



Let Peace Begin: Elevating Teaching & Learning Through the Florida B.E.S.T. ELA Standards

ARCHDIOCESE OF MIAMI
Professional Learning Days
June 4-5, 2026



Let Peace Begin

A Prayer for Our Work Together



Loving God,
You are the source of all wisdom and peace.
As we gather to implement the Florida B.E.S.T.
ELA Standards, open our hearts and minds
to Your guidance.

Give us clarity of purpose,
strength in our work, and compassion
for every learner we serve.
May our words, our teaching, and our actions
reflect Your love
and build classrooms where peace can grow.

Help us nurture hearts, minds,
and a love of learning
that leads to excellence
and lasting impact.

May our efforts be a reflection of You,
and may peace begin with us.
Amen.



"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

Matthew 5:9

Agenda

Arrival, Breakfast, Fellowship	8:15am
Welcome, Prayer, Introductions	8:30am
Transitioning to FL B.E.S.T.	8:30am
Transition to breakout sessions	8:55am
Breakout Sessions: Catapult Learning	9:05am
Adjourn	11:30am

Thank you to the ADOM ELA Standards Adoption Committee 2025/26:

Aileen Amador, 5th Grade ELA Teacher | St. Timothy Catholic School

Kathy Balboa, Curriculum Specialist | St. Michael the Archangel Catholic School

Christie Barbeite, Assistant Principal | Mother of Christ Catholic School

Rebecca Bautista, EdD, Principal | CAVA

Elci Gonzalez, 8th Grade ELA Teacher | St. Louis Covenant

Silvia Kenna, Curriculum Specialist | Blessed Sacrament Catholic School

Joana Ledo, ELA Teacher | Mother of Our Redeemer Catholic School

Karina Nunez, PK Director/Literacy Coach | St. Timothy Catholic School

Stephanie Paguaga, EdD, Principal | St. Lawrence Catholic School

Jillian Pegg, Curriculum Coordinator | Nativity Catholic School

Colleen Ramroth, Religion and Academic Coordinator | St. Jerome Catholic School

Carmen Rivera, ELA Teacher Grades 3-5 | St. Bernadette Catholic School

Laura Salinas, 4th Grade ELA Teacher | Nativity Catholic School

Elena Toyos, Assistant Principal | St. Mark Catholic School

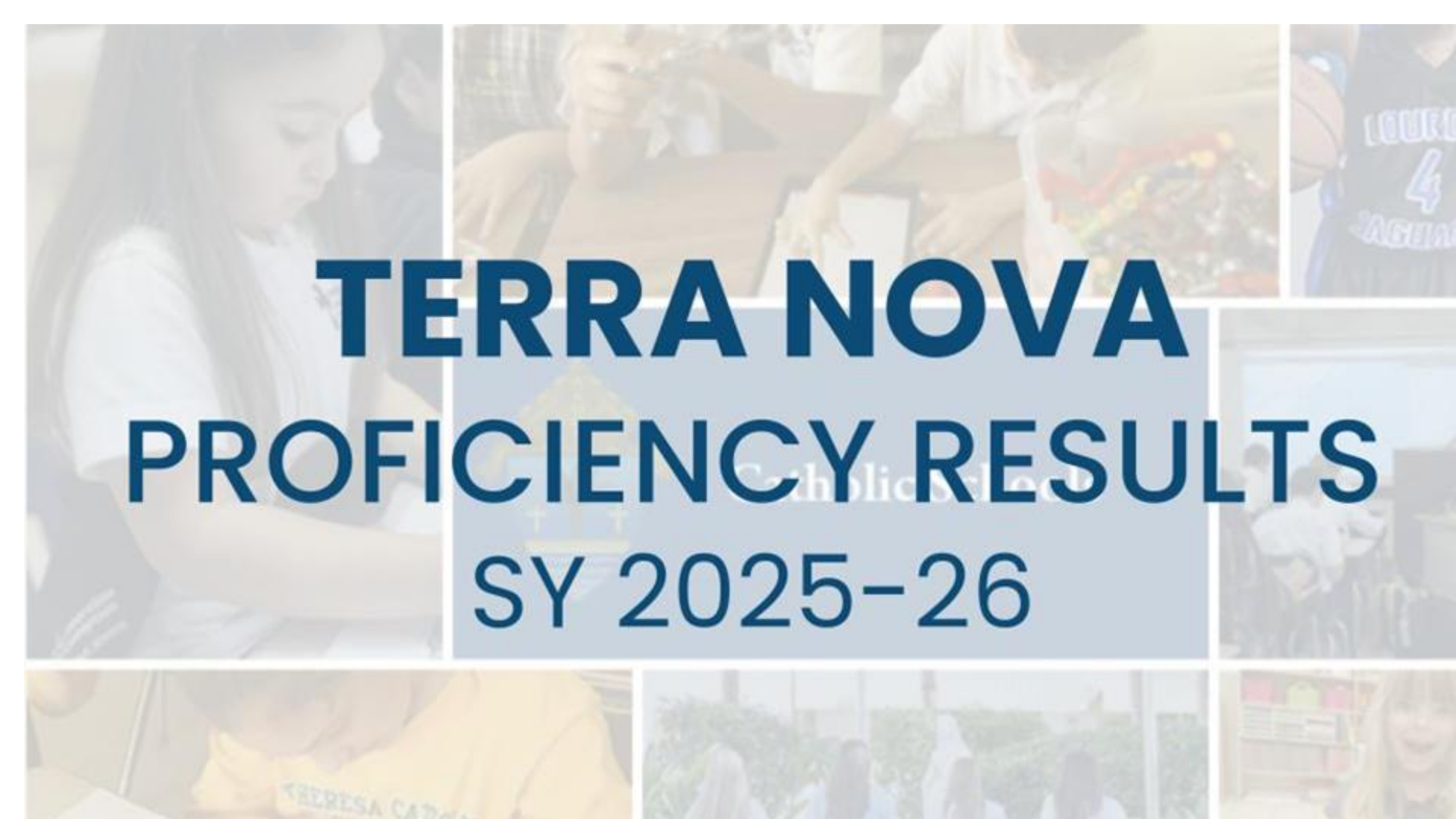
Elsie Valderrama, Assistant Principal, Curriculum & Instruction | St. John Neumann Catholic School

