

# **The Common Core State Standards**

*Speaking and Listening*

# *Speaking and Listening 6–8*

Source:  
Common Core  
State Standards

The grades 6–12 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 CCR anchor standards by number. The CCR and grade-specific standards are necessary complements—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity—that together define the skills and understandings that all students must demonstrate.

## **Comprehension and Collaboration**

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1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

## **Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas**

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4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.
6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

## **Note on Range and Content of Student Speaking and Listening**

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To become college and career ready, students must have ample opportunities to take part in a variety of rich, structured conversations—as part of a whole class, in small groups, and with a partner—built around important content in various domains. They must be able to contribute appropriately to these conversations, to make comparisons and contrasts, and to analyze and synthesize a multitude of ideas in accordance with the standards of evidence appropriate to a particular discipline. Whatever their intended major or profession, high school graduates will depend heavily on their ability to listen attentively to others so that they are able to build on others' meritorious ideas while expressing their own clearly and persuasively. New technologies have broadened and expanded the role that speaking and listening play in acquiring and sharing knowledge and have tightened their link to other forms of communication. The Internet has accelerated the speed at which connections between speaking, listening, reading, and writing can be made, requiring that students be ready to use these modalities nearly simultaneously. Technology itself is changing quickly, creating a new urgency for students to be adaptable in response to change.

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## College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for

# *Speaking and Listening*

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The College and Career Readiness (CCR) anchor standards are the same for all middle and high school students, regardless of subject area or grade level. What varies is the sophistication of the speaking and listening they must do at subsequent grade levels in each disciplinary domain. The fundamental speaking skills should not change as students advance; rather, the level at which they learn and can perform those skills should increase in complexity as students move from one grade to the next.

### **Comprehension and Collaboration**

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Discussion in one form or another is a vital, integral part of learning and classroom culture. To ensure students contribute substance, they are expected to read, write, or investigate as directed so they come to class ready to engage in the discussion of that topic or text with peers or the whole class. During these discussions, they learn to acknowledge and respond to others' ideas and incorporate those ideas, as well as others they discover through their research, as

evidence to support their conclusions or claims. Details and evidence in various forms and from different sources is first evaluated, then selected as needed by the students to use in their presentations. When listening to others speak, students learn to listen for key details and qualities to evaluate the perspective, logic, evidence, and use of rhetoric in their presentation or speech.

### **Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas**

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When giving a presentation, students carefully select which details and evidence to use when supporting their ideas or findings, organizing this information in a clear, concise manner that ensures the audience understands. To that end, students focus on how to best organize and develop their ideas

and supporting evidence according to their purpose, audience, occasion, and appointed task. When appropriate, they use digital media to enhance, amplify, or otherwise improve their presentation, adapting their language and delivery as needed to the different contexts, tasks, or audiences.

**Speaking and Listening 1:** Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

### English Language Arts/History, Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects

**6** 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.

- a. 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.
- b. Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
- c. Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.
- d. Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.

**7** 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.

- a. 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.
- b. Follow rules for collegial discussions, **track progress toward** specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
- c. **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.**
- d. **Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.**

**8** 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.

- a. 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.
- b. Follow rules for collegial discussions **and decision-making**, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
- c. Pose questions that **connect the ideas of several speakers** and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant **evidence, observations, and ideas**.
- d. Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, **qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented**.

*Note:* Note that no distinction is made between the speaking and listening standards for English Language Arts, Social Studies, History, Science, and other technical subjects.

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## Common Core Speaking and Listening Standard 1

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### What the **Student** Does

#### English Language Arts/History, Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects

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**6 Gist:** Participate in different discussions (pairs, groups, full-class) with a range of peers about grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, adding to others' ideas while contributing their own. Arriving at these discussions prepared to discuss what they read or studied, students draw from what they learned, citing evidence in those texts during the discussion. As they participate and collaborate, students make goals, meet deadlines, and follow all guidelines for such academic discussions and their role in them. Also, when discussing or collaborating with others, students ask and answer questions, elaborating in some detail about how their remarks relate to the topic, text, or issue the class is studying. Finally, students restate and show they understand the different points of view raised by reflecting on and paraphrasing the most important ideas discussed.

- What topic, text, or issue is being discussed and what questions can you contribute?
- How can you best prepare to discuss this text, topic, or issue?
- What are the rules and roles for this discussion or collaboration?

