragraphs, and effective paragraphing. Writing instruction should move back and forth between "whole to part" and "part to whole"; that is, students should understand the concept of a larger piece of writing (e.g., a book, a brochure, an essay, a narrative) and the parts that comprise the piece of writing (e.g., word choice, varied sentence lengths and structure, order of ideas presented).

How to Read the Colorado Academic Standards

CONTENT AREA
Grade Level, Standard Category

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Prepared Graduates:
The *PG Statements* represent concepts and skills that all students who complete the Colorado education system must master to ensure their success in postsecondary and workforce settings.

Grade Level Expectation:
The *GLEs* are an articulation of the concepts and skills for a grade, grade band, or range that students must master to ensure their progress toward becoming a prepared graduate.

Evidence Outcomes

The *EOs* describe the evidence that demonstrates that a student is meeting the GLE at a mastery level.

Academic Context and Connections

The *ACCs* provide context for interpreting, connecting, and applying the content and skills of the GLE. This includes the *Colorado Essential Skills*, which are the critical skills needed to prepare students to successfully enter the workforce or educational opportunities beyond high school embedded within statute (C.R.S. 22-7-1005) and identified by the Colorado Workforce Development Committee.

The ACCs contain information unique to each content area. Content-specific elements of the ACCs are described below.

Colorado Academic Standards

Content Area

Grade Level, Standard Category   2020 Colorado Academic Standards   GLE Code

Academic Context and Connections in Reading, Writing, and Communicating:

Colorado Essential Skills: These statements describe how the learning of the content and skills described by the GLE and EOs connects to and supports the development of the *Colorado Essential Skills* named in the parentheses.

Essential Questions: These "big picture" questions ask students to more deeply explore the concepts and skills expressed in the GLE.

Essential Reasoning Skills: These skills develop critical thinking, building awareness to multiple perspectives, and engage students in "thinking about their thinking" and to consider their own attitudes, beliefs, and biases on issues.

Minimum Skills Competencies: Evidence Outcomes in *Standard 1: Oral Expression and Listening* and in *Standard 2: Reading for all Purposes* marked with an asterisk (*) are the minimum competencies identified in the READ Act.

Prepared Graduates:

1. Collaborate effectively as group members or leaders who listen actively and respectfully; pose thoughtful questions, acknowledge the ideas of others; and contribute ideas to further the group's attainment of an objective.

Grade Level Expectation:

1. Employ appropriate presentation and collaboration strategies to meet the needs of a given task and purpose.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. (CCSS: SL.6.1)
   i. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion. (CCSS: SL.6.1a)
   ii. Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. (CCSS: SL.6.1b)
   iii. Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion. (CCSS: SL.6.1c)
   iv. Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing. (CCSS: SL.6.1d)
b. Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (for example: visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study. (CCSS: SL.6.2)
c. Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not. (CCSS: SL.6.3)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Follow a process identified by others to help generate ideas, negotiate roles and responsibilities, and respect consensus in decision making. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills, Collaboration/Teamwork)
2. Establish goals for communication and plan out steps accordingly. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills, Communication (using information and communications technologies))
3. Demonstrate task management attributes associated with producing high quality products including the abilities to: work positively and ethically, manage time and projects effectively, multi-task, clearly communicating with others. (Professional Skills, Task/Time Management)

Essential Questions:

1. What active listening strategies can we use while working in a group?
2. Why is it important for people to wait their turn before providing an opinion or giving feedback?
3. Why is it important to understand what others may be thinking?

Essential Reasoning Skills:

1. Clarify the purpose and intended outcomes of collaboration.
2. Expand thinking and understanding by integrating others' ideas and perspectives.
3. Identify potential bias or faulty assumptions in personal thinking.

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Prepared Graduates:
2. Deliver effective oral presentations for varied audiences and varied purposes.

Grade Level Expectation:
2. Develop, organize, and present ideas and opinions effectively.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation. (CCSS: SL.6.4)

b. Include multimedia components (for example: graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays in presentations to clarify information. (CCSS: SL.6.5)

c. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (CCSS: SL.6.6)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Focus on learning goals by employing motivation and familiar strategies for engagement and evaluate progress, making necessary changes to stay the course. (Personal Skills, Perseverance/Resilience)

2. Establish goals for communication and plan out steps accordingly. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills, Communication (using information and communications technologies))

3. Demonstrate confidence in sharing ideas/feelings. (Professional Skills, Self-Advocacy)

Essential Questions:

1. What do effective speakers sound like?
2. How is spoken language different from written language?
3. What makes a speaker easy to follow?
4. How are nonverbal elements used to communicate?

Essential Reasoning Skills:

1. Ask critical questions to improve thinking.
2. Draw from multiple perspectives and points of view to expand thinking.
3. Recognize new ideas presented by others, adjusting their own views as needed.

Colorado Academic Standards

Reading, Writing, and Communicating

Prepared Graduates:

3. Read a wide range of literary texts to build knowledge and to better understand the human experience.

Grade Level Expectation:

1. Analyze literary elements within different types of literature to make meaning.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Use Key Ideas and Details to:
   i. Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (CCSS: RL.6.1)
   ii. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments. (CCSS: RL.6.2)
   iii. Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution. (CCSS: RL.6.3)

b. Use Craft and Structure to:
   i. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone. (CCSS: RL.6.4)
   ii. Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot. (CCSS: RL.6.5)
   iii. Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text. (CCSS: RL.6.6)

c. Use Integration of Knowledge and Ideas to:
   i. Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they "see" and "hear" when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch. (CCSS: RL.6.7)
   ii. Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (for example: stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics. (CCSS: RL.6.9)

d. Use Range of Reading and Complexity of Text to:
   i. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. (CCSS: RL.6.10)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Apply knowledge to set goals, make informed decisions and transfer to new contexts. (Personal Skills, Initiative/Self-Direction)
2. Focus on learning goals by employing motivation and familiar strategies for engagement and evaluate progress, making necessary changes to stay the course. (Personal Skills, Perseverance/Resilience)
3. Examine how individuals interpret messages differently, how values and points of view are included or excluded, and how media can influence beliefs and behaviors. (Professional Skills, Information Literacy)

Essential Questions:

1. How does structure impact meaning?
2. How do authors use different elements to develop a story?
3. How do different genres affect audiences differently?