Barbie Perdomo, Early Childhood Specialist | Archdiocese of Miami

Dr. LaTonya White, Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning | Archdiocese of Miami

OVERVIEW OF THE ADOPTION PROCESS

- ADOM Priority 2025/26: Develop, revise or adopt new ELA standards for elementary schools.
- ELA Standards Adoption Committee
 - **Met in person and virtually to evaluate other state curriculum standards and frameworks.**
 - **Criteria: assessment alignment, rigor and coherence, SOR embedded, developmental appropriateness for elementary students.**
 - **Compared LAFS with FL B.E.S.T.**
 - **Recommended to and approval by Superintendent**
- Revised Curriculum Maps K-8th Grade
- Professional Learning Days
- Ongoing PL in ELA pedagogy during system-wide PD days 26/27 SY



TERRA NOVA

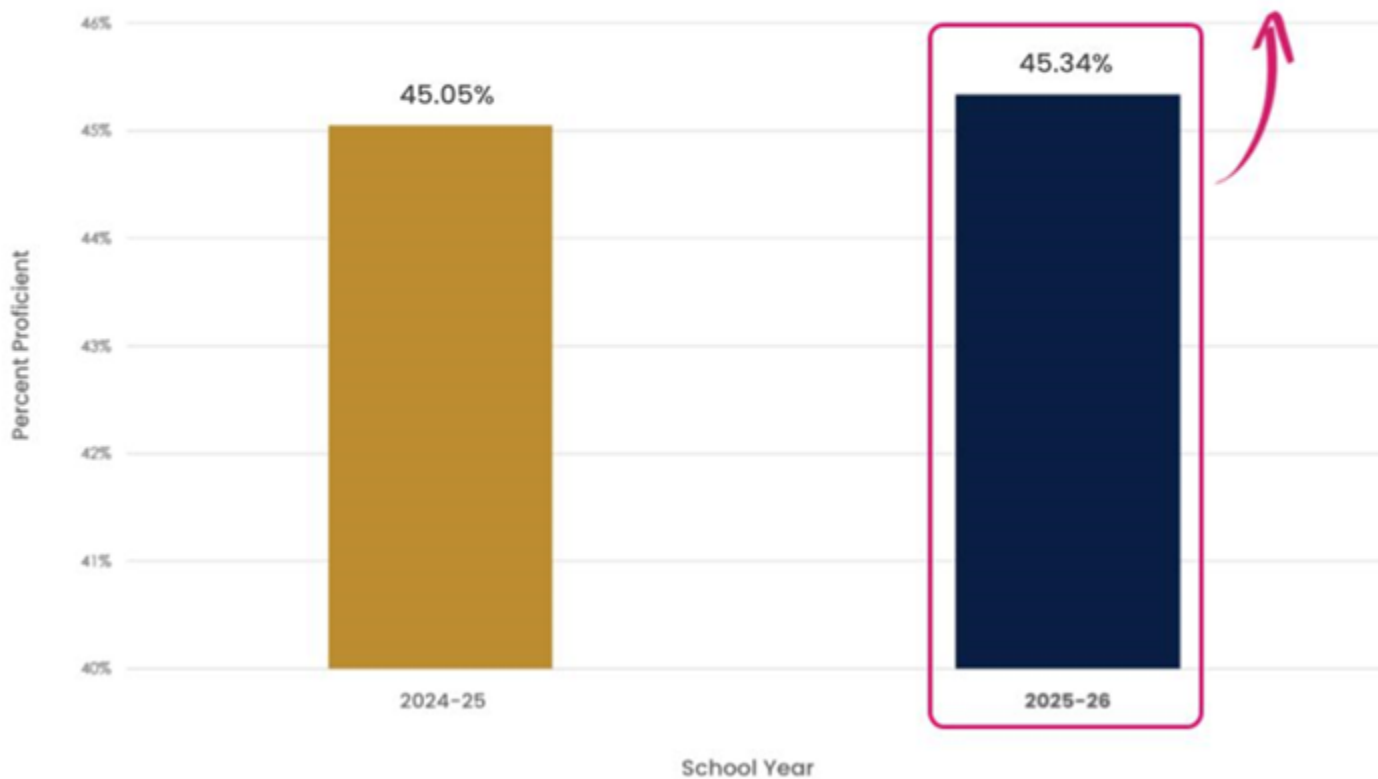
PROFICIENCY RESULTS

Catholic School