**7 Gist:** Participate in different discussions (pairs, groups, full-class) with a range of peers about grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, adding to others' ideas while contributing their own. Arriving at these discussions prepared to discuss what they read or researched, students draw from what they learned, citing evidence in those texts during the discussion. As they participate and collaborate, students monitor progress on goals and deadlines, following all guidelines for such academic discussions and their role in them. Also, when discussing or collaborating with others, students ask and respond to others' remarks by making cogent observations that help the discussion regain its focus. Finally, students recognize and respond to new ideas presented by others, adjusting their own views as needed.

- What topic, text, or issue is being discussed and what questions can you contribute?
- What rules and roles are central to this discussion or collaboration?
- What do you learn, and how does it require you to change your position or perspective?

**8 Gist:** Participate in different discussions (pairs, groups, full-class) with a range of peers about grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, adding to others' ideas while contributing their own. Arriving at these discussions prepared to discuss what they have read or studied, students draw from what they learned, citing evidence in those texts during the discussion. As they participate and collaborate, students make goals, meet deadlines, and follow all guidelines for such academic discussions and their role in them. Also, when discussing or collaborating with others, students ask and answer questions that connect different speakers' ideas, bringing in relevant evidence, insights, and ideas in response to others' observations and claims. Finally, students restate and show they understand the different points of view by defending or clarifying their own views in response to the evidence provided.

- What topic, text, or issue is being discussed and what questions can you contribute?
- What rules and roles apply to this discussion, collaboration, or decision?
- What evidence, observations, or ideas are most important to consider in the discussion?

## Common Core Speaking and Listening Standard 1

### What the **Teacher** Does

#### **To prepare and help students to participate in conversations, do the following:**

- Send them home with specific questions to investigate—through research, reading, or just reflection—prior to a subsequent discussion the following day about that text or topic.
- Model for the students how to participate in the specific conversation for which you want to prepare them; this may involve sitting with one or more students and demonstrating how, for example, to discuss or respond to classmates' writing.
- Take them to the library or the lab to investigate online resources prior to a guest speaker; the goal of such inquiry should be specific questions they can pose to the guest the next day.
- Provide students with sentence templates that provide them with the language needed to enter the discussion (e.g., *I agree with what Maria said about \_\_\_\_, but disagree that \_\_\_\_*), or generate with them the sorts of questions they should ask when discussing a particular text or topic.
- Review the conventions, rules, roles, or responsibilities that apply to a specialized discussion strategy (e.g., literature circles, Socratic dialogue, or great books discussion).
- Track participation by keeping a record of the exchange using visual codes that indicate who initiates, responds, or extends; use this to assess and provide feedback for students.

#### **To have students participate in a range of collaborations with diverse partners, do the following:**

- Create the culture of respect for other views and ideas within the class that is necessary for students to collaborate with others, articulating for the class (verbally, on handouts, and on posters) the norms when working with or responding to others.
- Investigate alternative venues such as video conferencing or chat for such collaboration with classmates, community members, or people from other countries.
- Use various strategies that require students to work with different people in various contexts and configurations

to solve problems, develop ideas, or improve each other's work.

#### **To have students build on others' ideas and effectively express their own, do the following:**

- Try, when establishing norms for class discussion early on, requiring students first to respond to other students' comments before they can offer a new one of their own.
- Direct students to synthesize the different perspectives so far by first writing and then sharing these synthesis statements about what everyone is actually saying.
- Post a list of follow-up questions they can use when asking classmates (or the teacher) to say more about an idea or comment they made in the course of the discussion; as the year passes, these can become more specific, such as challenging another speaker's reasoning or the validity of the evidence.

#### **To have students pose questions that elicit elaboration and connect others' ideas, do the following:**

- Introduce the idea of "follow-up" or "clarification" questions as ways to include or respond to other people's ideas, providing models that show what they are; explain how, when, and why to use them in small or full class discussions.
- List on the board or screen the ideas or comments made by different students during the discussion of a topic; emphasize the importance of listening to the class, asking them to hear in these different comments key connections they can frame in a question that shows they listened and heard the "idea behind the ideas" that they think is the real heart of the conversation about a text or topic.

#### **To help your English Language Learners, try this one thing:**

- Have the full class first write about a text or topic they will subsequently discuss together or in small groups; allow students to read what they wrote if they are not comfortable speaking extemporaneously in class or small groups.



## Common Core Speaking and Listening Standard 1

### Academic Vocabulary: Key Words and Phrases

**Acknowledge new information expressed by others:** During academic discussions, which are intended to generate new ideas and understandings about a topic or a text, students will inevitably encounter other views or new information that conflicts with their understanding, interpretation, or position.

