

Grade 2 Reading Standards

Grade 2 Reading Standards for Literature [RL]

The following standards offer a focus for instruction each year and help ensure that students gain adequate exposure to a range of texts and tasks. Rigor is also infused through the requirement that students read increasingly complex texts through the grades. *Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year’s grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.*

Key Ideas and Details

1. Ask and answer such questions as *who, what, where, when, why, and how* to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.
2. Retell stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.
3. Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

Craft and Structure

4. Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song. (See grade 2 Language Standards 4–6 on applying knowledge of vocabulary to reading.)

For example, students learn the traditional nursery rhyme “As I was going to St. Ives” and point out how its repetitions of sounds affect the meaning and help them find the answer to the mathematical puzzle posed by the speaker in the poem. (RL.2.1, RL.2.4)

5. Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action.
6. Explain what dialogue is and how it can reveal characters’ thoughts and perspectives.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.
8. (Not applicable. For expectations regarding central messages, lessons, or morals in stories, see RL.2.)
9. Compare and contrast two or more versions of the same story (e.g., Cinderella stories) by different authors or from different cultures.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. Independently and proficiently read and comprehend literary texts representing a variety of genres, cultures, and perspectives and exhibiting complexity appropriate for at least grade 2. (See [more on qualitative and quantitative dimensions of text complexity.](#))

Grade 2 Reading Standards for Informational Text [RI]

Key Ideas and Details

1. Ask and answer such questions as *who, what, where, when, why, and how* to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.
2. Identify the main topic of a multiparagraph text as well as the focus of specific paragraphs within the text.
3. Describe the connection between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, mathematical ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text.

For example, as they are learning to subtract numbers within 1,000 in math, students read Shark Swimathon by Stuart Murphy and use mathematical reasoning to keep track of how many laps the shark swim team members swim each in order to predict whether or not the sharks will make their goal.

Craft and Structure

4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases in a text relevant to a *grade 2 topic or subject area*. (See grade 2 Language Standards 4–6 on applying knowledge of vocabulary to reading.)
5. Know and use various text features (e.g., captions, bold print, subheadings, glossaries, indexes, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text efficiently.
6. Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Explain how specific images (e.g., a diagram showing how a machine works) contribute to and clarify a text.

For example, in a social studies unit on understanding the information in different types of maps and how to use a world atlas, students compare the physical geography of North America and Africa. They interpret maps and read how geography influenced the life of a Kenyan woman who used her knowledge to restore fertility to the land. Among the books they read at different levels of complexity are Wangari's Trees of Peace: A True Story from Africa by Jeanette Winter, Seeds of Change: Wangari's Gift to the World by Jen Cullerton Johnson, and Planting the Trees of Kenya, the Story of Wangari Maathai by Claire Nivola. (RI.2.1, RI.2.7, SL.2.1)

8. Describe how reasons support specific points the author makes in a text.
9. Compare and contrast the most important points presented by two texts on the same topic.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. Independently and proficiently read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, mathematical, and technical texts, exhibiting complexity appropriate for at least grade 2. (See [more on qualitative and quantitative dimensions of text complexity](#).)

Grade 2 Reading Standards for Foundational Skills [RF]

These standards are directed toward fostering students' understanding and working knowledge of concepts of print, the alphabetic principle, and other basic conventions of the English writing system. A research- and evidence-based scope and sequence for phonological and phonics development and the complete range of foundational skills are not ends in and of themselves. They are necessary and important components of an effective, comprehensive reading curriculum designed to develop proficient readers with the capacity to comprehend texts across a range of types and disciplines. Instruction should be differentiated: as students become skilled readers, they will need much less practice with these concepts. Struggling readers may need more or different kinds of practice. The point is to teach students what they need to learn and not what they already know—to discern when particular children or activities warrant more or less attention.

Note: RF.1 and RF.2, on print concepts and phonological awareness, apply only to pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and grade 1.

Phonics and Word Recognition

3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
 - a. Distinguish long and short vowels when reading regularly spelled one-syllable words.
 - b. Know spelling-sound correspondences for additional common vowel teams.
 - c. Decode regularly spelled two-syllable words with long vowels.
 - d. Decode words with common prefixes and suffixes.

- e. Identify words with inconsistent but common spelling-sound correspondences.
- f. Recognize and read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words.

Fluency

- 4. Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
 - a. Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding.
 - b. Read grade-level text orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings.
 - c. Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.

Grade 2 Writing Standards [W]

The following standards offer a focus for instruction each year to help ensure that students gain adequate mastery of a range of skills and applications. Each year in their writing, students should demonstrate increasing sophistication in all aspects of language use, from vocabulary and syntax to the development and organization of ideas, and they should address increasingly demanding content and sources. *Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year’s grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.* The expected growth in student writing ability is reflected both in the standards themselves and in the collections of annotated student writing samples in [Appendix C of the Common Core State Standards](#) and the [Massachusetts Writing Standards in Action Project](#).

