

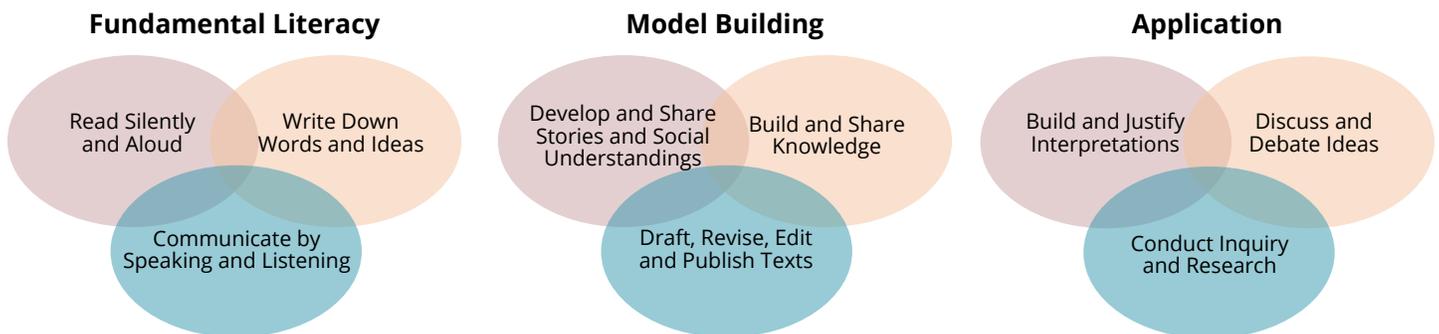
## ETS Key Practices

Gain insight into the processes of performing complex literacy tasks

ETS key practices are a tool to support understanding of how teachers can integrate discrete literacy skills and standards-based curricular activities to achieve important communicative goals in the English-language Arts (ELA). Key practices describe skill sets for reading, writing and/or critical thinking and provide a process-based framework for how these skills work together across different phases to support performing complex literacy tasks.

Using the key practices, teachers can organize instruction around purpose-driven activities that integrate different skill sets, manage complex tasks using tailored instructional support and identify targets for learning and assessment.

Figure 1. ELA key practices



### ETS Key Practices:

- are compatible with state standards
- are based on research in the cognitive and developmental sciences and educator experience<sup>1</sup>
- can support personalized instruction
- can support assessment development and reporting

### How ETS Key Practices Apply to Schools

ETS key practices provide a model that helps teachers to engage students in integrated key activities within the ELA domain. The key practices concept shows how a wide range of isolated skills can work together and develop across grade levels and levels of understanding. Classroom assessment tasks built on key practices can help teachers gather evidence of student understanding and scaffold learning opportunities effectively given student proficiency with different aspects of the practice.

### Discuss and Debate Ideas Key Practice

This figure illustrates the key practice of Discuss and Debate Ideas — related to the important concept of argumentation in middle and high school ELA. The key practice describes five phases of the argumentation process and presents a set of questions students might consider at each phase. For example, in the “Create and Evaluate Arguments” phase, students need to consider if they have provided relevant evidence to support their own arguments and to address possible counterarguments.