**Building on others' ideas:** When one student makes a comment or observation, students “build on” it by adding connections and other insights that often begin with phrases such as “Picking up on what Martha just said, I noticed . . .” or “Marco made a good point about . . .”

**Clearly:** This means using the language appropriate to the discipline, topic, or text in ways that ensure precision, clarity, and accuracy.

**Collegial discussions:** This refers to discussing ideas, some of them contentious, with mutual respect for your colleagues even if you do not agree.

**Diverse partners (and perspectives):** This refers to people and ideas from different backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives than students' own; the idea is that one must know how and be able to converse with all people.

**Explicitly draw on that preparation:** This means to make use of the notes, ideas, and any materials the student prepared specifically for the discussion; this shows how thoroughly the student prepared and how well they anticipated the demands and directions of the discussion.

**Expressing:** This refers to articulating or conveying students' ideas instead of merely parroting back classmates' or the author's ideas.

**Ideas that bring the discussion back on topic:** Discussions inevitably raise new questions or

connections that can easily lead the group away from the appointed topic or task; the group in general and those with such roles are responsible for finding ideas or questions that can be used to steer the conversation back on track.

**Individual roles:** This refers to the specific role students play or cultivate for themselves in academic discussions.

**Pose questions:** To “pose” is to ask; students ask each other or the teacher questions about the text, task, or topic during a discussion.

**Qualify or justify their views in light of the evidence:** When one encounters views or information that conflict with one's own, that person has to explain why they think as they do about a subject or text and, when necessary, justify their view or interpretation with evidence from the text or some other reliable source.

**Questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others' ideas:** During a legitimate, healthy conversation, all are responsible for including other views and making all in the group feel involved; sometimes a member is reluctant to join in, at which point the group or an appointed discussion leader should pose questions that help such people to join in and share or otherwise expand on their ideas.

**Relevant observations:** Any comments or questions that distract the group from the task or topic run the risk of undermining the discussion; though observations and ideas may seem off-topic, they are worth including so long as they are relevant and advance the discussion.

**Warranted:** This means when needed, appropriate, or otherwise called for; it is different from *warrant*, which is a rhetorical term that alerts readers to your assumptions.

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**Speaking and Listening 2:** Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

### English Language Arts/History, Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects

- 6** Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.
  
- 7** Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study.
  
- 8** Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.

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## Common Core Speaking and Listening Standard 2

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### What the **Student** Does

#### English Language Arts/History, Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects

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**6 Gist:** Incorporate and assess the quality of information conveyed in different media and formats (e.g., visual, audio, oral, quantitative, and mixed media), describing how this information, regardless of its media or format, supports and adds to our understanding of the text, topic, or issue being studied.

- What is the topic of the presentation?
- What different media or formats are appropriate to this text, task, topic, or purpose?
- What questions should you ask to interpret or explain the meaning and importance of this content?

**7 Gist:** Break down the main ideas and their supporting details to reveal their relationship as presented in different media and formats (e.g., visual, oral, quantitative), describing how these ideas improve others' understanding of a topic, text, or issue being studied.

- What are the topic, main ideas, and supporting details of the presentation?
- What is the relationship between and contribution of these main ideas and supporting details?
- How do the ideas included in the presentation clarify the topic, text, or idea?

**8 Gist:** Determine and examine the objective of all information delivered in different media and formats (e.g., visual, oral, and quantitative), examining the motivations (e.g., social, commercial, political) that inform the presentation.

- What is the topic and purpose of the presentation?
- What different media or formats are appropriate to this text, task, topic, or purpose?
- What is the speaker or presenter's motivation and how is he or she going about achieving it?

## Common Core Speaking and Listening Standard 2

### What the **Teacher** Does

#### **To have students integrate information presented in diverse formats and media, do the following:**

- Train students to look and listen for information presented through discussions, formal presentations, and online forums such as TED Talks; instruct students in how to best capture—by recording, taking notes, or deciding they would be better off just listening—the key information from a presentation.
- Play a recorded presentation (e.g., a commencement address, RSA Animate Talk, or @Google Talk) twice, the first time to get the gist and the second time, now that they know what to look and listen for, to take notes as they watch.

