

Core Knowledge English Language Arts

Grades K-2: Listening and Learning Strand



- Since 1986, Core Knowledge has been the leading national voice for content-rich literacy.
- Core Knowledge Founder E.D. Hirsch, Jr. provided the “intellectual DNA” of CCSS.
- Core Knowledge Foundation served as a consultant to the authors of CCSS ELA standards.
- Successful Pilot of K-2 Literacy Program in NYC Schools.

A New Approach to ELA Instruction: Two Keys to Reading



Two instructional strands:

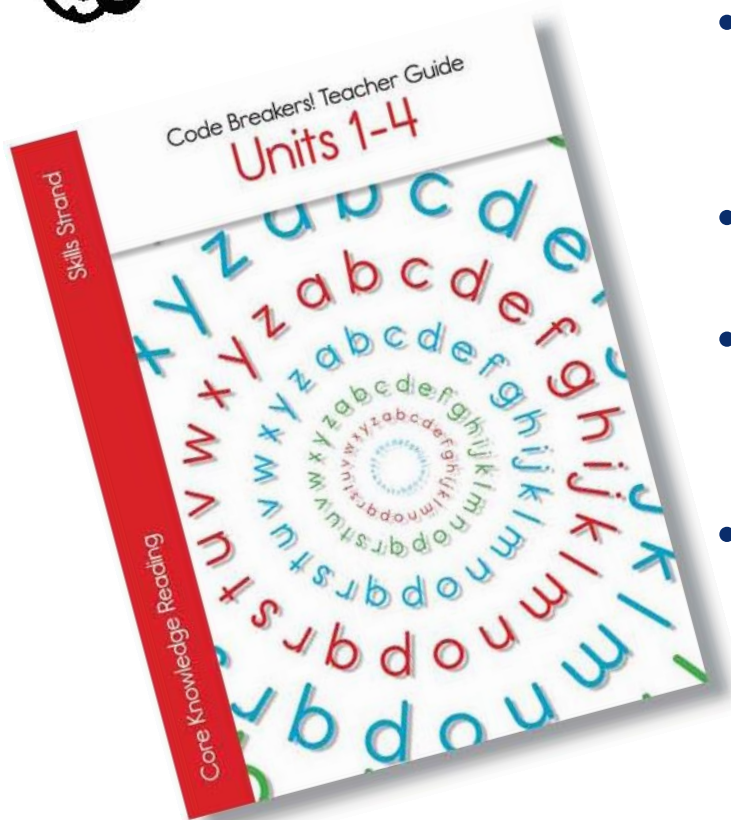
- “Skills” Strand
- “Listening and Learning” Strand



Decoding (Skills) + Language Comprehension (Listening and Learning through Read-Alouds) provides students with the two keys needed to translate letters into words AND make sense of what they decode.

Decoding Skills

First Key



These are taught in the Skills Strand of Core Knowledge Language Arts:

- Focus on systematic, explicit instruction in synthetic phonics
- Sound to letter instruction
- Reading and writing taught in tandem, as inverse procedures
- Repeated oral reading of 100% decodable text to build fluency