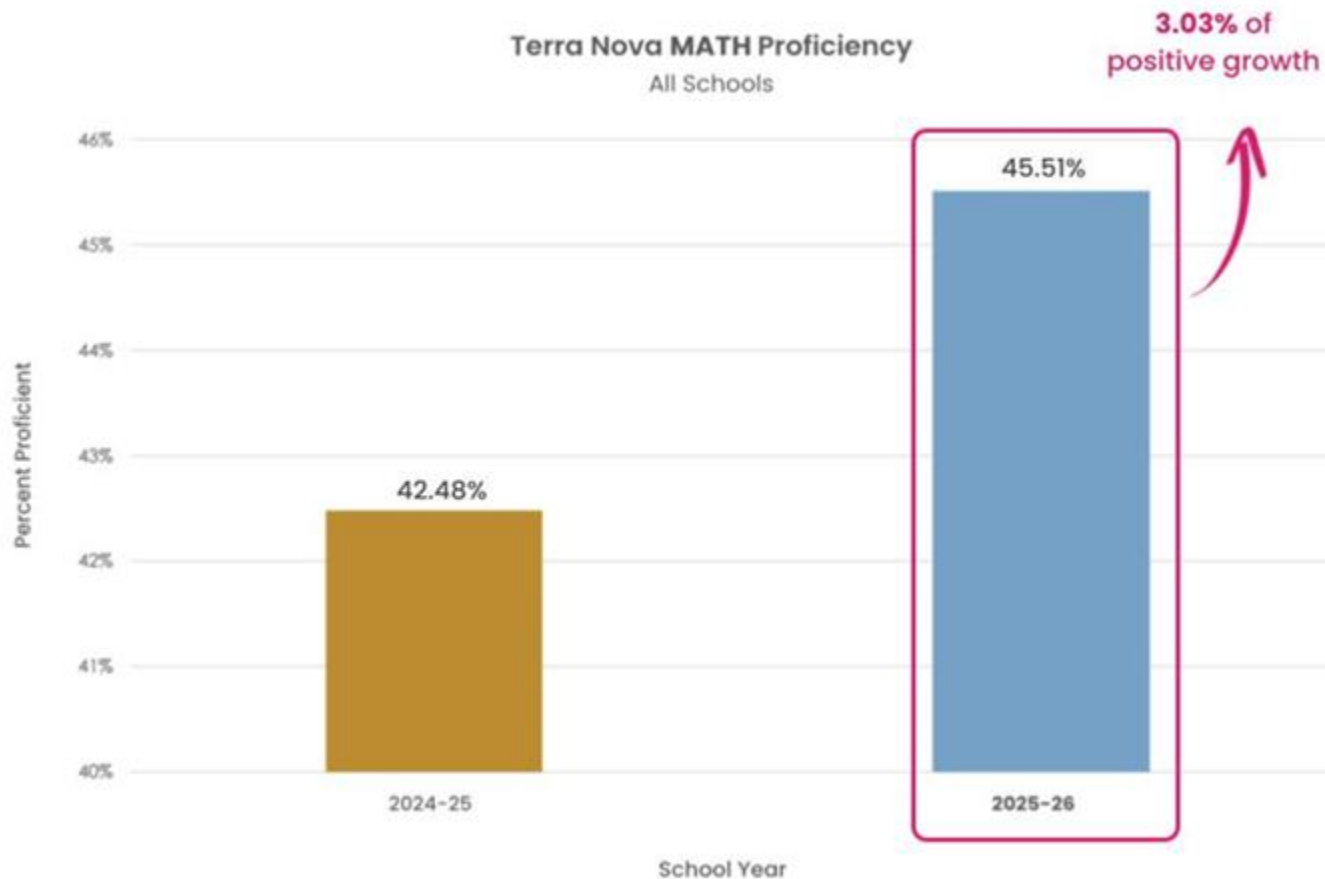
SY 2025-26

Terra Nova **READING** Proficiency

All Schools



Terra Nova MATH Proficiency All Schools





TERRA NOVA

CHANGE IN NCE RESULTS

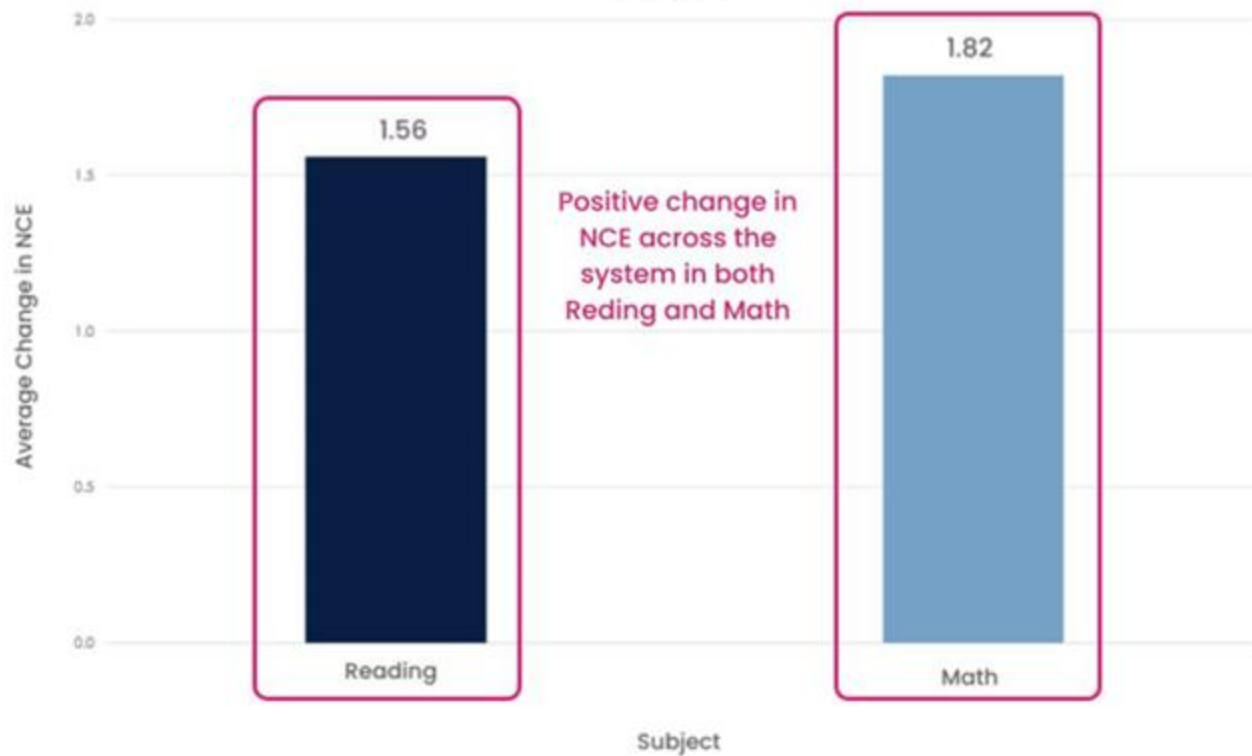
SY 2025-26

SAMPLE FOOTER TEXT

Terra Nova CHANGE IN NCE

SY 2025-26

All Schools



**Any positive change in NCE represents strong growth for the system*

B.E.S.T. ELA STANDARDS

B.E.S.T. ELA Standards Teacher Professional Development

Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking • Grades K-8 • 2026-2027

Understanding the B.E.S.T. Framework

Where we came from, what changed, and why it matters for your classroom.

The Four Pillars of Florida B.E.S.T. ELA

1

Foundational Phonics (K–2)

Science of Reading approach.
Systematic, explicit instruction in phonemic awareness and decoding.
Replaces three-cueing with direct sound-symbol mastery.

