

Writing Terminology Compared: WRITING Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the Oregon Writing Standards

In April 2011, representatives from higher education, districts, and Education Service Districts collaborated to design and draft transition resources for the English Language Arts Common Core State Standards (CCSS). As context for this work, comparisons between the Common Core (adopted in October 2010) and Oregon’s English language arts standards (adopted in 2003) were reviewed using the [ELA Crosswalk](#).

“Writing Terminology Compared” was designed by

- Annie Kelsey, School Improvement Specialist, Northwest Regional Education Service District (NWRES D)*
- Mary Beth Munroe, Literacy Coach, Medford School District*
- Amanda Sanford, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Special Education, Portland State University (PSU)*
- Marta Turner, School Improvement Coordinator, Northwest Regional Education Service District (NWRES D)*
- Linda Vanderford, Literacy Consultant, Clackamas Education Service District (CESD)*

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(See also CCSS [Glossary of Key Terms, Appendix A](#), pp. 45-46)

CCSS Writing Standards	Grades (CCSS)	CCSS Terms	Grades (Oregon)	Oregon Terms	Discussion
1	K-5	<i>Opinion pieces</i>	4 - 9/10	<i>Persuasive compositions</i>	The distinction is that the CCSS calls for students to express and support their opinions rather than persuade the reader to agree with them. (See <i>Arguments</i> below.)
1, 2	2-3	<i>Linking words and phrases</i>	4-6 9/10	<i>Transitions</i> <i>Conjunctions, transitional elements</i>	
1, 2	6-11/12	<i>Arguments</i>	4 - 9/10	<i>Persuasive compositions</i>	<p>These terms are sometimes used synonymously, but there are distinctions between the CCSS and Oregon Standards.</p> <p>The purpose of the argumentative essay is to establish the soundness or validity of one's own position through reasons and evidence while the purpose of the persuasive essay is to persuade the reader to adopt that position. Whereas opposing viewpoints may be acknowledged in persuasive essays, the CCSS Writing Standard 1 calls for students to develop counterclaims "fairly and thoroughly" at the upper grade levels. The effective difference between the intent of these two terms varies at different grade levels.</p> <p>For instance, at grade 4, the intent of the two terms is different:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Oregon EL.04.WR.26 calls for students "to convince the reader to take a certain action or to avoid a certain action." • The CCSS Writing Standard 1 at grade 4 is "Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information." • This CCSS is consistent with the CCR "... to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence." <p>However, at grades 6 through 9-10, there may be less effective difference, depending on the extent to which students responded to the part of the Oregon standards calling for them to "address counter-arguments/counter-claims."</p>

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					Finally, there may be a consequent difference in organization: While the persuasive essay may use the basic essay format (the "five paragraph format"), at the upper grades the well-developed argumentative essay may require a different organizational structure to present and address counterclaims. Three example formats are explained on the Essay Writing Help.com website at http://www.essaywritinghelp.com/argumentative.htm
1, 2	7 - 11/12	<i>Cohesion</i>	6, 9/10 8	<i>Unify, Coherence</i> <i>Coherent</i>	
1, 2	11/12	<i>Varied syntax</i>	4 8 - 9/10 7	<i>Variety of sentence patterns</i> <i>Varied sentence types</i> <i>Vary sentence beginnings</i> <i>(also, specific structures, e.g., infinitives, subordination, coordination, apposition, etc.)</i>	
1, 2	6 -11/12 9/10 - 11/12	<i>Formal style</i> <i>Objective tone</i>	5-6 8 9/10	<i>Adjusting tone and style as appropriate</i> <i>Establishing tone and mood</i> <i>Consistent tone</i>	<p>Oregon Standards do not call specifically for a formal style or objective tone, and this element in the CCSS raises the level of rigor for students.</p> <p>Some characteristics of academic formal style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Subject matter</u> is substantial. • <u>Vocabulary</u> is precise, concise and advanced, often scholarly or technical. Slang, contractions, colloquial expressions are absent. • <u>Sentences</u> are longer and more complex with subordination, longer verb phrases. • <u>Tone</u> is serious, polite but impersonal, without attempts to be clever or humorous; <i>the reader</i> or <i>one</i> is used instead of <i>you</i> or <i>I</i>. • <u>Grammatical rules</u> are observed. <p><u>Passive voice</u> may be used; <u>expletive pronouns</u> (it, there) may be used as subjects (avoiding overuse in each case).</p>

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2	K - 11/12	<i>Informative/explanatory texts</i>	1 2 3 4 5-8 9/10	<i>Expository descriptions</i> <i>Informative reports</i> <i>Descriptive pieces</i> <i>Informational reports</i> <i>Research reports</i> <i>Analytical and research reports</i>	
2	3 - 11/12	<i>Introduce a topic</i>	2 4 5 7 8 9/10	<i>Introductory sentence</i> <i>Create ... a topic sentence, establish ... a central idea</i> <i>Establish a main idea</i> <i>State the thesis</i> <i>Specify a thesis</i> <i>Establish a coherent ... thesis</i>	
2	4 - 11/12	<i>Domain-specific vocabulary</i>	9/10	<i>Technical terms</i>	Domain-specific vocabulary would include terms from the other subject areas (e.g., health, science, social studies).
3	K	<i>Narrate a single event or several loosely linked events</i>	K - 1	<i>Write brief stories</i>	
3	1 - 11/12	<i>Write narratives</i>	1 2 3 4 5-6 7 8-9/10	<i>Write brief stories</i> <i>Write brief narratives</i> <i>Write narratives</i> <i>Write personal narratives</i> <i>Write fictional narratives</i> <i>Write fictional or autobiographical narratives and short stories</i> <i>Write biographical or autobiographical narratives</i>	

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3	1- 3	<i>Temporal words</i>	1-2	Implied in <i>Sequence ... events</i>	Temporal words refer to time. Some that might be used at the primary level include <i>yesterday, now, when, first, second, next, last, later, before</i> .
3	5 - 11/12	<i>Narrative techniques</i>	6 7 8	<i>Narrative devices</i> <i>appropriate strategies</i> <i>narrative and descriptive strategies</i>	The narrative techniques are enumerated in the CCSS at each level (e.g., "dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines").
5	2 - 11/12	<i>Planning revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach</i>	1-9/10	<i>Writing process</i>	
9	4 - 11/12	<i>Literary or informational text</i>	1-9/10	<i>Literature/Literary Text</i>	CCSS "informational text" includes literary non-fiction, which is included as literature in Oregon's standards.

Additional resources for CCSS ELA may be found at <http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=3359>