



ELA Focus Standards for Graduation Pathways

The State Board of Education, in collaboration with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, is developing resources to support implementation of a performance-based pathway to graduation for high school students across the state of Washington. This is in alignment with the following requirement: [HB 1308: High School Graduation Pathway Options - Various Provisions](#).

The intent of this document is to provide guidance for schools and districts on the number and assortment of **ELA** standards which must be incorporated into the design of the learning experience and assessed within the performance-based graduation pathway. *Throughout this document “learning experience” is used as it was explained in related legislation: “may take a variety of forms, such as a project, practicum, work-related experience, community service, or cultural activity, and may result in a variety of products that can be evaluated, such as a performance, presentation, portfolio, report, film, or exhibit”* (please see [HB 1308](#) for more information). Flexibility with the selection of some of the standards is necessary in order to ensure that the learning experience can be designed to be both student-centered and responsive to interests and goals of the student.

Since the ultimate goal is for students to produce evidence of meeting high school ELA learning standards by demonstrating knowledge and skills in a real-world context, aligned to the student’s [High School and Beyond Plan](#), performance-based learning experiences¹ will be created by students, teachers, and in some cases community mentors working together, guided by the [ELA Task Model](#).

Students who wish to utilize the Performance-Based Pathways for ELA will work with an advisor to select and/or design cohesive and coherent learning experiences that provide them the opportunity to carry out activities and solve problems in a way that reflects the complex nature of such tasks in the world outside of the classroom. The learning experiences must be designed to enable students to provide evidence of meeting all of the focus standards listed below; the final product produced by the student could be a piece of writing, a performance, a presentation, a portfolio, a report, a film, animation, or another product that enables the student to show evidence of meeting the learning standards identified. While the focus of this document is to describe the ELA focus

¹ Defined in [HB 1308: High School Graduation Pathway Options - Various Provisions](#) (p. 4 lines 33 - 37).



standards for the performance-based graduation pathway, learning experiences that are developed may also inherently give students the opportunity to practice and provide evidence of skills present in [Washington's Profile of a Graduate](#).

The student's evidence of meeting the ELA focus standards will be assessed using the [Performance-Based Graduation Pathway statewide rubric](#).

Educators can use this list of standards in the following ways:

- As they meet with students to design individualized projects for the performance based pathways;
- As they work with other educators at their school to design projects that could be used by many students for the performance based pathways;
- As they work with community partners to design projects that could be used by many students for the performance based pathways;

Focus Standards

Reading Standards for Informational Text:

Key Ideas and Details: (1) Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Craft and Structure: (4) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10, or how Martin Luther King defines "just laws" and "unjust laws" in Letter From Birmingham Jail.)

Writing Standards:

Production and Distribution of Writing: (4) Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Integrate Knowledge and Ideas: (7) Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem or inform creative work.*.

- a. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative sources {including information presented in text as well as other media or formats}, using advanced searches effectively;

- b. Assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience
- c. Integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

Language Standards:

Conventions of Standard English: (1) Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

Choice Standards

In addition to the above standards, the student must choose one of the standards below. This will determine the type of product they create - a written text, or an oral/visual/video presentation.

Speaking and Listening Standards:

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas: (4) Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

Writing Standards:

Text Types and Purposes: (2) Write informative, explanatory, persuasive or creative texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and/or analysis of content.*

**The wording of these standards has been slightly modified to enable students to produce a wide variety of types of product including presentations.*

Resources

Colorado Department of Education (2014). [Portfolio and Capstone Guidebook](#).

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010). [Common Core State Standards for English language arts and literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects](#). Washington, DC.

Student Achievement Partners. (2020). [Priority instructional content in English language arts/literacy and Mathematics](#). Achieve The Core.

<https://achievethecore.org/page/3267/priority-instructional-content-in-english-language-arts-literacy-and-mathematics>

Vermont Agency of Education. *Critical Proficiencies in English Language Arts Literacy*. Unpublished draft resource shared with the Washington State Board of Education. 2023.

Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. [Considerations for K-12 Language Arts and Literacy Instruction](#). September, 2020.