2

Reading Prose & Poetry

Focus on literary elements and **deep textual analysis**.
Students engage with high-quality literature and analyze author's craft and rhetorical choices.

3

Reading Informational Text

Emphasis on non-fiction and primary sources. Students build background knowledge through complex, **content-rich texts tied to historical context**.

4

Communication & Vocabulary

Morphological analysis using Greek and Latin roots. Embedded in complex texts. Extends to collaborative discussion and **formal presentation skills**.

Balancing early mechanical reading skills with high-level comprehension and vocabulary expansion.

Why The Shift from LAFS to B.E.S.T.

LAFS

- Based on Common Core
- Abstract, multi-layered standards
- Broad wording
- Federalized curriculum mandates
- Fragmented, repetitive skill sets

B.E.S.T. STANDARDS

- Streamlined, teacher-friendly language and benchmarks
- Focused more on mastery
- Clear grade-level expectations
- Classical, content-rich literacy focus
- Civic literacy as a core requirement
- Increased writing tied to reading
- Goal: Florida #1 in literacy by 2030

Florida replaced LAFS to reduce 'standard creep' and refocus on measurable literacy outcomes.

Understanding Benchmark Demands

How to read, interpret, and use the standards document in your daily planning.

What Is a Benchmark?

"The benchmarks for the standards are mastery goals that students are expected to attain by the end of the year. To build mastery, students will continue to review and apply earlier grade-level benchmarks and expectations. If skills are not mastered, students will be given instruction and practice opportunities to address skill gaps from previous grades."

— B.E.S.T. ELA Standards Document

- Benchmarks are END-OF-YEAR mastery goals
- Earlier benchmarks continue to be reviewed and applied in subsequent grades
- Skill gaps from prior grades should be addressed through reteaching

Understanding the ELA Coding Scheme Level

Every benchmark has a code that tells you exactly where it lives in the standards framework.

ELA.3.R.1.2

ELA

Subject Area
(English Language Arts)

3

Grade Level
(Grade 3)

R

Strand
(Reading)

1

Standard
(Standard 1)

2

Benchmark
(Benchmark 2)

Five Components of Benchmark Demands

Each benchmark in the standards document is supported by multiple layers of guidance:

1

Grade-Level Benchmark

The core skill students must master by year's end — written as a clear, measurable expectation.

2

Benchmark Clarifications

Specific guidance on how deeply and in what context the benchmark should be taught and assessed.

3

Vertical Progression

Shows how each benchmark builds across grades — essential for scaffolding and remediation.

4

Appendices

Provide supplementary guidance, text exemplars, and examples that bring benchmarks to life. These include recommended texts, scope and sequence for morphology and grammar instruction, and fluency measures.

5

Glossary

Consistent vocabulary used across all grades and benchmark language to ensure shared understanding.

Components 1 and 2 of Benchmark Demands

Each benchmark in the standards document is supported by multiple layers of guidance:

1

Grade-Level Benchmark

The core skill students must master by year's end — written as a clear, measurable expectation.

2

Benchmark Clarifications

Specific guidance on how deeply and in what context the benchmark should be taught and assessed.

ELA.3.R.3 Reading Across Genres

Interpreting Figurative Language

ELA.3.R.3.1: Identify and explain metaphors, personification, and hyperbole in text(s).

Benchmark Clarifications:

Clarification 1: In addition to the types of figurative language listed in this benchmark, students are still working with types from previous grades such as simile, alliteration, and idiom. Other examples can be used in instruction.

Clarification 2: See [Elementary Figurative Language](#).

Figurative Language		
Elementary Figurative Language		
<i>Figurative Language</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Example</i>
Alliteration	The repetition of usually initial consonant sounds in two or more neighboring words or syllables	Peter Piper picked peppers.
Hyperbole	Exaggerated statements or claims not meant to be taken literally	This backpack weighs a ton.
Idiom	An expression that cannot be understood from the meanings of its separate words but must be learned as a whole	Break a leg!
Imagery	Writing about objects, actions, and ideas in such a way that it appeals to our five physical senses	The fresh and juicy orange is very cold and sweet.
Metaphor	A word or phrase for one thing that is used to refer to another thing in order to show or suggest that they are similar	They have hearts of gold.
Onomatopoeia	The forming of a word (as "buzz" or "hiss") in imitation of a natural sound	Bum, whirl, thump, boom
Personification	Representing a thing or idea as a person in art or literature	The cupcake is calling my name.
Simile	A comparison of two unlike things, often introduced by like or as	The explanation was clear as mud.

Component 3 of Benchmark Demands

Each benchmark in the standards document is supported by multiple layers of guidance:

3

Vertical Progression

Shows how each benchmark builds across grades — essential for scaffolding and remediation

Spiraled Standards in a Vertical Progression	
For each standard in the reading, communication, and vocabulary strands, the benchmarks are listed starting from grade 12 and ending at kindergarten to assist with vertical planning. Since all content in kindergarten is new, the entire benchmark is bolded. Moving up from kindergarten, the bolded language shows the new concept added at that grade level. This chart can help with vertical planning within a district or school system. It also helps to provide a framework for teachers to enable scaffolds for students who may need remediation.	
Reading Standards	
Reading Prose and Poetry	
R.1.1 Literary Elements	
ELA.12.R.1.1	Evaluate how key elements enhance or add layers of meaning and/or style in a literary text and explain the functional significance of those elements in interpreting the text.
ELA.11.R.1.1	Evaluate how key elements enhance or add layers of meaning and/or style in a literary text.
ELA.10.R.1.1	Analyze how key elements enhance or add layers of meaning and/or style in a literary text.
ELA.9.R.1.1	Explain how key elements enhance or add layers of meaning and/or style in a literary text.
ELA.8.R.1.1	Analyze the interaction between character development, setting, and plot in a literary text.
ELA.7.R.1.1	Analyze the impact of setting on character development and plot in a literary text.
ELA.6.R.1.1	Analyze how the interaction between characters contributes to the development of a plot in a literary text.
ELA.5.R.1.1	Analyze how setting, events, conflict, and characterization contribute to the plot in a literary text.
ELA.4.R.1.1	Explain how setting, events, conflict, and character development contribute to the plot in a literary text.
ELA.3.R.1.1	Explain how one or more characters develop throughout the plot in a literary text.
ELA.2.R.1.1	Identify plot structure and describe main story elements in a literary text.
ELA.1.R.1.1	Identify and describe the main story elements in a story.
ELA.K.R.1.1	Describe the main character(s), setting, and important events in a story.
This benchmark is not present in kindergarten.	