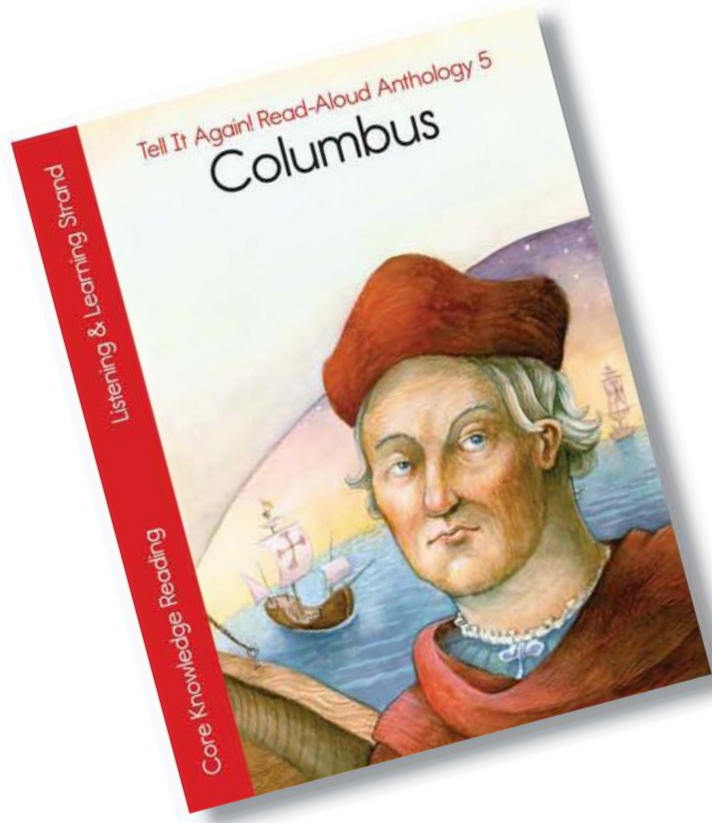
Language Comprehension

Second Key



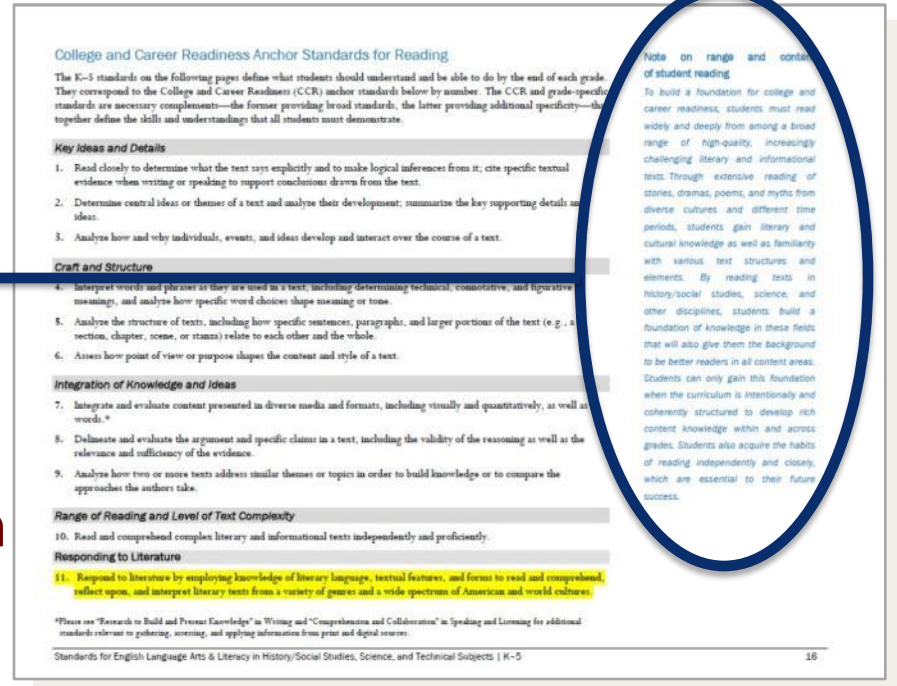
These are taught in the Listening and Learning Strand of Core Knowledge Language Arts:

- Carefully sequenced oral read-alouds grouped into topically unified domains
- Read-Alouds include fiction and informational selections
- Focus on listening comprehension and text-based oral conversation
- Extension activities that incorporate drawing, dictation, and writing



“...the background to be better readers.” 

“By reading texts in history/social studies, science, and other disciplines, students **build a foundation of knowledge in these fields that will also give them the background to be better readers in all content areas.** Students can only gain this foundation when the curriculum is intentionally and coherently structured to develop rich content knowledge within and across grades.”



College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading

The K-5 standards on the following pages define what students should understand and be able to do by the end of each grade. They correspond to the College and Career Readiness (CCR) anchor standards below by number. The CCR and grade-specific standards are necessary complements—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity—together define the skills and understandings that all students must demonstrate.

Key Ideas and Details

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Craft and Structure

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.*
8. Delinate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

Responding to Literature

11. Respond to literature by employing knowledge of literary language, textual features, and forms to read and comprehend, reflect upon, and interpret literary texts from a variety of genres and a wide spectrum of American and world cultures.

*Please see “Research to Build and Present Knowledge” in Writing and “Comprehension and Collaboration” in Speaking and Listening for additional standards relevant to gathering, assessing, and applying information from print and digital sources.

Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects | K-5 18

Year-long Scope and Sequence



Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2
Nursery Rhymes and Fables	Different Lands, Similar Stories	Fighting for a Cause
The Human Body: Five Senses	Fables and Stories	Fairy Tales and Tall Tales
Stories	The Human Body: Body Systems, Germs, Diseases, and Preventing Illness	Cycles in Nature
Plants	Early World Civilizations	Insects
Farms	Early American Civilizations	Ancient Greek Civilizations
Kings and Queens	Astronomy	Greek Myths
Seasons and Weather	Animals and Habitats	Early Asian Civilizations
Colonial Towns and Townpeople	Fairy Tales	Charlotte's Web I & II
Taking Care of the Earth	History of the Earth	Immigration

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“Building knowledge systematically...”