Essential Reasoning Skills:

1. Categorize/compare literary elements and terms.
2. Identify use of literary devices.
3. Identify characteristic text features; distinguish between texts, genres.

Colorado Academic Standards

Reading, Writing, and Communicating

Prepared Graduates:

4. Read a wide range of informational texts to build knowledge and to better understand the human experience.

Grade Level Expectation:

2. Analyze organization and structure of informational text to make meaning.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Use Key Ideas and Details to:
   i. Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (CCSS: RI.6.1)
   ii. Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments. (CCSS: RI.6.2)
   iii. Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated on in a text (for example: through examples or anecdotes). (CCSS: RI.6.3)
b. Use Craft and Structure to:
   i. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings. (CCSS: RI.6.4)
   ii. Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas. (CCSS: RI.6.5)
   iii. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text. (CCSS: RI.6.6)

c. Use Integration of Knowledge and Ideas to:
   i. Integrate information presented in different media or formats (for example: visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue. (CCSS: RI.6.7)
   ii. Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not. (CCSS: RI.6.8)
   iii. Compare and contrast one author's presentation of events with that of another (for example: a memoir written by and a biography on the same person). (CCSS: RI.6.9)
d. Use Range of Reading and Complexity of Text to:
   i. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. (CCSS: RI.6.10)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Make connections between information gathered and personal experiences to apply and/or test solutions. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Critical Thinking/Problem Solving)
2. Apply knowledge to set goals, make informed decisions and transfer to new contexts. (Personal Skills, Initiative/Self-Direction)
3. Examine how individuals interpret messages differently, how values and points of view are included or excluded, and how media can influence beliefs and behaviors. (Professional Skills, Information Literacy)

Essential Questions:

1. What are the characteristics of nonfiction?
2. How do text structures affect our understanding?
3. How do authors use text features to highlight information?
4. How can an author's perspective inform readers or persuade them to change their thinking?
5. How does the author's language match his or her purpose in writing?

Essential Reasoning Skills:

1. Explain relationships such as cause/effect, problem/solution.
2. Make basic inferences or logical predictions from data or texts.
3. Recognize and describe patterns in syntax and/or organization.

Prepared Graduates:

5. Understand how language functions in different contexts, command a variety of word-learning strategies to assist comprehension, and make effective choices for meaning or style when writing and speaking.

Grade Level Expectation:

3. Apply knowledge of word relationships, word structures, and sentence structures to determine the meaning of new words in context.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 6 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. (CCSS: L.6.4)
   i. Use context (for example: the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. (CCSS: L.6.4a)
   ii. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (for example: *audience*, *auditory*, *audible*). (CCSS: L.6.4b)
   iii. Consult reference materials (for example: dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech. (CCSS: L.6.4c)
   iv. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (for example: by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary). (CCSS: L.6.4d)

b. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. (CCSS: L.6.5)
   i. Interpret figures of speech (for example: personification) in context. (CCSS: L.6.5a)
   ii. Use the relationship between particular words (for example: cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words. (CCSS: L.6.5b)
   iii. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (for example: *stingy*, *scrimping*, *economical*, *unwasteful, and thrifty*). (CCSS: L.6.5c)
c. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression. (CCSS: L.6.6)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Test hypotheses/prototype with planned process for getting feedback. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Inquiry/Analysis)
2. Apply knowledge to set goals, make informed decisions and transfer to new contexts. (Personal Skills, Initiative/Self-Direction)
3. Focus on learning goals by employing motivation and familiar strategies for engagement and evaluate progress, making necessary changes to stay the course. (Personal Skills, Perseverance/Resilience)

Essential Questions:
1. What do proficient readers do when they encounter unfamiliar words?
2. What strategies and resources can we use to learn new words?
3. How does knowledge of roots and affixes help determine the meaning of unknown words?

Essential Reasoning Skills:
1. Use explicit context clues to infer the meaning of words and/or phrases.
2. Create examples/non examples of definitions.
3. Employ synonyms or antonyms gleaned from a passage to provide an approximate meaning of a word.

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Prepared Graduates:
6. Craft arguments using techniques specific to the genre.

Grade Level Expectation:
1. Write arguments that support claim(s) using clear reasons, relevant evidence, credible sources, and a formal style.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:
a. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. (CCSS: W.6.1)
   i. Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly. (CCSS: W.6.1a)
   ii. Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. (CCSS: W.6.1b)
   iii. Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons. (CCSS: W.6.1c)
   iv. Establish and maintain a formal style. (CCSS: W.6.1d)
   v. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented. (CCSS: W.6.1e)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:
1. Look for and value in different perspectives expressed by others. (Personal Skills, Adaptability/Flexibility)
2. Examine how individuals interpret messages differently, how values and points of view are included or excluded, and how media can influence beliefs and behaviors. (Professional Skills, Information Literacy)
3. Demonstrate confidence in sharing ideas/feelings. (Professional Skills, Self-Advocacy)

Essential Questions:
1. How do writers determine a point of view?
2. How do writers know if they have convinced others that their opinions are valid?
3. How do writers select evidence to best support their claims?

Essential Reasoning Skills:
1. Inform thinking and writing by following the writings of professionals in areas of personal interest.
2. Consider others' perspectives to expand thinking and persuasiveness.
3. Distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information, fact and opinion.

Colorado Academic Standards

Reading, Writing, and Communicating

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Prepared Graduates:

7. Craft informational/explanatory texts using techniques specific to the genre.

Grade Level Expectation:

2. Write informative/explanatory texts characterized by appropriate organization, ample development, precise language and formal style.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. (CCSS: W.6.2)
    i. Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (for example: headings), graphics (for example: charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. (CCSS: W.6.2a)
    ii. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples. (CCSS: W.6.2b)
    iii. Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts. (CCSS: W.6.2c)
    iv. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. (CCSS: W.6.2d)
    v. Establish and maintain a formal style. (CCSS: W.6.2e)
    vi. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented. (CCSS: W.6.2f)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Make connections between information gathered and personal experiences to apply and/or test solutions. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Critical Thinking/Problem Solving)
2. Test hypotheses/prototype with planned process for getting feedback. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Inquiry/Analysis)
3. Evaluate information through the use of technologies. (Professional Skills, Use Information and Communications Technologies)

Essential Questions:

1. How do we organize texts to help readers understand?
2. How do writers monitor their work to include information that is relevant to the topic?
3. How is word selection important to a piece of writing?