Reading Across Genres	
R.3.1 Figurative Language	
ELA.12.R.3.1	Evaluate an author's use of figurative language.
ELA.11.R.3.1	Analyze the author's use of figurative language and explain examples of allegory.
ELA.10.R.3.1	Analyze how figurative language creates mood in text(s).
ELA.9.R.3.1	Explain how figurative language creates mood in text(s).
ELA.8.R.3.1	Analyze how figurative language contributes to meaning and explain examples of symbolism in text(s).
ELA.7.R.3.1	Analyze how figurative language contributes to tone and meaning and explain examples of allusions in text(s).
ELA.6.R.3.1	Explain how figurative language contributes to tone and meaning in text(s).
ELA.5.R.3.1	Analyze how figurative language contributes to meaning in text(s).
ELA.4.R.3.1	Explain how figurative language contributes to meaning in text(s).
ELA.3.R.3.1	Identify and explain metaphors, personification, and hyperbole in text(s).
ELA.2.R.3.1	Identify and explain similes, idioms, and alliteration in text(s).
ELA.1.R.3.1	Identify and explain descriptive words and phrases in text(s).
ELA.K.R.3.1	Identify and explain descriptive words in text(s).
R.3.2 Paraphrase and Summaries	
ELA.12.R.3.2	Paraphrase content from grade-level texts.
ELA.11.R.3.2	Paraphrase content from grade-level texts.
ELA.10.R.3.2	Paraphrase content from grade-level texts.
ELA.9.R.3.2	Paraphrase content from grade-level texts.
ELA.8.R.3.2	Paraphrase content from grade-level texts.
ELA.7.R.3.2	Paraphrase content from grade-level texts.
ELA.6.R.3.2	Paraphrase content from grade-level texts.
ELA.5.R.3.2	Summarize a text to enhance comprehension.
a. Include plot and theme for a literary text.	
b. Include the central idea and relevant details for an informational text.	
ELA.4.R.3.2	Summarize a text to enhance comprehension.
a. Include plot and theme for a literary text.	
b. Include the central idea and relevant details for an informational text.	
ELA.3.R.3.2	Summarize a text to enhance comprehension.
a. Include plot and theme for a literary text.	
b. Use the central idea and relevant details for an informational text.	
ELA.2.R.3.2	Retell a text to enhance comprehension.
a. Use main story elements in a logical sequence for a literary text.	
b. Use the central idea and relevant details for an informational text.	
ELA.1.R.3.2	Retell a text in oral or written form to enhance comprehension.
a. Use main story elements at the beginning, middle, and end for a literary text.	
b. Use topic and important details for an informational text.	
ELA.K.R.3.2	Retell a text orally to enhance comprehension.
a. Use main character(s), setting, and important events for a story.	
b. Use topic and details for an informational text.	

Foundational Phonics: K–2 Progression

KINDERGARTEN	GRADE 1	GRADE 2
Phonemic Awareness & Letter-Sound Correspondence - Identify and produce rhymes - Segment spoken words into phonemes - Map letters to sounds (A–Z)	Blending, Segmenting & Multisyllabic Decoding - Blend phonemes into words - Segment words into individual sounds - Decode multisyllabic words fluently	Decoding Efficiency & Morphological Analysis - Build automatic decoding fluency - Identify prefixes, suffixes, root words - Introduce Greek and Latin roots

Progression of Foundational Benchmarks

These are the progressions of the Foundational benchmarks. Foundational benchmarks do not spiral in the same way as those in the other strands. The other strands appear in spiraled progressions in the next section.

Progression of Foundational Skills	
Print Concepts	ELA.K.F.1.1 Demonstrate knowledge of the basic concepts of print. - Locate a printed word on a page. - Distinguish letters from words within sentences. - Match print to speech to demonstrate that language is represented by print. - Identify parts of a book (front cover, back cover, title page). - Move top to bottom and left to right on the printed page, returning to the beginning of the next line. - Identify all upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet. - Recognize that print conveys specific meaning and pictures may support meaning.
	ELA.1.F.1.1 Locate the title, table of contents, names of author(s) and illustrator(s), and glossary of books.
	ELA.K.F.1.2 Demonstrate phonological awareness. - Blend and segment syllables in spoken words. - Identify and produce alliterative and rhyming words. - Blend and segment onset and rimes of single-syllable words. - Identify the initial, medial, and final sound of spoken words. - Add or delete phonemes at the beginning or end of a spoken word and say the resulting word. - Segment and blend phonemes in single-syllable spoken words.
	ELA.1.F.1.2 Demonstrate phonological awareness. - Segment spoken words into initial, medial, and final phonemes, including words with digraphs, blends, and trigraphs. - Orally blend initial, medial, and final phonemes together to produce a single-syllable word that includes digraphs, blends, or trigraphs. - Blend single-syllable spoken words with at least five phonemes. - Segment single-syllable spoken words with at least five phonemes. - Segment and blend phonemes in multi-syllable spoken words.
	ELA.612.F.2.1 Demonstrate an understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds. - Orally produce single-syllable and multi-syllable words by accurately blending words. - Accurately segment single-syllable and multi-syllable words.
	ELA.K.F.1.3 Use knowledge of grade-appropriate phonics and word-analysis skills to decode words accurately. - Demonstrate knowledge of the most frequent sound for each consonant. - Demonstrate knowledge of the short and long sounds for the five major vowels. - Decode consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words. - Encode consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words.
	ELA.1.F.1.3 Use knowledge of grade-appropriate phonics and word-analysis skills to decode words accurately. - Decode words using knowledge of spelling-sound correspondences for common consonant digraphs, trigraphs, and blends. - Decode simple words with r-controlled vowels. - Decode and encode regularly spelled one-syllable words. - Decode words with inflectional endings.
Phonics and Word Analysis	

Science of Reading mandates explicit, systematic phonics instruction — the non-negotiable vehicle for literacy.

