



New K-6 curriculum

English language arts and literature

Overview

English language arts and literature is essential to foundational literacy and communication skills. It prepares students for ongoing learning as they build successful and fulfilling lives and make meaningful contributions to their communities and the world.

Students will learn about historical aspects and contemporary applications of the English language through reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and representing in order to communicate effectively in a variety of situations. By exploring a wide variety of texts from both local and global communities, students build empathy, broaden perspectives, and expand worldviews. Students think critically about ideas and information and explore creative expression individually and with others.

From draft to new curriculum – content update summary

What we heard

We listened to all feedback from classroom piloting and engagement activities and heard these common concerns across all draft K-6 subjects:

- Load
 - some content is too heavy within a subject, grade, or learning outcome
- Age-inappropriateness
 - some knowledge, understandings, and skill/procedures need to be better aligned with students' developmental level in a specific grade
 - more pre-requisite learning is needed in some grades to support the knowledge, understandings, and skills/procedures
- Wording clarity
 - clearer expectations and verb choice are needed in some content for students to achieve learning outcomes
 - clearer descriptions are needed for some knowledge, understandings, or skills/procedures
- First Nations, Métis, and Inuit content
 - additional content is needed to support First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives
 - some content needs to represent First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives and contributions more authentically

The feedback on draft K-6 English Language Arts and Literature content suggested updates to provide:

- more focus on reading for enjoyment and creative writing
- additional opportunities for students to use higher-level thinking verbs such as analyze, reflect, and create
- more digital literacy

What we updated

In April 2022, we finalized new K-6 English Language Arts and Literature curriculum by updating the draft curriculum from March 2021. In addition to making changes that reflect engagement and piloting feedback, we also aligned the new curriculum with top-performing jurisdictions, both within Canada and internationally, as well as those with knowledge-rich curriculums.

We made the following content updates:

- **Load:** Refined examples and redistributed content across multiple grades while considering age-appropriateness.
- **Age-appropriateness:** Shifted content between K-6 grades or into grades 7-12.
- **Wording clarity:** Analyzed and aligned verbs in learning outcomes to Bloom's Taxonomy to ensure the higher-level verbs are used in all K-6 grades, and/or edited for clear and correct language use.
- **First Nations, Métis, and Inuit content:** Made updates based on feedback from stakeholder groups and jurisdictional scans.
- **Reading for enjoyment:** Added knowledge, understandings and skills/procedures across K-6 grades.
- **Creative and critical thinking:** Strengthened verbs in learning outcomes and added knowledge, understandings and skills/procedures across K-6 grades to support connections between creativity and effective communication, or critical thinking and interpretation of texts.
- **Digital literacy:** Added or revised knowledge, understandings, skills/procedures to strengthen content related to text creators' responsibilities; evaluating information sources; and ethically creating, using and storing information.

Current and new curriculum comparison

The following table shows how elements in the current K-6 English language arts and literature curriculum, published in 2000, compare to the new curriculum. The comparisons provide examples and do not represent all the changes that were made.

	Current curriculum (2000) Examples	New curriculum (April 2022) Examples
Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no focus on works of literature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities are provided for students to study a wide variety of texts from many communities, cultures, and perspectives.
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing is not addressed in a clear, organized progression. • Grammar, spelling, and punctuation conventions are not identified in detail. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students develop writing skills in an organized, orderly way to effectively express ideas and information in a variety of forms. • There are clear expectations for students to learn grammar, spelling, and punctuation across all grades.
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a limited focus on reading fluency. • Reading comprehension strategies are not presented in a clear progression. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are clear expectations for students to develop accurate, automatic, and expressive reading skills in all grades. • Reading comprehension strategies follow a clear progression to enable students to understand information and ideas.
Oral communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral language is generally addressed through listening and speaking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are clear expectations for students to develop oral language skills by listening, speaking, delivering speeches, presenting, and collaborating.

