

Essential Skills Definitions

The Essential Skills are valuable process skills for preparing Oregon students to meet their postsecondary goals. These skills cut across academic disciplines and are embedded in the content standards. The skills are not intended to be content-specific but rather to be applied in a variety of courses, subjects, and settings. The following are the nine Essential Skills as defined by the State Board of Education.

Essential Skill Definitions

A. Read and comprehend a variety of text*

- Demonstrate the ability to read and understand text.*
- Summarize and critically analyze key points of text,* events, issues, phenomena or problems, distinguishing factual from non-factual and literal from inferential elements.
- Interpret significant ideas and themes, including those conveyed through figurative language and use of symbols.
- Follow instructions from informational or technical text* to perform a task, answer questions, and solve problems.

**Text includes but is not limited to all forms of written material, communications, media, and other representations in words, numbers, and graphics and visual displays using traditional and technological formats.*

B. Write clearly and accurately

- Adapt writing to different audiences, purposes, and contexts in a variety of formats and media, using appropriate technology.
- Develop organized, well-reasoned, supported, and focused communications.
- Write to explain, summarize, inform, and persuade, including business, professional, technical, and personal communications.
- Use appropriate conventions to write clearly and coherently, including correct use of grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, sentence construction, and formatting.

C. Apply mathematics in a variety of settings

- Interpret a situation and apply workable mathematical concepts and strategies, using appropriate technologies where applicable.
- Produce evidence, such as graphs, data, or mathematical models, to obtain and verify a solution.
- Communicate and defend the verified process and solution, using pictures, symbols, models, narrative or other methods.

Essential Skill Definitions

D. Listen actively and speak clearly and coherently

- Listen actively to understand verbal and non-verbal communication.
- Give and follow spoken instructions to perform a task, ask and answer questions, and solve problems.
- Present or discuss ideas clearly, effectively, and coherently, using both verbal and nonverbal techniques.
- Use language appropriate to particular audiences and contexts.

E. Think critically and analytically

- Identify and explain the key elements of a complex event, text*, issue, problem or phenomenon.
- Develop a method to explore the relationships between the key elements of a complex event, text*, issue, problem or phenomenon.
- Gather, question and evaluate the quality of information from multiple primary and secondary sources.
- Propose defensible conclusions that address multiple and diverse perspectives.
- Evaluate the strength of conclusions, differentiating reasoning based on facts from reasoning based on opinions.

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F. Use technology to learn, live, and work

- Use creativity and innovation to generate ideas, products, or processes using current technology.
- Use technology to participate in a broader community through networking, collaboration and learning.
- Recognize and practice legal and responsible behavior in the use and access of information and technology.
- Use technology as a tool to access, research, manage, integrate, and communicate ideas and information.

G. Demonstrate civic and community engagement

- Apply knowledge of local, state, and U.S. history and government to explain current social and political issues.
- Perform the civic and community responsibilities essential to living in a representative democracy.

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H. Demonstrate global literacy

- Demonstrate knowledge of diverse cultural, linguistic, and artistic expressions.
- Apply a global perspective to analyze contemporary and historical issues.

I. Demonstrate personal management and teamwork skills.

- Participate cooperatively and productively in work teams to identify and solve problems.
- Display initiative and demonstrate respect for other team members to complete tasks.
- Plan, organize, and complete assigned tasks accurately and on time.
- Exhibit work ethic and performance, including the ability to be responsible and dependable.