Component 4 of Benchmark Demands

Appendices

Provide supplementary guidance, text exemplars, and examples that bring benchmarks to life.

Appendix A: K-12 ELA Expectations for Students K-12 ELA Expectations

ELA Expectation	Clarifications
ELA.K.12.EE.1.1 Cite evidence to explain and justify reasoning.	K-1 Students include textual evidence in their oral communication with guidance and support from adults. The evidence can consist of details from the text without naming the text. During 1st grade, students learn how to incorporate the evidence in their writing. 2-3 Students include relevant textual evidence in their written and oral communication. Students should name the text when they refer to it. In 3rd grade, students should use a combination of direct and indirect citations. 4-5 Students continue with previous skills and reference comments made by speakers and poets. Students cite texts that they've directly quoted, paraphrased, or used for information. When writing, students will use the form of citation dictated by the instructor or the style guide referenced by the instructor. 6-8 Students continue with previous skills and use a style guide to create a proper citation. 9-12 Students continue with previous skills and should be aware of existing style guides and the ways in which they differ.
ELA.K.12.EE.2.1 Read and comprehend grade-level complex texts proficiently.	See Text Complexity for grade-level complexity bands and a text complexity rubric.
ELA.K.12.EE.3.1 Make inferences to support comprehension.	Students will make inferences before the words infer or inference are introduced. Kindergarten students will answer questions like "Why is the girl smiling?" or make predictions about what will happen based on the title page. Students will use the terms and apply them in 2nd grade and beyond.
ELA.K.12.EE.4.1 Use appropriate collaborative techniques and active listening skills when engaging in discussions in a variety of situations.	In kindergarten, students learn to listen to one another respectfully. In grades 1-2, students build upon these skills by justifying what they are thinking. For example: "I think _____ because _____." The collaborative conversations are becoming academic conversations. In grades 3-12, students engage in academic conversations discussing claims and justifying their reasoning, refining and applying skills. Students build on ideas, propel the conversation, and support claims and counterclaims with evidence.
ELA.K.12.EE.5.1 Use the accepted rules governing a specific format to create quality work.	Students will incorporate skills learned into work products to produce quality work. For students to incorporate these skills appropriately, they must receive instruction. A 3rd grade student creating a poster board display must have instruction in how to effectively present information to do quality work.
ELA.K.12.EE.6.1 Use appropriate voice and tone when speaking or writing.	In kindergarten and 1st grade, students learn the difference between formal and informal language. For example, the way we talk to our friends differs from the way we speak to adults. In 2nd grade and beyond, students practice appropriate social and academic language to discuss texts.

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Appendix B: Reading

What is a Text?

"In academic terms, a text is anything that conveys a set of meanings to the person who examines it."

— *The Word on College Reading and Writing* by Carol Burnell, Jaime Wood, Monique Babin, Susan Peszkecker, and Nicole Rosevear

For the purposes of text within the standards, the full breadth of the term text is intended. The standards are meant to prepare students to interpret a variety of texts in a variety of formats. In planning instruction, make sure that students are exposed to a diverse selection of quality texts.

Text Complexity

There are three components of text complexity: qualitative, quantitative, and student-centered. Each of these factors is equally important. Singularly, they reveal a partial and potentially misleading impression of a text. The quantitative measures are divided by grade band and address the measurable data of a text such as sentence length, word length, and word frequency. Each readability measure has a different formula for calculating the readability of a text.

Text Complexity Quantitative Grade Bands

Grade Level	Quantitative Measures	
	Flesch-Kincaid	Lexile
K – 1st	-1.3 – 2.18	BR – 430L
2nd – 3rd	1.98 – 5.34	420L – 820L
4th – 5th	4.51 – 7.73	740L – 1010L
6th – 8th	6.51 – 10.34	925L – 1185L
9th – 10th	8.32 – 12.12	1050L – 1335L
11th – 12th	10.34 – 14.2	1185L – 1385L

Text Features

Text Feature	Description	Note or Example
Annotation	A written note added to a text by way of comment or explanation.	Annotation Annotation is a written note added to a text by way of comment or explanation. Annotation is a written note added to a text by way of comment or explanation. Annotation is a written note added to a text by way of comment or explanation.
Appendix	A section or table containing additional content or information at the end of a text.	Some texts have multiple appendices. Appendix Appendix is a section or table containing additional content or information at the end of a text.
Caption	A title or brief explanation added to an article, cartoon, illustration, photograph, or other graphic.	The Florida panther (pictured above) has short, light brown fur. Caption Caption is a title or brief explanation added to an article, cartoon, illustration, photograph, or other graphic.
Chart	A visual representation of data or a visual depiction of information.	Pie charts, like the one below, are often used to convey additional information related to a text's topic. Causes of Panther Mortality 1979-97  Chart Chart is a visual representation of data or a visual depiction of information.
Footnote	A note of reference, explanation, or comment printed at the bottom of a page.	A footnote Footnote Footnote is a note of reference, explanation, or comment printed at the bottom of a page.

Component 4 of Benchmark Demands

4

Appendices

Provide supplementary guidance, text exemplars, and examples that bring benchmarks to life.

Fluency Norms

The Hasbrouck-Tindal Norms Chart indicates words correct per minute by grade level, time of year, and percentile rank. Fluency measures should always be combined with comprehension checks such as a retelling of the passage or comprehension questions to strengthen the link between fluency and comprehension. Oral reading fluency rubrics that consider other factors of fluency should also be considered.

From Hasbrouck, J. & Tindal, G. (2017). An update on compiled ORF norms (Technical Report No. 1702). Eugene, OR: Behavioral Research and Teaching, University of Oregon.