Essential Reasoning Skills:

1. Understand that personal assumptions can affect how a reader understands and interprets a text.
2. Ask critical questions to improve thinking.
3. Present information in a clear manner so others can understand the conveyed information.

Colorado Academic Standards

Reading, Writing, and Communicating

Prepared Graduates:

8. Craft narratives using techniques specific to the genre.

Grade Level Expectation:

3. Write engaging real or imagined narratives using techniques such as sensory language, dialogue, description and sequencing to convey experiences and events.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences. (CCSS: W.6.3)
    i.   Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. (CCSS: W.6.3a)
    ii. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. (CCSS: W.6.3b)
    iii. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another. (CCSS: W.6.3c)
    iv. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events. (CCSS: W.6.3d)
    v.   Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events. (CCSS: W.6.3e)
    vi. Use stylistic techniques (for example: alliteration, onomatopoeia, rhyme scheme); figurative language (for example: simile, metaphor, personification); and graphic elements (for example: capital letters, line length, word position) to express personal or narrative voice.

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Engage in novel approaches, moves, directions, ideas, and/or perspectives. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Creativity/Innovation)
2. Assess personal strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a "growth mind-set." (Personal Skills, Self-Awareness)
3. Establish goals for communication and plan out steps accordingly. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills, Communication)

Essential Questions:

1. How do we help our readers visualize the character, setting, and plot in a text?
2. How is word selection important to a piece of writing?

Essential Reasoning Skills:

1. Generate a variety of ideas, responses, solutions, or questions.
2. Add details in order to modify or expand upon an idea.

Prepared Graduates:
9. Demonstrate mastery of their own writing process with clear, coherent, and error-free polished products.

Grade Level Expectation:
4. Plan, draft, edit, and revise as needed to craft clear and coherent writing that demonstrates a grasp of standard conventions for grammar, usage, and mechanics as well as a style appropriate for purpose and audience.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. (CCSS: L.6.1)
   i. Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, and possessive). (CCSS: L.6.1a)
   ii. Use intensive pronouns (e.g., myself, ourselves). (CCSS: L.6.1b)
   iii. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person. (CCSS: L.6.1c)
   iv. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents). (CCSS: L.6.1d)
   v. Recognize variations from Standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language. (CCSS: L.6.1e)
b. Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. (CCSS: L.6.2)
   i. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements. (CCSS: L.6.2a)
   ii. Correctly spell frequently used words and consult reference materials (for example: dictionaries, both print and digital, spell check, and/or trusted peers and/or adults) to determine the spelling of less frequent vocabulary. (adapted from CCSS: L.6.2b)
c. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. (CCSS: L.6.3)
   i. Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style. (CCSS: L.6.3a)
   ii. Maintain consistency in style and tone. (CCSS: L.6.3b)

d. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in grade level expectations 1 and 2 above.) (CCSS: W.6.4)
e. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. (CCSS: W.6.5)
f. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others. (adapted from CCSS: W.6.6)
g. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences. (CCSS W.6.10)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Apply knowledge to set goals, make informed decisions and transfer to new contexts. (Personal Skills, initiative/self-direction)
2. Focus on learning goals by employing motivation and familiar strategies for engagement and evaluate progress, making necessary changes to stay the course. (Personal Skills, Perseverance/Resilience)
3. Demonstrate task management attributes associated with producing high quality products including the abilities to: work positively and ethically, manage time and projects effectively, multi-task, and clearly communicate with others. (Professional Skills, Task/Time Management)

Essential Questions:
1. Why is proofreading important?
2. How can writers create strong sentence fluency in their work?
3. How can resources be used to edit and critique a work in progress?
4. How do we collaborate to improve reading?

Essential Reasoning Skills:
1. Explain the rationales for conventional rules for grammar, punctuation, usage, spelling, and presentation.
2. Explain how intentional violations of the conventional rules impact a reader's perceptions.

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Prepared Graduates:
10. Gather information from a variety of sources; analyze and evaluate its quality and relevance; and use it ethically to answer complex questions.

Grade Level Expectation:
1. Pose research question(s), gather, synthesize, and credit relevant and credible resources, and present findings.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate. (CCSS: W.6.7)
b. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources. (CCSS: W.6.8)
c. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (CCSS: W.6.9)
   i. Apply *grade 6 Reading standards* to literature (for example: "Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres [for example: stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories] in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics"). (CCSS: W.6.9a)
   ii. Apply *grade 6 Reading standards* to literary nonfiction (for example: "Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not"). (CCSS: W.6.9b)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Make connections between information gathered and personal experiences to apply and/or test solutions. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Critical Thinking/Problem Solving)
2. Test hypotheses/prototype with planned process for getting feedback. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Inquiry/Analysis)
3. Evaluate information through the use of technologies. (Professional Skills, Use Information and Communications Technologies)

Essential Questions:

1. How do we research effectively?
2. How do biases interfere with critical thinking?
3. How do we cite our research?

Essential Reasoning Skills:

1. Use divergent and convergent thinking to generate and prioritize research questions.
2. Identify the best words to use in academic searching.
3. Consider tone, style, logic, audience, and purpose to determine the credibility of a source.
4. Synthesize information by grouping and sequencing.
5. Communicate information in a format appropriate to the research questions and the audience.

Colorado Academic Standards

Reading, Writing, and Communicating

Prepared Graduates:

1. Collaborate effectively as group members or leaders who listen actively and respectfully; pose thoughtful questions, acknowledge the ideas of others; and contribute ideas to further the group's attainment of an objective.

Grade Level Expectation:

1. Incorporate language, tools, and techniques appropriate for task and audience during formal presentations.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. (CCSS: SL.7.1)

   i. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion. (CCSS: SL.7.1a)

   ii. Follow rules for collegial discussions, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. (CCSS: SL.7.1b)

   iii. Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed. (CCSS: SL.7.1c)

   iv. Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views. (CCSS: SL.7.1d)

b. Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (for example: visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study. (CCSS: SL.7.2)

c. Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence. (CCSS: SL.7.3)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Follow a process identified by others to help generate ideas, negotiate roles and responsibilities, and respect consensus in decision making. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills, Collaboration/Teamwork)

2. Establish goals for communication and plan out steps accordingly. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills, Communication)

3. Demonstrate task management attributes associated with producing high quality products including the abilities to: work positively and ethically, manage time and projects effectively, multi-task, and clearly communicate with others. (Professional Skills, Task/Time Management)

Essential Questions:

1. What makes an effective discussion?

2. What strategies do effective communicators use to involve other people in a discussion?

3. How do we share responsibility in discussions?

Essential Reasoning Skills:

1. Prioritize tasks based on intended outcomes of collaboration.

2. Evaluate the merit (which is better/more important/more logical/more appropriate) of ideas or solutions.

3. Defend opinions with sound reasoning.

Colorado Academic Standards
Reading, Writing, and Communicating

Prepared Graduates:
2. Deliver effective oral presentations for varied audiences and varied purposes.