	Current curriculum (2000) Examples	New curriculum (April 2022) Examples
Phonological awareness <i>The ability to identify and manipulate sounds in oral language</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is little focus on students learning to identify and manipulate sounds when speaking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a strong emphasis on phonological awareness from Kindergarten to Grade 2, and this is applied to reading and writing in later grades.
Phonics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning the relationships between sounds and letters (phonics) happens in a general way through reading. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are clear expectations for students to learn phonics from Kindergarten to Grade 3 then apply this learning to reading and writing in later grades.
Vocabulary and morphology <i>The study of words and their parts, such as prefixes, suffixes, and base words</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary and morphology are generally addressed through word analysis and comprehension. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are clear expectations for students to build their knowledge of vocabulary and word parts (morphology) from grade to grade.
Text form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The term text is not clearly defined. • General references are included to the forms, structures, and formats used to communicate information and ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The term text is clearly defined to be more inclusive and diverse and to support digital and non-digital learning. It includes information and ideas provided in books, reports, websites, media, diagrams, pictures, oral stories, and more. • Clear, detailed learning progressions that focus on text forms and structures are included, supporting reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and representing information and ideas digitally and non-digitally.

Snapshot by grade

In new K-6 English language arts and literature, students will learn about reading fluency and comprehension, writing conventions and form, and oral language.

Kindergarten

- Develop listening and speaking skills by sharing ideas, stories, and poems.
- Recognize and write some letters and words.
- Share understandings of ideas and information about people, places, or things that are real or imaginary.
- Express ideas and information creatively.
- Contribute to discussions by asking questions and speaking in sentences that contain complete ideas.
- Copy words to become familiar with how words are spelled.

Grade 1

- Speak about experiences and information using appropriate vocabulary, volume, and speed.
- Retell the main idea, characters, and details in a story or poem.
- Show understandings of letter-sound relationships and automatic recognition of words.
- Combine ideas in logical sequences to speak and write in complete sentences.
- Begin sentences with a capital letter, and end them with a period, a question mark, or an exclamation mark.
- Organize ideas to create stories and poems or to record factual information.

Grade 2

- Adjust listening and speaking to communicate clearly and to develop positive relationships.
- Make connections between letters and the sounds they represent to read fluently and spell words correctly.
- Use a variety of reading strategies, including altering speed, rereading, and making predictions, to understand the message in a story or an informational text.
- Ask and answer questions to clarify information.
- Create imaginative representations or dramatizations of stories that include characters, setting, and plot.
- Clarify written ideas and information through use of appropriate vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation.

Grade 3

- Explore how oral traditions show respect for traditional shared knowledge.
- Use eye contact, posture, gestures, and movements to enhance communication.
- Read complex words, phrases, and passages fluently and with expression.
- Relate personal experiences to interactions with people or information in books, poems, or plays.
- Apply writing strategies to create texts that draw upon a variety of sources of inspiration.
- Demonstrate grammar, spelling, and punctuation that clarify written communication.
- Identify how a variety of texts can communicate ideas and information.

Grade 4

- Demonstrate listening and speaking that build relationships and understanding.
- Demonstrate appropriate emphasis on words, pausing, phrasing, and intonation that reflect comprehension of text.
- Examine and apply strategies that support text comprehension.
- Create a variety of written texts to share information and develop personal expression.
- Access, share, and store information ethically in a variety of digital or non-digital forms.
- Examine and apply grammar, spelling, and punctuation to develop concise written communication.
- Identify the purpose, form, and structure of a variety of texts and how they can communicate ideas and information.

Grade 5

- Engage in collaborative dialogue to share ideas, solve problems, and make decisions.
- Apply knowledge of vocabulary to reading and writing.
- Evaluate ideas and information to comprehend texts.
- Analyze and reflect on ways to write effectively for different audiences and purposes.
- Experiment with and apply grammar, spelling, and punctuation to develop precise written communication.
- Examine how text genres, forms, and structures support and enhance communication in a variety of digital or non-digital formats.

Grade 6

- Offer relevant information and logical reasoning to enhance collaborative dialogue.
- Analyze texts and interpret contexts to build comprehension.
- Refine and adjust writing through creative and critical thinking to reflect individuality and skills.
- Apply grammar, spelling, and punctuation accurately and skillfully in written communication.
- Analyze how a variety of texts are organized and can influence understandings of ourselves, other people, and the world.