Grade	Percentile	Fall WCPM	Winter WCPM	Spring WCPM
1	90		97	116
	75		59	91
	50		29	60
	25		16	34
	10		9	18
2	90	111	131	148
	75	84	109	124
	50	50	84	100
	25	36	59	72
	10	23	35	43
3	90	134	161	166
	75	104	137	139
	50	83	97	112
	25	59	79	91
	10	40	62	63

2nd-3rd Grade

Title	Author
<i>A More Perfect Union: The Story of Our Constitution</i>	Maestro, Betty
<i>Eleanor</i>	Cooney, Barbara
<i>Father of the Constitution: A Story About James Madison</i>	Tavoularis, Alex and Barbara Mitchell
<i>Revolutionary Friends: General George Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette</i>	Castroville, Selene
<i>Susan B. Anthony: Fighter for Freedom and Equality</i>	Slade, Suzanne
<i>The Congress of the United States</i>	Taylor-Butler, Christine
<i>The Declaration of Independence from A to Z</i>	O'Brien, Catherine
<i>The Story of the Statue of Liberty</i>	Maestro, Betty
<i>The Turtle Twins and the Miraculous Pencil</i>	Boyack, Connor
<i>The Turtle Twins Learn About the Law</i>	Boyack, Connor
<i>Vote!</i>	Christelow, Eileen
<i>We Live Here Too!: Kids Talk About Good Citizenship</i>	Loewen, Nancy
<i>We the Kids: The Preamble to the Constitution of the United States</i>	Catrow, David
<i>We the People</i>	Cheney, Lynne
<i>What Are the Branches of Government?</i>	Matzke, Ann
<i>What Is a Government?</i>	Boedsky, Ilan

4th-5th Grade

Title	Author
<i>"The Gettysburg Address" (1863)</i>	Lincoln, Abraham
<i>Before Columbus: The American of 1491</i>	Mann, Charles C.
<i>Bill of Rights</i>	Madison, James
<i>Florida</i>	Orr, Tanya B.
<i>James Madison: Champion of Liberty and Justice</i>	Kaminski, John
<i>Shh! We're Writing the Constitution</i>	Fritz, Jean
<i>The Bill of Rights</i>	Burgan, Michael
<i>The Constitution</i>	Colman, Warren
<i>The Declaration of Independence</i>	Landau, Elaine
<i>The Emancipation Proclamation</i>	Heitrich, Ann
<i>The Great Seal of the United States</i>	DeGuzelle, Terri
<i>The Reconstruction Amendments</i>	Burgan, Michael
<i>The U.S. Constitution and You</i>	Sobel, Syl
<i>United States Constitution</i>	Founding Fathers
<i>What Are the Parts of Government?</i>	Thomas, William David

Text Structures

Text structure, also referred to as an organizational pattern, refers to how a text is organized. Below are six common text structures used by authors of expository texts.

Note: Some signal words/phrases appear in more than one text structure.

Text Structure	Description	Signal Words/Phrases	Example
Description	Information is presented in sections that often begin with a central idea and are followed by an elaboration of the features, characteristics, or examples of the subject at hand.	Characteristics of; details; for example; for instance; includes; in particular; specifically; such as; to illustrate	A story about panthers is organized into four sections, each section describing a different characteristic of a panther.
Problem and Solution	Information is conveyed as an issue or a problem of concern, and solution(s) are proposed or explained.	An answer to; a consequence of; a possible solution to; challenge of; dilemma; in order to solve; issue; problem; question; reason; resolution; resolved	An author addresses the diminishing panther population by explaining the reasons for the decline and offering suggestions for improving the species' survival rate.
Chronological	Facts, events, or details are presented in the order in which they occurred in time. *	On, at (date, time); before; earlier; eventually; following; next; not long after; now; presently; previously; prior to; then; recently; simultaneously; soon; until; when	An author writes an article about the evolutionary history of the Florida panther and organizes significant historical events based on the corresponding year each occurred.
Compare and Contrast	The similarities and/or differences of two or more people, things, concepts, or ideas are presented.	Alike; also; as opposed to; both; but; comparatively; conversely; different; however; in contrast; instead of; not only; on the other hand; opposite from; same; share; similarly	An author explains how to distinguish a panther from a bobcat by providing characteristics shared by each and emphasizing their distinctive features.
Cause and Effect	Information reflects a causal relationship. The description of what happened in the effect and the detail(s) related to why it happened is the cause.	As a result; as such; because of; cause; consequently; due to; for this reason; led to; since; so; reason; result of; therefore; unless	An article explains the effects of increasing construction on the habitats of endangered species.
Sequence	Information is presented as a series of instructions or steps in a process.	First; second; third; at once; after; before; during; finally; following; last; next	An instructional guide provides a detailed explanation of how to assemble a model Florida panther, step-by-step.

Component 5 of Benchmark Demands

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Glossary

Consistent vocabulary used across all grades and benchmark language to ensure shared understanding.

Glossary of Terms		
Key Word	Definition	Synonyms
accuracy	freedom from mistake or error; conformity to truth or to a standard or model	correctness, exactness, precision, veracity
affix	a letter or group of letters added to the beginning or end of a word to change its meaning; a prefix or suffix	prefix, suffix
allegory	the expression by means of symbolic fictional figures and actions of truths or generalizations about human existence; a symbolic representation	apologue, fable, parable
alliterative	repetition of initial consonant sounds in two or more words	
allusion	an implied or indirect reference especially in literature; the act of making an indirect reference to something; the act of alluding to something	
alphabetic principle	the concept that letters and letter combinations represent individual phonemes in written words	
ambiguity	the quality or state of being understood in two or more possible ways; a word or expression that can be understood in two or more possible ways	
analyze	to study or examine something in detail, in order to discover more about it	breakdown, deconstruct, dissect
archetype	the original pattern or model of which all things of the same type are representations or copies	
argument	a coherent series of reasons, statements, or facts intended to support or establish a point of view	claim, dispute, assertion
audience	the people who watch, read, or listen to something	readers, public, following, listenership, readership, viewership, followers
author's perspective	in informational text, the author's attitude toward a topic or subject; in literary text, a character's attitude	
author's purpose	Persuade: Argument/opinion texts present information in a reasoned, logical way, demonstrating that the writer's opinion or claim is valid. Inform: Expository texts convey information accurately and serve one or more closely related purposes: to increase readers' knowledge of a subject, to help readers better understand a procedure or process, or to provide readers with an enhanced understanding of a situation	writer's purpose, author's intent

Pedagogy: How to Teach the Benchmarks

The four instructional approaches that make B.E.S.T. come alive in your classroom.

