Effective Expression

Students who have achieved the standards in grades nine and ten demonstrate the ability to express themselves in writing, discussing, and presenting, and they demonstrate considerable command of language conventions. Building from this foundation, expectations and examples of instruction for grades eleven and twelve are portrayed in the following sections.

Writing

Expectations for writing at grades eleven and twelve are advanced. Students write arguments using precise and knowledgeable claims; they supply the most relevant evidence for their claims and counterclaims and anticipate the audience’s knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases. They organize complex elements in informative/explanatory writing so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; and they use techniques in narrative writing to build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., sense of mystery, suspense, growth, resolution).

In the following snapshot, students plan their writing of an argument related to their reading of King Lear.

Snapshot 7.7. Paraphrasing Textual Evidence to Support Argumentative Writing Integrated ELA and ELD in Grade Eleven

Mrs. Ellis explicitly teaches the writing process in her eleventh-grade English class. One technique she teaches is paraphrasing—a basic move that can help students generate evidence needed for crafting a sophisticated, well-supported argument. Mrs. Ellis reminds her students that prewriting skills, such as paraphrasing, easily transfer between subject areas and writing tasks. Because her students have practiced paraphrasing before, Ms. Ellis approaches the lesson as a review.

To delve into this particular strategy, Mrs. Ellis uses a retired AP English Language prompt that asks students to chorally read with her a line from a Shakespearian play, King Lear, where King Lear’s view of the relationship between wealth and justice can be deciphered.

Through tatter’d clothes small vices do appear;
Robes and furr’d gowns hide all. Plate sins with gold,
And the strong lance of justice huriest breaks;
Arm it in rags, a pigmy’s straw does pierce it.

Shakespeare, King Lear
Mrs. Ellis instructs the students to work in pairs to put King Lear's statement into their own words. The pairs work together to parse Shakespeare's language. As they attempt to determine what the text says, Mrs. Ellis circulates around the classroom to respond to their inquiries, ask probing questions, and observe how students are interacting with the text and with one another. After several minutes, Mrs. Ellis calls the class together and, using their input, she writes a paraphrase of King Lear's lines for all to see via a document camera. Working line by line, she calls on groups to contribute, working with them refining their paraphrasings, ensuring precision and clarifying their understandings of the text's meaning as they go. Then she asks students to write the jointly constructed paraphrase projected by the document camera in their notebooks.

Once the class has agreed on what King Lear is saying—that the wealthy are treated more gently by the justice system than the poor—Mrs. Ellis instructs students to go back to working in pairs to brainstorm all the evidence they can think of from their discussions, readings, and personal experience, to support or refute King Lear's claim. The task, she tells them, is to defend, challenge, or qualify King Lear's position. The brainstorm session is timed to help them get used to on-demand writing assignments, and Mrs. Ellis tells her class that each group's goal is to find 15 examples in three minutes. "At this point," Mrs. Ellis says, "all ideas are considered legitimate and worth capturing, so write fast and get going!"

At the end of three minutes, Mrs. Ellis pulls the class together and again begins to work around the room, writing down as many examples as possible using the document camera. As she does, she encourages her students to record the ideas they hear their classmates share.

When ideas begin to repeat or are revoiced, the class goes back through the compiled evidence to discuss the details that will enable them to write fully developed paragraphs. The questions they use are: Which examples do we know the most about? Which could we say the most about? What is the best way to organize this information? What other prewriting strategies might help us get ready to write an argument?

The next day's lesson will continue with the writing process, focusing on how to craft a strong thesis statement.

The writing sample in figure 7.25 presents an informative/explanatory essay written by a student in grade twelve that has been analyzed and annotated according to the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy. In this piece, the writer addresses the underlying messages of an ad for McDonald's. It represents the range of writing expected of students in grade twelve.
between the living organisms. Instructional segment 1 also builds on other key ideas in life science that students engaged in during the middle grades including (1) models of cells and how they interact in multicellular organisms (MS-LS1-1, MS-LS1-2 and MS-LS1-3) and (2) the ability to explain the role of genes and how changes in them (mutations) can cause a change in the proteins a cell constructs (MS-LS3-1 and MS-LS3-2). Formative assessments at the beginning of the course will help teachers determine what level of detail they will need to revisit to help students succeed.

Opportunities for ELA/ELD Connections

As part of the discussion to reach consensus on categorizing pictures of living and nonliving things, students develop "agree–disagree" statements and exchange ideas with one another about which pictures represent living or nonliving things, making sure they articulate their rationale. The teacher can post a sample agree statement and a sample disagree statement that model the language students are expected to use in this content area. For example, "I agree that a sponge is a living thing based on the criteria that anything that is, or ever has been, alive is a living thing" or "I disagree that a sponge is a living thing since the definition of living is something that is not dead—a sponge is dead." As students share, the teacher can validate and guide students to self-correct their statements.

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy Standards: SL.9–12.1
CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI. 9–12.3

Life Science/Biology Instructional Segment 1: Structure and Function

The performance expectations in the topic Structure and Function help students formulate an answer to the following question: How do the structures of organisms enable life’s functions? High school students are able to investigate explanations for the structure and function of cells as the basic units of life, the hierarchical systems of organisms, and the role of specialized cells for maintenance and growth. Students demonstrate understanding of how systems of cells function together to support the life processes. Students demonstrate their understanding through critical reading, using models, and conducting investigations. The crosscutting concepts of **structure and function [CCC-6]**, **matter and energy [CCC-5]**, and **systems and system models [CCC-4]** in organisms are called out as organizing concepts. (NGSS Lead States 2013e)