Grade Level Expectation:
2. Prepare for formal presentations and use appropriate delivery techniques.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation. (CCSS: SL.7.4)
b. Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points. (CCSS: SL.7.5)
c. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (CCSS: SL.7.6)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Establish goals for communication and plan out steps accordingly. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills, Communication)
2. Demonstrate task management attributes associated with producing high quality products including the abilities to: work positively and ethically, manage time and projects effectively, multi-task, and clearly communicate with others. (Professional Skills, Task/Time Management)
3. Demonstrate confidence in sharing ideas/feelings. (Professional Skills, Self-Advocacy)

Essential Questions:

1. How does the lack of a component (introduction, main idea, supporting details, and conclusion) change the impact of a presentation?
2. How do the ideas included in a presentation clarify the topic, text, or idea?
3. What different media or formats are appropriate for a presentation?

Essential Reasoning Skills:

1. Analyze an audience's background knowledge, interests, and goals.
2. Select supporting details/anecdotes/facts for credibility and impact.
3. Polish presentation for clarity of content and effect, and grammatically correct use of language, spelling, and mechanics.

Prepared Graduates:

3. Read a wide range of literary texts to build knowledge and to better understand the human experience.

Grade Level Expectation:

1. Analyze the connections between interrelated literary elements to understand literary texts.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Use Key Ideas and Details to:
   i. Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (CCSS: RL.7.1)
   ii. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text. (CCSS: RL.7.2)
   iii. Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (for example: how setting shapes the characters or plot). (CCSS: RL.7.3)
b. Use Craft and Structure to:
   i. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (for example: alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama. (CCSS: RL.7.4)
   ii. Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (for example: soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning. (CCSS: RL.7.5)
   iii. Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text. (CCSS: RL.7.6)

c. Use Integration of Knowledge and Ideas to:
   i. Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (for example: lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film). (CCSS: RL.7.7)
   ii. Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history. (CCSS: RL.7.9)
d. Use Range of Reading and Complexity of Text to:
   i. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. (CCSS: RL.7.10)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Make connections between information gathered and personal experiences to apply and/or test solutions. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Critical Thinking/Problem Solving)
2. Apply knowledge to set goals, make informed decisions and transfer to new contexts. (Personal Skills, Initiative/Self-Direction)
3. Examine how individuals interpret messages differently, how values and points of view are included or excluded, and how media can influence beliefs and behaviors. (Professional Skills, Information Literacy)

Colorado Academic Standards

Reading, Writing, and Communicating

Essential Questions:
1. How would changing the setting, character, plot, or point of view affect the outcome of a literary text?
2. How do authors appeal to the reader's emotions and beliefs?

Essential Reasoning Skills:
1. Explain or connect ideas using supporting evidence (quote, example, text references).
2. Identify/make inferences about explicit or implicit central ideas.
3. Use reasoning, planning, and evidence to support inferences.

Prepared Graduates:
4. Read a wide range of informational texts to build knowledge and to better understand the human experience.

Grade Level Expectation:
2. Summarize and evaluate to show understanding of informational texts.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Use Key Ideas and Details to:
   i. Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (CCSS: RI.7.1)
   ii. Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text. (CCSS: RI.7.2)
   iii. Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (for example: how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events). (CCSS: RI.7.3)

b. Use Craft and Structure to:
   i. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone. (CCSS: RI.7.4)
   ii. Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas. (CCSS: RI.7.5)
   iii. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others. (CCSS: RI.7.6)

c. Use Integration of Knowledge and Ideas to:
   i. Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (for example: how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words). (CCSS: RI.7.7)
   ii. Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims. (CCSS: RI.7.8)
   iii. Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts. (CCSS: RI.7.9)

d. Use Range of Reading and Complexity of Text to:
   i. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. (CCSS: RI.7.10)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Make connections between information gathered and personal experiences to apply and/or test solutions. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Critical Thinking/Problem Solving)
2. Plan and evaluate complex solutions to global challenges that are appropriate to their contexts using multiple disciplinary perspectives (such as cultural, historical, and scientific). (Civic/Interpersonal Skills, Global/Cultural Awareness)
3. Examine how individuals interpret messages differently, how values and points of view are included or excluded, and how media can influence beliefs and behaviors. (Professional Skills, Information Literacy)

Colorado Academic Standards

Reading, Writing, and Communicating

Essential Questions:
1. How does an author use language to convey his/her viewpoint?
2. How can readers distinguish between facts and an author's opinion? Why does this matter?
3. How are multiple sources valuable when we are learning new information?
4. How is nonfiction like fiction?
5. How do we identify similarities and differences between two texts on the same topic?

Essential Reasoning Skills:
1. Distinguish accurate from inaccurate information.
2. Analyze interrelationships among concepts, issues, and problems.
3. Synthesize information within a source or text.

Prepared Graduates:

5. Understand how language functions in different contexts, command a variety of word-learning strategies to assist comprehension, and make effective choices for meaning or style when writing and speaking.