Staying on Topic Within a Grade and Across Grades: How to Build Knowledge Systematically in English Language Arts K-5

Building knowledge systematically in English language arts is like giving children various pieces of a puzzle in each grade that, over time, will form one big picture. At a curricular or instructional level, texts—within and across grade levels—need to be selected around topics or themes that systematically develop the knowledge base of students. Within a grade level, there should be an adequate number of titles on a single topic that would allow children to study that topic for a sustained period. The knowledge children have learned about particular topics in early grade levels should then be expanded and developed in subsequent grade levels to ensure an increasingly deeper understanding of these topics. Children in the upper elementary grades will generally be expected to read these texts independently and reflect on them in writing. However, children in the early grades (particularly K-2) should participate in rich, structured conversations with an adult in response to the written texts that are read aloud, orally comparing and contrasting as well as analyzing and synthesizing, in the manner called for by the *Standards*.

Preparation for reading complex informational texts should begin at the very earliest elementary school grades. What follows is one example that uses domain-specific nonfiction titles across grade levels to illustrate how curriculum designers and classroom teachers can infuse the English language arts block with rich, age-appropriate content knowledge and vocabulary in history/social studies, science, and the arts. Having students listen to informational read-alouds in the early grades helps lay the necessary foundation for students' reading and understanding of increasingly complex texts on their own in subsequent grades.

Exemplar Texts on a Topic Across Grades	K	1	2-3	4-5
The Human Body Students can begin learning about the human body starting in kindergarten and then review and extend their learning during each subsequent grade.	The five senses and associated body parts <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>My Five Senses</i> by Alida (1989)• <i>Hearing</i> by Maria Riss (1985)• <i>Sight</i> by Maria Riss (1985)• <i>Small</i> by Maria Riss (1985)• <i>Taste</i> by Maria Riss (1985)• <i>Touch</i> by Maria Riss (1985)	Introduction to the systems of the human body and associated body parts <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Under Your Skin: Your Amazing Body</i> by Mick Manning (2007)• <i>Me and My Amazing Body</i> by Joan Swensen (1999)• <i>The Human Body</i> by Gallimard Jeunesse (2007)	Digestive and excretory systems <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>What Happens to a Hamburger</i> by Paul Showers (1985)• <i>The Digestive System</i> by Christine Taylor-Burke (2008)• <i>The Digestive System</i> by Rebecca L. Johnson (2006)• <i>The Digestive System</i> by Kristin Petrie (2007)	Circulatory system <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>The Heart</i> by Seymour Simon (2006)• <i>The Heart and Circulation</i> by Carol Ballard (2005)• <i>The Circulatory System</i> by Kristin Petrie (2007)• <i>The Amazing Circulatory System</i> by John Burstein (2009)

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Components of a Domain Unit



Each *Domain Unit*:

- stays on topic for 2 – 3 weeks.
- includes a *different* Read-Aloud about the domain topic each day.
- builds upon the language and concepts presented in prior domains.
- includes Read-Aloud texts that increase in complexity as the unit progresses.

Listening and Learning Lessons



The Read-Aloud (35/40 minutes)

Introducing the Read-Aloud (10 min)

Presenting the Read-Aloud (10/15 min)

Discussing the Read-Aloud (15 min)

- Comprehension Questions (10 min)


- Word Work (5 min)

Extension Activities (15/20 min)

These can be conducted later during the same day.

Overview of Assessments



- Individual student performance can be assessed by observation of student responses during classroom activities and/or completion of workbook pages.
- Opportunities for such assessment are noted in both the *Skills* and *Listening and Learning* Teacher Guides with a .
- A score of 10 indicates excellent performance and a 0 indicates very poor performance.
- Tens Scores can be recorded on a chart like the one below.
- It's easy to see which students need extra help.

Tens Recording Chart

Use the following grid to record your Tens scores. Refer to page xv for the Tens Conversion Chart.

Lesson/Activity Number

	24/II	24/III	24/IV	24/V	25/III	25/IV	25/V	26/II	26/III	26/IV	26/V	26/VI	27/III
Rachel W.	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	1		2			1
Juliane M.		8	9		10	9				10		10	
Rachael S.			5	6	7	8			9	8			
Eria K.		9	8		8	6			7	6			7

Rachel needs extra help.

Reading to Learn: The 6 Shifts



Balance of Informational and Literary Texts



Knowledge in the Disciplines



Staircase of Complexity



Text-Based Answers



Writing from Sources



Academic Vocabulary

I. Why Listening and Learning?



Students HEAR read aloud a balance of informational and fictional texts



Cross-curricular instruction with domain-specific texts on science, history, & the arts read aloud



Read-Aloud text complexity (L&L)
Phonemic & syntactic complexity (SKILLS)



Oral conversations around a common text



Drawing and dictating, leading to short written works with increasing details.