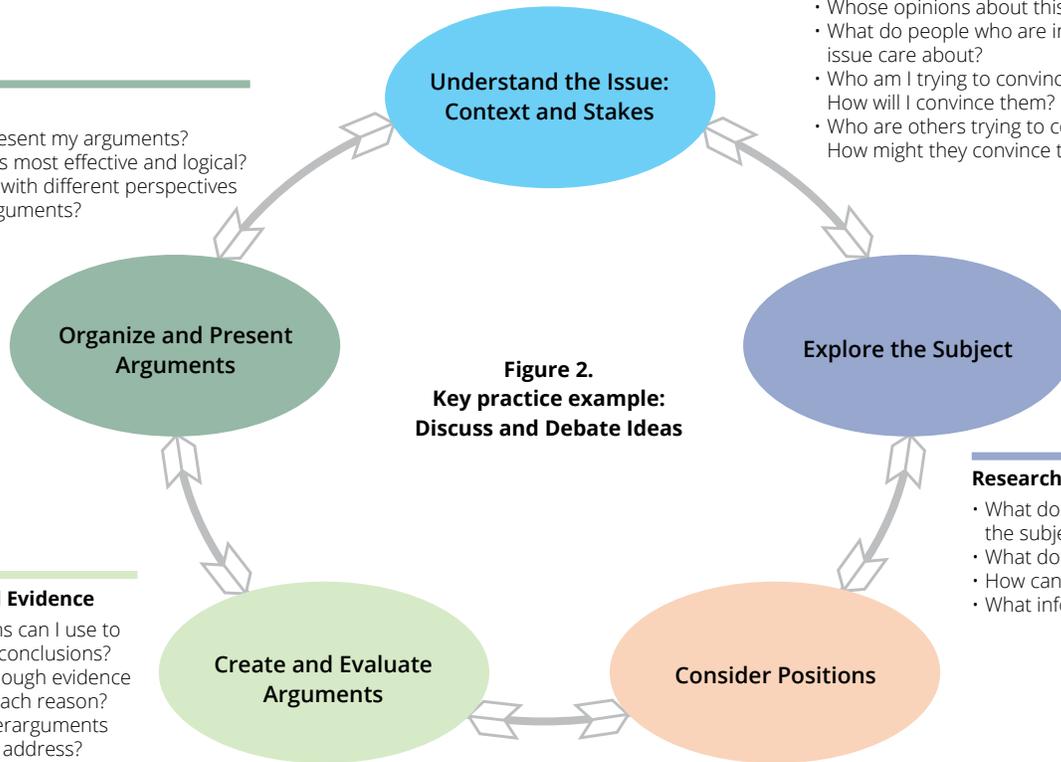
<sup>1</sup> See <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ets2.12063/abstract> and <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ets2.12079>

### Framing a Case

- How should I present my arguments?
- What structure is most effective and logical?
- How will people with different perspectives present their arguments?

### Appeal Building

- Whose opinions about this issue matter?
- What do people who are interested in this issue care about?
- Who am I trying to convince? How will I convince them?
- Who are others trying to convince? How might they convince them?



### Reasons and Evidence

- What reasons can I use to support my conclusions?
- Do I have enough evidence to support each reason?
- What counterarguments do I need to address?

### Research and Inquiry

- What do I know about the subject?
- What don't I know?
- How can I find out more?
- What information is relevant?

### Taking a Position

- What positions are reasonable?
- Are they all clear and defensible?
- What position should I take?
- How should I focus and limit my position?

## The Role of ETS Key Practices in the *Winsight*<sup>®</sup> Assessment Program

ETS learning progressions informed the development of the *Winsight*<sup>®</sup> Assessment Program, an integrated series of summative, interim and formative assessment components, created by ETS and delivered by Questar<sup>®</sup>, that provides a coherent picture of student learning.

### Summative assessments

- Identify levels of student understanding that are critical to successful achievement at a particular grade placement.
- Provide initial information about student understanding for a receiving teacher at the beginning of a school year.
- Allow administrators to make evidence-based decisions on resource allocation and curricular planning.
- Give teachers a starting point for formative and instructional follow-up.

### Interim testlets

- Measure student understanding of the content of an educational unit.
- Focus on specific learning progressions.
- Provide data to inform current and future instructional decision making.
- Allow teachers and schools to choose which concepts need targeted assessment.

### Formative assessment tools

- Support teachers in focusing instruction on student learning and state standards.
- Provide teachers with meaningful real-time feedback about where each student is on the path along a learning progression. This information enables them to customize lessons for individuals and groups of students — pinpointing where they need the most help.
- Support student self-reflection on their learning and peer feedback.