Grade Level Expectation:

3. Apply knowledge of word relationships, word structures, and sentence structures to determine the meaning of new words in increasingly complex texts.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 7 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. (CCSS: L.7.4)
   i. Use context (for example: the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. (CCSS: L.7.4a)
   ii. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (for example: *belligerent*, *bellicose*, *rebel*). (CCSS: L.7.4b)
   iii. Consult general and specialized reference materials (for example: dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech. (CCSS: L.7.4c)
   iv. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (for example: by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary). (CCSS: L.7.4d)

b. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. (CCCS: L.7.5)
   i. Interpret figures of speech (for example: literary, biblical, and mythological allusions) in context. (CCCS: L.7.5a)
   ii. Use the relationship between particular words (for example: synonym/antonym, analogy) to better understand each of the words. (CCCS: L.7.5b)
   iii. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (for example: *refined*, *respectful*, *polite*, *diplomatic, and condescending*). (CCCS: L.7.5c)

c. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression. (CCSS: L.7.6)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Apply knowledge to set goals, make informed decisions and transfer to new contexts. (Personal Skills, Initiative/Self-Direction)
2. Examine how individuals interpret messages differently, how values and points of view are included or excluded, and how media can influence beliefs and behaviors. (Professional Skills, Information Literacy)
3. Evaluate information through the use of technologies. (Professional Skills, Use Information and Communications Technology)

Colorado Academic Standards

Reading, Writing, and Communicating

Essential Questions:
1. When a word has multiple meanings or pronunciations, how does a reader select the correct one?
2. How do we learn new words?
3. How do people adjust the words they use in different contexts?

Essential Reasoning Skills:
1. Recognize subtle context clues (for example: contrast or antonym clues, inference clues, punctuation clues) that help understand the meaning of words and/or phrases.
2. Infer meanings by applying knowledge of Greek and Latin roots.
3. Discern layers of meaning, both literal (denotation) and implied (connotation).

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Prepared Graduates:
6. Craft arguments using techniques specific to the genre.

Grade Level Expectation:
1. Write well-organized arguments using logical reasoning, relevant and credible evidence, acknowledgement of opposing claims, clear language, and formal style.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:
a. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. (CCSS: W.7.1)
  i. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. (CCSS: W.7.1a)
  ii. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. (CCSS: W.7.1b)
  iii. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence. (CCSS: W.7.1c)
  iv. Establish and maintain a formal style. (CCSS: W.7.1d)
  v. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented. (CCSS: W.7.1e)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:
1. Look for and value in different perspectives expressed by others. (Personal Skills, Adaptability/Flexibility)
2. Examine how individuals interpret messages differently, how values and points of view are included or excluded, and how media can influence beliefs and behaviors. (Professional Skills, Information Literacy)
3. Demonstrate confidence in sharing ideas/feelings. (Professional Skills, Self-Advocacy)

Essential Questions:
1. What part does word choice play in writing?
2. How do we use evidence to support our claims?
3. How do we use counterclaims to support our arguments?

Essential Reasoning Skills:
1. Understand that personal experiences affect how a reader understands and interprets a text.
2. Use multiple perspectives and points of view to expand others' thinking.
3. Classify the similarities and differences in points of view.

Colorado
Academic Standards

Reading, Writing,
and Communicating

Colorado Department of Education

Prepared Graduates:
7. Craft informational/explanatory texts using techniques specific to the genre.

Grade Level Expectation:
2. Write well-developed informative/explanatory texts using logical organizational strategies, relevant supporting information, domain-specific vocabulary, and formal style.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. (CCSS: W.7.2)
   i. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (for example: headings), graphics (for example: charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. (CCSS: W.7.2a)
   ii. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples. (CCSS: W.7.2b)
   iii. Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts. (CCSS: W.7.2c)
   iv. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. (CCSS: W.7.2d)
   v. Establish and maintain a formal style. (CCSS: W.7.2e)
   vi. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented. (CCSS: W.7.2f)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Make connections between information gathered and personal experiences to apply and/or test solutions. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Critical Thinking/Problem Solving)
2. Test hypotheses/prototype with planned process for getting feedback. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Inquiry/Analysis)
3. Evaluate information through the use of technologies. (Professional Skills, Use Information and Communications Technologies)

Essential Questions:

1. How do we use evidence to enhance our readers' understanding?
2. How do different references enhance readers' thinking about writing?
3. What should writers tell and what should they describe to make information clear?

Essential Reasoning Skills:

1. Synthesize information from multiple sources using logical organization, effective supporting evidence, and variety in sentence structure.
2. Ask critical questions to improve thinking.
3. Determine the most effective means of delivery of information.

Colorado Academic Standards

Reading, Writing, and Communicating

Prepared Graduates:
8. Craft narratives using techniques specific to the genre.

Grade Level Expectation:
3. Write engaging real or imagined narratives effectively using techniques such as relevant description, sensory language, dialogue, and logical pacing to capture the action and detail experiences and events.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences. (CCSS: W.7.3)
   i. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. (CCSS: W.7.3a)
   ii. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. (CCSS: W.7.3b)
   iii. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another. (CCSS: W.7.3c)
   iv. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events. (CCSS: W.7.3d)
   v. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events. (CCSS: W.7.3e)
   vi. Use stylistic techniques (for example: alliteration, onomatopoeia, rhyme scheme, repetition); figurative language (for example: simile, metaphor, personification); and graphic elements (for example: capital letters, line length, word position) to express personal or narrative voice.

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Engage in novel approaches, moves, directions, ideas, and/or perspectives. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Creativity/Innovation)
2. Assess personal strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a "growth mind-set." (Personal Skills, Self-Awareness)
3. Establish goals for communication and plan out steps accordingly. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills, Communication (using information and communications technologies))

Essential Questions:

1. In what ways does an author use the setting to create a mood for the story?
2. What inferences can a reader make about different character types?
3. What visual clues does a writer give about a story by using only the words of a text?

Essential Reasoning Skills:

1. Provide insight into characters' motivations in narratives.
2. Envision and develop scenes that convey an idea.

Prepared Graduates:
9. Demonstrate mastery of their own writing process with clear, coherent, and error-free polished products.