Oral exposure, through Read-Alouds to academic and domain-specific vocabulary

PLUS explicit, sequential, phonics instruction that begins orally

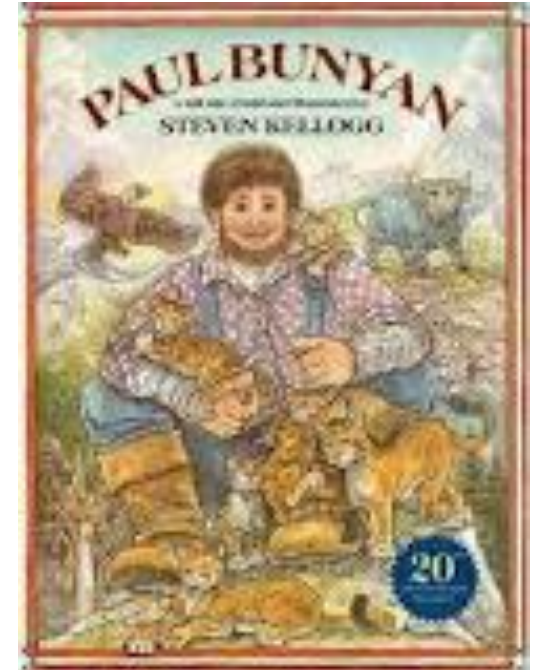
Introducing the Read-Aloud



- Help students **transition**
- Set a **purpose**
- Activate **background knowledge**
- Preview **domain vocabulary**

Presenting the Read-Aloud

- Read the book as a **performance**: with expression, character voices, variation of tone and volume.
- Model **fluency**.
- Read at an **even pace** to allow students time to form mental pictures in their minds.
- Model **appreciation** and **joy** for reading.



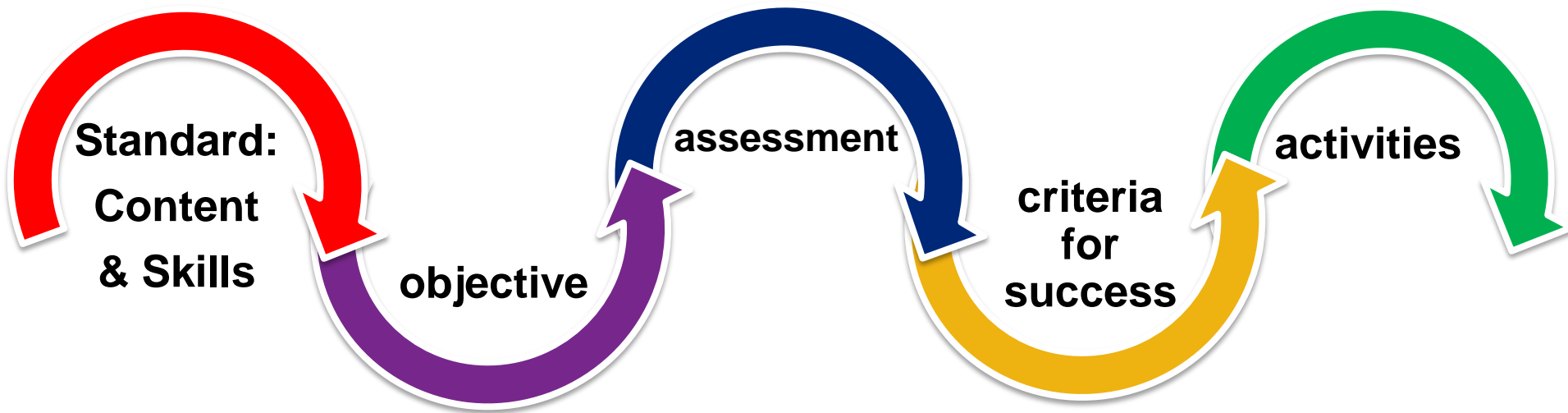
Pausing to Interact



- Plan and ask **focusing & extending** questions that are **text-dependent**; provide **cues**;
- **Pause briefly**: Interact, Invite, & Refocus;
- Call for **correct** language, **complete** sentences, definitions, elaboration, **evidence** from text, or use of domain vocabulary;
- Use **visuals** to explain concepts;
- Highlight **key vocabulary** (tier 2/3) for discussion.

Shifts 2, 4, & 6

Aligning Lesson Components



Extensions



Follow-up Activities:

- Completed **later in the day** (after Language Arts block)
- Last approximately **twenty minutes**
- Designed to reinforce **language** and domain **vocabulary**
- May make **cross-curricular connections**

K-2 Curriculum:

- Recommended Sequence
- Common Core Knowledge Posting Timeline
- List of Trade Books by Grade Level and Domain
- Domain Lessons and Materials

Common Core State Standards and Resources