#### **To have students analyze the purpose of presentations in diverse formats and media, do the following:**

- Introduce students to the different purposes common to presenters of the sort you are having them watch or create: to persuade, to entertain, or to inform.
- Have students list any elements, features, or other aspects of the media or format they want to argue are used to achieve the presenter's purpose; on a more general level, students can list the different media and formats themselves that the presenter uses to achieve the purpose, and then further their analysis by explaining why the presenter chose that media or format for this purpose.

#### **To have students interpret information presented in diverse media and formats, do the following:**

- Begin by clarifying for students what it means to interpret another's text in whatever form or media; this means explaining to them such ideas as denotative and connotative meaning since one can interpret ideas or information at the denotative or literal level and miss entirely the deeper, connotative level of the text.
- Have students paraphrase the different texts they hear, view, or read, working in groups to discuss what others

think these texts say and resolving discrepancies as they arise through discussion.

#### **To have students analyze the main ideas and supporting details, do the following:**

- Provide students with a graphic organizer that asks them to identify the main idea and explain why they think that is the main idea; then sort those supporting details into appropriate categories relative to the main ideas.
- Outline some portion of a text to show how ideas relate to each other; this is often called a “backward outline” since it is being created to analyze the relationship between main and supporting ideas instead of to create such a presentation.

#### **To have students explain how the ideas presented clarify a topic, text, or issue, do the following:**

- Model for students by thinking aloud as you view, listen to, or read a text; this means pausing the video, audio, or reading to indicate to students what you notice—a term, some feature, a phrase—and how it works to clarify the topic, text, or issue you are examining.
- Get ahold of a printed version of the presentation text so students can manipulate it, ideally on a computer; once you are all set up, have students rearrange the elements of the text spatially (called *parsing*) to represent and reveal the relationship between ideas and how they function to clarify.

#### **To help your English Language Learners, try this one thing:**

- Play any audio, video, or mixed media texts multiple times, discussing out loud for these students and the whole class your observations about how different formats and media are being used; then ask them to apply these ideas about analyzing the text to some other text they are studying. For ELLs, offer the online link to the audio and video versions of the text so they can replay it multiple times, thereby, improving their auditory comprehension.



## Common Core Speaking and Listening Standard 2

### Academic Vocabulary: Key Words and Phrases

**Analyze the main ideas and supporting details:** It is asking students to break down the different elements to reveal the main ideas and their relationship to the supporting details; this might include examining how structures, grammar, syntax, or more media-based features serve to emphasize the main or supporting ideas in the text you are studying.

**Evaluate the motives behind the presentation:** Anyone presenting to us has some motivation, be it to persuade, explain, or entertain; at times, such motives can be masked, the evaluator mistaking an attempt to explain for an effort to persuade, thus making it crucial to view the motives in context.

**Evaluate:** This means to determine the quality, value, use, or importance of data, details, or other forms of information one might include in one's presentation as evidence to support a position.

**Explain how it contributes to a topic:** This refers specifically to the way presenters and others can use diverse media and other formats when presenting information; in choosing to use other formats, such as a visual explanation, one necessarily contributes more (e.g., more clarity, structure, aesthetic impact, persuasion, or emotion).

**Format:** This is included as part of a speech or presentation charts, slides, graphics, or images, as well as multiple media, all of which allow the speaker to represent their ideas more fully and effectively.

**Information presented in diverse media and formats:** The content of presentations and speeches these days comes in many different modes, including still and video images, colors, and shapes, as well as more quantitative techniques such as charts, tables, and graphs.

**Integrate:** This means to join the different sources or data from them into one cohesive body of evidence used to support one's claims about what a speaker or author said or meant about a topic.

**Interpret:** Though related, to *interpret* is not the same thing as to *translate*, which calls for one to move something in one language or sign system into another; instead, to interpret means to make sense of what something is, does, or means. It is necessarily subjective, though more reliable interpretations will be based on reasonable judgments and informed opinions.

**Media:** This includes all the different forms your ideas and information, evidence, and data come in: print, audio, video, photograph; but also, mixed media, such as websites or presentation slides with embedded digital imagery (still photographs, videos, and animations) and audio.

**The motives (e.g., social, commercial, or political):** A *social* motive would mean to do something for the good of the society or community of which one is a part; a *commercial* motive, however, would mean one was driven to sell, to earn, or to promote a service, product, or business.

**Visually, quantitatively, orally:** This refers to images, video, art, or graphics of any other sort intended to convey the ideas the speaker wants to communicate; measurable means numerical, quantifiable data that is displayed or formatted so as to suit the speaker's purpose; spoken means whether in front of a live audience or for an anonymous listener viewing a slide show online with a voice-over instead.

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