Grade Level Expectation:
4. Plan, draft, edit, and revise as needed to ensure that writing is clear and coherent, that it conforms to standard conventions for grammar, usage, and mechanics, and that its style is appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:
a. Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. (CCSS: L.7.1)
   i. Explain the function of phrases and clauses in general and their function in specific sentences. (CCSS: L.7.1a)
   ii. Choose among simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences to signal differing relationships among ideas. (CCSS: L.7.1b)
   iii. Place phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers. (CCSS: L.7.1c)
b. Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. (CCSS: L.7.2)
   i. Use a comma to separate coordinate adjectives (for example: *It was a fascinating, enjoyable movie* but not *He wore an old[,] green shirt*). (CCSS: L.7.2a)
   ii. Correctly spell frequently used words and consult reference materials (for example, dictionaries, both print and digital, spell check, and/or trusted peers and/or adults) to determine the spelling of less frequently used vocabulary. (adapted from CCSS: L.7.2.b).
c. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. (CCSS: L.7.3)
   i. Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy. (CCSS: L.7.3a)
d. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (CCSS: W.7.4)

e. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (CCSS.W.7.5)
f. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others. (adapted from CCSS: W.7.6)
g. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences. (CCSS W.7.10)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:
1. Apply knowledge to set goals, make informed decisions and transfer to new contexts. (Personal Skills, Initiative/self-direction)
2. Focus on learning goals by employing motivation and familiar strategies for engagement and evaluate progress, making necessary changes to stay the course. (Personal Skills, Perseverance/Resilience)
3. Demonstrate task management attributes associated with producing high quality products including the abilities to: work positively and ethically, manage time and projects effectively, multi-task, and clearly communicate with others. (Professional Skills, Task/Time Management)

Essential Questions:
1. How do transition words create fluency in writing?
2. How can vocabulary help or hinder a piece of writing?
3. When does a writer know he/she has done enough editing?
4. How does editing make someone a better writer?

Essential Reasoning Skills:

1. Explain the rationales for conventional rules for grammar, punctuation, usage, spelling, and presentation.
2. Explain how intentional violations of the conventional rules impact a reader's perceptions.

Prepared Graduates:
10. Gather information from a variety of sources; analyze and evaluate its quality and relevance; and use it ethically to answer complex questions.

Grade Level Expectation:
1. Pose research questions, synthesize answers from multiple credible sources, and present conclusions in an appropriate format.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:
a. Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation. (CCSS: W.7.7)
b. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation. (CCSS: W.7.8)
c. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (CCSS: W.7.9)
   i. Apply *grade 7 Reading standards* to literature (for example: "Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history"). (CCSS: W.7.9a)
   ii. Apply *grade 7 Reading standards* to literary nonfiction (for example: "Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims"). (CCSS: W.7.9b)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:
1. Make connections between information gathered and personal experiences to apply and/or test solutions. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Critical Thinking/Problem Solving)
2. Test hypotheses/prototype with planned process for getting feedback. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Inquiry/Analysis)
3. Evaluate information through the use of technologies. (Professional Skills, Use Information and Communications Technologies)

Essential Questions:
1. How do writers summarize information in their own words?
2. What makes content credible or non-credible?
3. How might different audiences understand a message differently?
4. How do we cite our research?

Essential Reasoning Skills:
1. Change close-ended questions to open-ended questions for research.
2. Identify unique search terms to locate targeted sources.
3. Compare and contrast tone, style, logic, audience and purpose in potential resources.
4. Synthesize information by classifying and sequencing.
5. Determine effective format(s) for communicating findings.

Prepared Graduates:
1. Collaborate effectively as group members or leaders who listen actively and respectfully; pose thoughtful questions, acknowledge the ideas of others; and contribute ideas to further the group's attainment of an objective.

Grade Level Expectation:
1. Engage in effective collaborative discussions and analyze information presented.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. (CCSS: SL.8.1)
   i. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion. (CCSS: SL.8.1a)
   ii. Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. (CCSS: SL.8.1b)
   iii. Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas. (CCSS: SL.8.1c)
   iv. Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented. (CCSS: SL.8.1d)
b. Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (for example: visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (for example: social, commercial, political) behind its presentation. (CCSS: SL.8.2)
c. Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced. (CCSS: SL.8.3)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Make connections between information gathered and personal experiences to apply and/or test solutions. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Critical Thinking/Problem Solving)
2. Look for and value in different perspectives expressed by others. (Personal Skills, Adaptability/Flexibility)
3. Follow a process identified by others to help generate ideas, negotiate roles and responsibilities, and respect consensus in decision making. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills, Collaboration/Teamwork)

Essential Questions:

1. What does good listening look like?
2. How do individuals contribute to the success of a team?
3. Do all teams need leaders?
4. How is asking questions a useful strategy in learning?

Essential Reasoning Skills:

1. Expand on others' observations and claims with relevant evidence, insights and ideas.
2. Identify and question assumptions and inferences.
3. Determine the presence or absence of logical relationships.

Colorado
Academic Standards

Reading, Writing, and Communicating

COLORADO
Department of Education

Prepared Graduates:
2. Deliver effective oral presentations for varied audiences and varied purposes.

Grade Level Expectation:
2. Design organized presentations incorporating key details and claims while tailored for purpose and audience.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation. (CCSS: SL.8.4)

b. Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest. (CCSS: SL.8.5)

c. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (CCSS: SL.8.6)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Establish goals for communication and plan out steps accordingly. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills, Communication)

2. Demonstrate task management attributes associated with producing high quality products including the abilities to: work positively and ethically, manage time and projects effectively, multi-task, and clearly communicate with others. (Professional Skills, Task/Time Management)

3. Demonstrate confidence in sharing ideas/feelings. (Professional Skills, Self-Advocacy)

Essential Questions:

1. How do delivery techniques change in relation to audience purpose or content?

2. How does language help or hurt the message being communicated?

3. How do presenters determine what information is relevant when preparing a report or presentation?

4. How do speakers know if an audience is actively engaged in a presentation?

5. What are the structural elements of a speech and what strategies can be used to enhance each part?

Essential Reasoning Skills:

1. Take a position on an issue and support it using quality reasoning.

2. Recognize rhetorical appeals (logos, ethos, pathos).

3. Identify and correct common fallacies in reasoning.

Colorado Academic Standards

Reading, Writing, and Communicating

Prepared Graduates:

3. Read a wide range of literary texts to build knowledge and to better understand the human experience.

Grade Level Expectation:

1. Analyze and evaluate literary elements and an author's choices to understand literary text.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Use Key Ideas and Details to:
   i. Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (CCSS: RL.8.1)
   ii. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text. (CCSS: RL.8.2)
   iii. Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision. (CCSS: RL.8.3)

b. Use Craft and Structure to:
   i. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts. (CCSS: RL.8.4)
   ii. Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style. (CCSS: RL.8.5)
   iii. Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (for example: created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor. (CCSS: RL.8.6)

c. Use Integration of Knowledge and Ideas to:
   i. Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors. (CCSS: RL.8.7)

   ii. Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new. (CCSS: RL.8.9)

d. Use Range of Reading and Complexity of Text to:
   i. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently. (CCSS: RL.8.10)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Apply knowledge to set goals, make informed decisions and transfer to new contexts. (Personal Skills, Initiative/Self-Direction)
2. Look for and value in different perspectives expressed by others. (Personal Skills, Adaptability/Flexibility)
3. Examine how individuals interpret messages differently, how values and points of view are included or excluded, and how media can influence beliefs and behaviors. (Professional Skills, Information Literacy)

Essential Questions:

1. How do authors develop theme?
2. How do authors convey mood?
3. How do different authors approach story elements?

Essential Reasoning Skills:

1. Apply a concept in a new context (for example, write an alternative ending to a story).
2. Interpret themes and apply them to life.
3. Justify or critique interpretations of text.