Text Types and Purposes

Note: The intent of Writing Standards 1–3 is to ensure flexibility, not rigidity, in student writing. Many effective pieces of writing blend elements of more than one text type in service of a single purpose: for example, an argument may rely on anecdotal evidence, a short story may function to explain some phenomenon, or a literary analysis may use explication to develop an argument. In addition, each of the three types of writing is itself a broad category encompassing a variety of texts: for example, narrative poems, short stories, and memoirs represent three distinct forms of narrative writing. Finally, although the bulk of writing assigned in school should address the purposes described below, other forms of writing—for example, lists and notes, descriptive letters, personal reflections—should have a place in the classroom as well. To develop flexibility and nuance in their own writing, students need to engage with a wide range of complex model texts (see Reading Literature Standard 10 and Reading Informational Text Standard 10) and study authors who have written successfully across genres (see [Appendix B: A Literary Heritage](#)).

- 1. Write opinion pieces that introduce the topic or book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply reasons that support the opinion, use linking words (e.g., *because, and, also*) to connect opinion and reasons, and provide a concluding statement or section.
In math, instead of writing opinions, students write or draw solutions to math word problems and present arguments to explain their thinking.

Connections to the Standards for Mathematical Practice

2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.

3. Construct viable arguments and respond to the reasoning of others.

See the [pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework](#) or the *Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics*.

For example, students keep a math journal in which they record proposed solutions to word problems in addition and subtraction. They use drawings, written equations, and written sentences to argue why 8 is the correct answer to a problem such as “If there are 15 cupcakes in the table and 7 are eaten, how many remain?”

- 2. Write informative/explanatory texts that introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.

Second graders research grey wolves and write and illustrate informational reports. See two different reports from this project, “All about Grey Wolves: the Pack Family,” and “All about Grey Wolves: Howl in the Night.” [Massachusetts Writing Standards in Action](#) (W.2.2, W.2.7, W.2.8, L.2.1, L.2.2, L.2.3)

3. Write narratives in prose or poem form that recount a well-elaborated event or experience, or a set of events or experiences; include details and dialogue to show actions, thoughts, and feelings; use temporal words to signal order where appropriate; and provide a sense of closure.
 - a. For poems, use words and phrases that form patterns of sounds (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, end rhymes, repeated sounds in words or lines) to create structure. (See grade 2 Reading Literature Standard 4.)

In “Goodbye to Winter Clothes,” a second grader captures the turning point from New England’s winter to spring.

“Good bye to winter clothes

Peace out winter

Adios to slipping on ice

Hey beautiful flowers

Hola to bright birds

Hey to shiny grass”

This narrative in the form of a poem is from [Massachusetts Writing Standards in Action](#). (W.2.3, W.2.10, L.2.1, L.2.2, L.2.5)

Production and Distribution of Writing

4. Produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

For example, students learn about the job of a reporter and news reporting in print and online journalism. They learn to read, analyze, and evaluate models of narrative news reporting and write their own news stories using what they have learned from the models. (W.2.3, W.2.4)
5. With guidance and support from adults and peers, focus on a topic and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing.
 - a. (Begins in grade 3.)
 - b. Demonstrate the ability to choose and use appropriate vocabulary (as described in Language Standards 4–6 up to and including grade 2).
6. With guidance and support from adults, use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., read a number of books on a single topic to produce a report; record science observations).

For example, students read biographies of people who have made a difference in the world. They conduct research and write new or updated biographies of subjects of their choosing. (RI.2.2, RI.2.3, W.2.2, W.2.7)
8. Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
9. (Begins in grade 4.)

Range of Writing

10. Write routinely for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Grade 2 Speaking and Listening Standards [SL]

The following standards offer a focus for instruction each year to help ensure that students gain adequate mastery of a range of skills and applications. *Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each*

year's grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.

Comprehension and Collaboration

1. Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about *grade 2 topics and texts* with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
 - a. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).
 - b. Build on others' talk in conversations by linking their comments to the remarks of others.
 - c. Ask for clarification and further explanation as needed about the topics and texts under discussion.

For example, students working in a group studying community helpers make a list of people they know and could interview. Building on one another's knowledge, they decide whom they wish to invite to class to discuss the work they do.

Connections to the Standards for Mathematical Practice

2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.

3. Construct viable arguments and respond to the reasoning of others.

See the [pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework](#) or the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics.

2. Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
3. Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.