Explicit Instruction

STEP 1

Teacher Models & Explains

Show students exactly what mastery looks like. Think aloud while demonstrating the skill.

STEP 2

Guided Practice

Students practice what the teacher modeled. Teacher provides prompts, cues, and corrective feedback throughout.

STEP 3

Supported Application

Students apply the skill while the teacher scaffolds instruction — gradually reducing support.

STEP 4

Independent Practice

Students perform the skill independently. This confirms mastery and readiness for the next benchmark.

Based on Anita Archer's "Explicit Instruction: Effective and Efficient Teaching" — explicitinstruction.org

Instructional Approaches: Systematic, Scaffolded & Differentiated

SYSTEMATIC INSTRUCTION

A planned sequence that includes a logical progression of content, concepts, and skills — from simple to complex. Includes cumulative teaching, review, and practice to enable learners to achieve learning goals.

- curriculum maps
- use vertical progression
- collaborate to create pacing guides
- pacing varies by school
- consider TerraNova testing when planning

SCAFFOLDED INSTRUCTION

- meeting every student where they are
- intentional temporary support
- decreases as learners grow toward independence
- **For schools with iReady, use the report called Grade-level Planning (scaffolding)**
 - select a skill (ie: theme)
 - report tells you students who are READY to go, need additional support, in-depth support, or need help decoding

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

Adapting instruction in response to the distinct assessed skills and needs of individual learners in order to increase their access and opportunities to meet specific learning goals.

- Choice boards
- Learning styles
- Enrichment
- Remediation

SECTION 5

Standards Scavenger Hunt



Open your B.E.S.T. ELA Standards document. Work with your table to hunt down the answers!

HOW TO PLAY

1. Each clue asks you to find something specific in your standards document.
2. Discuss with your table group — compare what you find.
3. Be ready to share out with the whole group!

Clue 1 of 8

YOUR MISSION

Find a benchmark in your grade level that relates to FOUNDATIONAL PHONICS or FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS.

Write down the full benchmark code and read the benchmark aloud to your group. What is the skill students need to master by end of year?

HINT

Foundational Skills benchmarks use the strand letter 'F' in the coding scheme. For example: ELA.K.F.1.1 — What does the number after F mean?

Clue 2 of 8

YOUR MISSION

Locate the BENCHMARK CLARIFICATIONS for one benchmark at your grade level.

How do the clarifications change your understanding of the benchmark? What specific detail does the clarification add that the benchmark alone doesn't tell you?

HINT

Clarifications appear directly beneath the benchmark text in the standards document. They often begin with phrases like 'Students will...' or 'Instruction includes...'

Clue 3 of 8

YOUR MISSION

Find your grade-level benchmark for READING INFORMATIONAL TEXT.

Now look one grade BELOW yours. How did the benchmark change? What skill was added or made more complex at your grade level?

HINT

Informational Text benchmarks use the strand code 'R' and usually fall under Standard 2. Compare the language carefully — look for words like 'explain,' 'analyze,' or 'compare' that signal growing complexity.

Clue 4 of 8

YOUR MISSION

Hunt down a benchmark that involves VOCABULARY — specifically one that asks students to use context clues, Greek/Latin roots, or morphological analysis.

What grade introduced this expectation, and how does it progress to YOUR grade?

HINT

Vocabulary benchmarks are often found under the Communication strand (C) or embedded in Reading benchmarks. Look for the words 'determine the meaning' or 'use context' in the benchmark language.

Clue 5 of 8

YOUR MISSION

Find the section in the standards that describes the SIX ELA EXPECTATIONS (the overarching expectations that apply across all grades and strands).

List all six, then discuss: which expectation do you feel your students need the most support with right now?

HINT

The Six ELA Expectations are described early in the B.E.S.T. ELA Standards document — typically in the introduction or framework section. They are designed to enhance quality instruction across all benchmarks.

Clue 6 of 8

YOUR MISSION

Open the APPENDIX section of your standards document.

Find one appendix that applies to your grade level. What does it contain? How could you use this information when planning your next unit?

HINT

Appendices are located at the back of the standards document. They often include text exemplars, genre lists, or additional guidance that brings the benchmarks to life with concrete examples.

Clue 7 of 8

YOUR MISSION

Find a benchmark related to WRITING or COMMUNICATION at your grade level.

Read the benchmark AND its clarifications. What TEXT TYPE does this benchmark address? How does it connect to a reading benchmark at the same grade level?

HINT

Writing/Communication benchmarks use the strand code 'C' (Communication). Look for connections to the 'R' (Reading) benchmarks — B.E.S.T. intentionally integrates reading and writing skills.

Clue 8 of 8

YOUR MISSION

Look up the GLOSSARY in the standards document.

Find a term that is new to you or that you want to better understand. Read the definition, then explain it to your table group in your OWN WORDS. How will knowing this term help you teach the standards?

HINT

The Glossary ensures consistent vocabulary is used across all grade levels. Pay special attention to terms that appear in multiple benchmark codes — these are the 'power vocabulary' of the standards.

Scavenger Hunt — Debrief & Share Out



What did you find that **SURPRISED** you?

Something you didn't know was in the standards, or that was different from what you expected.



What **CONNECTIONS** did you notice?

Between your grade level and grades above/below you. Between reading and writing benchmarks.



What **QUESTIONS** do you still have?

About a specific benchmark, a clarification, an appendix entry, or how to use the vertical progression.



What will you **DO DIFFERENTLY** next year?

One concrete change to your planning or instruction based on what you learned today.

"Where do you see opportunity for training and support within your school?"

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Benchmarks are mastery goals — use clarifications and appendices together in every planning session.
- Vertical progression is your roadmap for scaffolding and remediation.
- Explicit, systematic, scaffolded, and differentiated instruction are the pedagogical pillars of B.E.S.T.
- You are not starting over. You are shifting and refining.