Colorado
Academic Standards

Reading, Writing,
and Communicating

Prepared Graduates:
4. Read a wide range of informational texts to build knowledge and to better understand the human experience.

Grade Level Expectation:
2. Analyze and evaluate an author's choices to understand informational text.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:
a. Use Key Ideas and Details to:
   i. Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (CCSS: RI.8.1)
   ii. Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text. (CCSS: RI.8.2)
   iii. Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (for example: through comparisons, analogies, or categories). (CCSS: RI.8.3)
b. Use Craft and Structure to:
   i. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts. (CCSS: RI.8.4)
   ii. Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept. (CCSS: RI.8.5)
   iii. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints. (CCSS: RI.8.6)

c. Use Integration of Knowledge and Ideas to:
   i. Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (for example: print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea. (CCSS: RI.8.7)
   ii. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced. (CCSS: RI.8.8)
   iii. Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation. (CCSS: RI.8.9)
d. Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity
   i. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently. (CCSS: RI.8.10)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:
1. Make connections between information gathered and personal experiences to apply and/or test solutions. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Critical Thinking/Problem Solving)
2. Plan and evaluate complex solutions to global challenges that are appropriate to their contexts using multiple disciplinary perspectives (such as cultural, historical, and scientific). (Civic/Interpersonal Skills, Global/Cultural Awareness)
3. Examine how individuals interpret messages differently, how values and points of view are included or excluded, and how media can influence beliefs and behaviors. (Professional Skills, Information Literacy)

Essential Questions:
1. How do we evaluate an author's credibility?
2. How do visuals convey information?
3. How can bias influence a reader?
4. What elements make a text more attractive to some readers than others?

Essential Reasoning Skills:
1. Analyze the points of view, implications and consequences, inferences, assumptions, and concepts inherent in thinking.
2. Differentiate between valid and faulty generalizations.
3. Identify common reasoning fallacies in print and non-print sources.

Colorado Academic Standards

Reading, Writing, and Communicating

Prepared Graduates:

5. Understand how language functions in different contexts, command a variety of word-learning strategies to assist comprehension, and make effective choices for meaning or style when writing and speaking.

Grade Level Expectation:

3. Apply knowledge of word structure, grammar, and context to determine the meaning of new words and phrases in increasingly complex texts.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. (CCSS: L.8.4)
   i. Use context (for example: the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. (CCSS: L.8.4a)
   ii. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (for example: *precede*, *recede*, *secede)*. (CCSS: L.8.4b)
   iii. Consult general and specialized reference materials (for example: dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech. (CCSS: L.8.4c)
   iv. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (for example: by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary). (CCSS: L.8.4d)

b. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. (CCSS: L.8.5)
   i. Interpret figures of speech (for example: verbal irony, puns) in context. (CCSS: L.8.5a)
   ii. Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words. (CCSS: L.8.5b)
   iii. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (for example: bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute). * (CCSS: L.8.5c)

c. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression. (CCSS: L.8.6)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Apply knowledge to set goals, make informed decisions and transfer to new contexts. (Personal Skills, Initiative/Self-Direction)
2. Follow a process identified by others to help generate ideas, negotiate roles and responsibilities, and respect consensus in decision making. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills, Collaboration/Teamwork)
3. Examine how individuals interpret messages differently, how values and points of view are included or excluded, and how media can influence beliefs and behaviors. (Professional Skills, Information Literacy)

Colorado
Academic Standards

Reading, Writing,
and Communicating

Essential Questions:
1. How does the history of language affect our understanding of a text?
2. How does slang, dialect, or colloquial language affect a listener?
3. How do we learn new words?

Essential Reasoning Skills:
1. Apply knowledge of affixes and roots to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words.
2. Discern layers of meaning, both denotative (literal) and connotative (implied).
3. Discern shades of meaning; arrange similar terms along a continuum of meaning.

Prepared Graduates:
6. Craft arguments using techniques specific to the genre.

Grade Level Expectation:
1. Write well-organized and cohesive arguments, distinguishing claim(s) from opposing claims and using language to clarify connections among claims, reasons, and evidence.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. (CCSS: W.8.1)
   i. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. (CCSS: W.8.1a)
   ii. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. (CCSS: W.8.1b)
   iii. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. (CCSS: W.8.1c)
   iv. Establish and maintain a formal style. (CCSS: W.8.1d)
   v. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented. (CCSS: W.8.1e)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Look for and value in different perspectives expressed by others. (Personal Skills, Adaptability/Flexibility)
2. Examine how individuals interpret messages differently, how values and points of view are included or excluded, and how media can influence beliefs and behaviors. (Professional Skills, Information Literacy)
3. Demonstrate confidence in sharing ideas/feelings. (Professional Skills, Self-Advocacy)

Essential Questions:

1. What techniques do authors use to persuade readers?
2. How can authors use diction to convince or persuade others?
3. How do writers select evidence to best support their claim(s)?

Essential Reasoning Skills:

1. Determine strengths and weaknesses of their thinking and thinking of others by using criteria including relevance, clarity, accuracy, fairness, significance, depth, breadth, logic, and precision.
2. Take a position on an issue and support it using quality reasoning.
3. Identify common properties in a range of examples.

Colorado Academic Standards

Reading, Writing, and Communicating

COLORADO
Department of Education

Prepared Graduates:
7. Craft informational/explanatory texts using techniques specific to the genre.