For example, groups of students ask and answer questions about mathematical reasoning as they solve word problems in which they must add and subtract within 1,000. In their conversations, they use general academic and domain-specific vocabulary such as place value, digit, value, operation, add, subtract, addition, subtraction, sum, difference, compose, decompose, increase, decrease, composition, and decomposition. They complete an assessment in which, as head Zookeepers, they are responsible for ordering animals' food. They address Standards for Mathematical Practice 3 through 8 as well as math content standards as they solve problems like the one below:

Penguins: The 80 penguins eat a total of 504 pounds of fish each week.

Week 1: Currently there are 282 pounds of fish in the freezer. How many pounds of new fish should you order to feed the penguins for week one?

Week 1 Order: _____ pounds of fish

Week 2: After week one, there are 216 pounds of fish left in the freezer. The 80 penguins eat a total of 504 pounds of fish each week. How many pounds of new fish should you order to feed the penguins for week two?

Week 2 Order: _____ pounds of fish

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

4. Tell a story, recount an experience, or explain how to solve a mathematical problem with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences and using appropriate vocabulary. (See grade 2 Language Standards 4–6 for specific expectations regarding vocabulary.)

Connections to the Standards for Mathematical Practice

2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.

3. Construct viable arguments and respond to the reasoning of others.

6. Attend to precision.

See the [pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework](#) or the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics.

5. Create audio recordings of stories or poems; add drawings or other visual displays to stories or descriptions of experiences when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.
6. Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification. (See grade 2 Language Standards 1 and 3 for specific expectations.)

Grade 2 Language Standards [L]

The following standards offer a focus for instruction each year to help ensure that students gain adequate mastery of a range of skills and applications. *Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades. For example, though sentence fragments may receive the most attention in grade 4, more nuanced discussions of the topic should develop throughout the later grades as students continue to analyze speakers' and authors' sentence structure, vary syntax for effect in their own speaking and writing, and more.*

Conventions of Standard English

1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking; retain and further develop language skills learned in previous grades.

Sentence Structure and Meaning

 - a. Produce and expand complete simple and compound declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences and choose among sentence types depending on the meaning to be conveyed.
 - b. Use adjectives and adverbs in sentences and choose between them depending on what is to be modified.

Word Usage

 - c. Use collective nouns and frequently occurring irregular plural nouns.
 - d. Use reflexive pronouns.
 - e. Form and use the past tense of frequently occurring irregular verbs.
2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
 - a. Print upper- and lowercase letters legibly and fluently.
 - b. Capitalize holidays, product names, and geographic names.
 - c. Use commas in greetings and closings of letters.
 - d. Use an apostrophe to form contractions and frequently occurring possessives.
 - e. Generalize learned spelling patterns when writing words (e.g., *cage* → *badge*; *boy* → *boil*).
 - f. Consult reference materials, including beginning dictionaries, as needed to check and correct spellings.
 - g. Demonstrate understanding that context determines whether the writer uses a numeral or a written number (e.g., numerals in $1 + 3 = 4$, but written words in “When I was one, I was just begun, / When I was two, I was still quite new” from A. A. Milne’s poem “Now We Are Six”).

Knowledge of Language

3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
 - a. Compare formal and informal uses of English.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 2 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.
 - a. Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
 - b. Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known prefix is added to a known word (e.g., *happy/unhappy*, *tell/retell*).

- c. Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., *addition, additional*).
 - d. Use knowledge of the meaning of individual words to predict the meaning of compound words (e.g., *birdhouse, lighthouse, housefly; bookshelf, notebook, bookmark*).
 - e. Use glossaries and beginning dictionaries, both print and digital, to determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases.
 - f. Recognize and use appropriately abbreviations related to grade-level content or commonly used in everyday life (e.g., *a.m., p.m.*)
 - g. Recognize and use appropriately symbols related to grade-level content or commonly used in everyday life (e.g., \$, ¢).
5. Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.
- a. Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., describe foods that are *spicy* or *juicy*).
 - b. Distinguish shades of meaning among closely related verbs (e.g., *toss, throw, hurl*) and closely related adjectives (e.g., *thin, slender, skinny, scrawny*).
6. Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, activities in the grade 2 curriculum, reading and being read to, and responding to texts, including using adjectives and adverbs to describe. (See grade 2 Reading Literature Standard 4 and Reading Informational Text Standard 4 on applying knowledge of vocabulary to reading; see grade 2 Writing Standard 5 and Speaking and Listening Standard 4 on strengthening writing and presentations by applying knowledge of vocabulary.)

For example, in art class, students learn about line, shape, and color as they create two-dimensional prints representing a cityscape. They learn that certain concepts, such as pattern and repetition, can have similar, yet somewhat different meanings when applied to art, math, and literature. They also learn that some terms, such as “warm and cool colors” belong just to the domain of visual arts. When they display their work, students describe their knowledge and personal experiences about their work on the unit. (W.2.2, SL.2.4, L.2.6, Arts Standards)

Connections to the Standards for Mathematical Practice

6. Attend to precision.

See the [pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework](#) or the *Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics*.