Grade Level Expectation:
2. Write well-developed and logically organized informative/explanatory texts, conveying relevant content through precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and formal style.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. (CCSS: W.8.2)
   i. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (for example: headings), graphics (for example: charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. (CCSS: W.8.2a)
   ii. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples. (CCSS: W.8.2b)
   iii. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts. (CCSS: W.8.2c)
   iv. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. (CCSS: W.8.2d)
   v. Establish and maintain a formal style. (CCSS: W.8.2e)
   vi. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented. (CCSS: W.8.2f)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Make connections between information gathered and personal experiences to apply and/or test solutions. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Critical Thinking/Problem Solving)
2. Test hypotheses/prototype with planned process for getting feedback. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Inquiry/Analysis)
3. Evaluate information through the use of technologies. (Professional Skills, Use Information and Communications Technologies)

Essential Questions:

1. What techniques do writers use to "hook" their readers?
2. What tools do writers use to summarize ideas?
3. What kind of organization is most effective in informational writing?
4. How do writers know when they have given enough information?
5. Are all styles of informational writing equally appropriate?

Essential Reasoning Skills:

1. Identify purpose, question(s) at issue and point of view of texts they plan to write.
2. Monitor selected sources and check the credibility of the author of the source before using it in their work.
3. Recognize and correct errors in reasoning.

Colorado
Academic Standards

Reading, Writing,
and Communicating

Prepared Graduates:
8. Craft narratives using techniques specific to the genre.

Grade Level Expectation:
3. Write engaging real or imagined narratives effectively using techniques such as relevant and sufficient descriptive details, sensory language, logical pacing and dialogue to detail actions and to develop and reflect on experiences and events.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:
a. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences. (CCSS: W.8.3)
   i. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. (CCSS: W.8.3a)
   ii. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. (CCSS: W.8.3b)
   iii. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events. (CCSS: W.8.3c)
   iv. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events. (CCSS: W.8.3d)
   v. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events. (CCSS: W.8.3e)
   vi. Use stylistic techniques (for example: alliteration, onomatopoeia); figurative language (for example: simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole); and graphic elements (for example: capital letters, line length, word position) to express personal or narrative voice.

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:
1. Engage in novel approaches, moves, directions, ideas, and/or perspectives. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Creativity/Innovation)
2. Assess personal strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a "growth mind-set." (Personal Skills, Self-Awareness)
3. Establish goals for communication and plan out steps accordingly. (Civic/Interpersonal Skills, Communication (using information and communications technologies))

Essential Questions:
1. What are the elements of a well-developed character?
2. How do authors use imagery to create tone?
3. What makes text elements engaging to a reader?
4. How does foreshadowing create connections for a reader?

Essential Reasoning Skills:
1. Identify and explore the structure of narrative texts.
2. Use descriptive language effectively to create narrative settings and build characters.

Prepared Graduates:
9. Demonstrate mastery of their own writing process with clear, coherent, and error-free polished products.

Grade Level Expectation:
4. Produce clear and coherent final drafts that demonstrate a command of the conventions for grammar, usage, and mechanics as well as a style appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. (CCSS: L.8.1)
   i. Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences. (CCSS: L.8.1a)
   ii. Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice. (CCSS: L.8.1b)
   iii. Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood. (CCSS: L.8.1c)
   iv. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood. (CCSS: L.8.1d)
b. Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. (CCSS: L.8.2)
   i. Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break. (CCSS: L.8.2a)
   ii. Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission. (CCSS: L.8.2b)
   iii. Correctly spell frequently used words and consult reference materials (for example: dictionaries, both print and digital, spell check, and/or trusted peers and/or adults) to determine the spelling of less frequent vocabulary. (adapted from CCSS: L.8.2c)
c. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. (CCSS: L.8.3)
   i. Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (for example: emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact). (CCSS: L.8.3a)

d. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (CCSS: W.8.4)
e. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (CCSS: W.8.5)
f. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others. (CCSS: W.8.6)
g. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences. (CCSS W.8.10)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Apply knowledge to set goals, make informed decisions and transfer to new contexts. (Personal Skills, Initiative/Self-direction)
2. Focus on learning goals by employing motivation and familiar strategies for engagement and evaluate progress, making necessary changes to stay the course. (Personal Skills, Perseverance/Resilience)
3. Demonstrate task management attributes associated with producing high quality products including the abilities to: work positively and ethically, manage time and projects effectively, multi-task, and clearly communicate with others. (Professional Skills, Task/Time Management).

Essential Questions:
1. How does the use of correct grammar, usage, and mechanics add clarity to writing?
2. How can various tools help a writer edit work?
3. What are some common punctuation errors? How can writers avoid these challenges in the future?
4. When is it beneficial to use the thesaurus?

Essential Reasoning Skills:
1. Explain the rationales for conventional rules for grammar, punctuation, usage, spelling, and presentation.
2. Explain how intentional violations of the conventional rules impact a reader's perceptions.

Prepared Graduates:

10. Gather information from a variety of sources; analyze and evaluate its quality and relevance; and use it ethically to answer complex questions.

Grade Level Expectation:

1. Pose important questions; identify, locate, and evaluate sources; extract and synthesize relevant information, and communicate findings appropriately.

Evidence Outcomes

Students Can:

a. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration. (CCSS: W.8.7)

b. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation. (CCSS: W.8.8)

c. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (CCSS: W.8.9)

   i. Apply *grade 8 Reading standards* to literature (for example: "Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new"). (CCSS: W.8.a)

   ii. Apply *grade 8 Reading standards* to literary nonfiction (for example: "Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced"). (CCSS: W.8.9b)

Academic Context and Connections

Colorado Essential Skills:

1. Make connections between information gathered and personal experiences to apply and/or test solutions. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Critical Thinking/Problem Solving)

2. Test hypotheses/prototype with planned process for getting feedback. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Inquiry/Analysis)

3. Evaluate information through the use of technologies. (Professional Skills, Use Information and Communications Technologies)

Essential Questions:

1. How do we know what resources meet our needs?
2. What do we do when our immediate resources are not adequate?
3. How do we know our information is reliable?
4. What organizational strategy best suits this research?
5. How do we determine the most appropriate format for presenting our research?
6. How do we cite our research?

Essential Reasoning Skills:
1. Clearly define research questions, problems, and/or tasks.
2. Infer information from unfiltered search results.
3. Critique sources for bias, missing perspectives, misquotes, falsified images, and/or faulty logic.
4. Synthesize information by comparing/contrasting, classifying, and sequencing.
5. Determine appropriate ways to communicate findings and conclusions.