

Winsight[®] Assessment ELA Key Practices

BUILDING AND
SHARING KNOWLEDGE



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ELA Key Practices: Building and Sharing Knowledge

What is the Building and Sharing Knowledge Key Practice?

The *Building and Sharing Knowledge* key practice in English language arts describes the knowledge, skills and strategies involved in learning from informational texts. This practice includes the ability to set goals for reading, activate relevant background knowledge, construct a coherent model of the text, identify gaps in understanding, correct errors or misconceptions, and convey what was learned to a given audience. The key practice represents a process that is iterative over time, which results in deeper understanding that can be applied to a variety of new situations.

Connecting the Building and Sharing Knowledge Key Practice to the Common Core State Standards

Building and Sharing Knowledge skills connect to several Common Core State Standards for English language arts (Grades 3 to 12). The reading standards include extracting key ideas (RI.2), making connections among key ideas (RI.3), citing evidence to support inferences (RI.1), determining the meaning of words (RI.4), analyzing text structure (RI.5) and author purpose (RI.6), detecting errors in claims (RI.8), and resolving conflicting information (RI.9). Writing standards include writing explanatory texts to convey ideas (W.2), and producing writing in which the organization and style are appropriate to the purpose and audience (W.4).

How is the Key Practice Organized?

The key practice is organized into five phases: (1) *Set Goals and Activate Background Knowledge*, (2) *Understand the Text*, (3) *Clarify Meanings*, (4) *Consolidate Knowledge*, and (5) *Convey Knowledge*. For instructional purposes, these phases may occur in sequence, but for advanced levels of the practice, the phases often overlap or may be revisited multiple times as the student's understanding of the content develops and becomes more refined. For example, before finalizing content for a website, a student may revisit their guiding questions or purpose for reading and notice that some critical information is missing. In this case, the student may need to find and reread relevant sections of a text so they can update the website before publishing. Figure 1 below shows the five phases of the *Building and Sharing Knowledge* key practice. The questions included as part of each phase of the key practice in Figure 1 are useful guides to help both teachers and students understand these multiple skills and how they're organized to make up the larger practice.

The *Building and Sharing Knowledge* key practice is relevant when students read informational text for a particular purpose, to gain a deep understanding of an issue, or to learn new content. The phases were designed to highlight some of the key processes that help students to construct meaning from text. While reading comprehension requires students to successfully decode and recognize words, successful word recognition alone does not guarantee that a student will extract the meaning from a text, retain it and be able to apply it in future situations. Skilled comprehension requires a student to set goals for reading, activate relevant knowledge, use a variety of strategies to simplify text, organize thinking, draw inferences, connect the text to what one already knows and monitor one's understanding.

More specifically, the first phase, *Set Goals and Activate Background Knowledge*, requires students to create goals for reading before the text is read. These goals act as advance organizers, helping students determine what is important to look for while reading. In conjunction with these goals, students should also reflect upon what they already know about the topic of the materials, so they can build upon this prior knowledge while reading.

The second phase, *Understand the Text*, occurs while students are reading and involves using a host of strategies to make the text more familiar and memorable (e.g., paraphrasing), to draw inferences to make unstated ideas explicit (e.g., connecting ideas across sentences), and to simplify the text by extracting key information and their relations (e.g., using text structure to create a graphic organizer).

The third phase, *Clarify Meanings*, occurs during and after reading. It involves monitoring one’s comprehension to determine if the text makes sense, or if there are any gaps or errors in understanding. If there are errors, gaps or misconceptions, the student needs to update their understanding so that it is accurate, coherent, and complete. This phase also involves checking to see if the goals for reading have been satisfied and, if not, taking the subsequent actions to complete reader goals.

The fourth phase, *Consolidate Knowledge*, occurs during and after reading, and is designed to deepen the student’s understanding so that it is more memorable and flexible. During this phase, students may use a host of strategies to summarize what they’ve learned, elaborate their understanding by connecting the text to prior knowledge, self-explain the meaning of text, and test themselves to ensure they retain key information. Students also may be asked to transfer or apply what they’ve learned to a new situation to ensure the new knowledge is flexible and valuable for future use.

During the final phase, *Convey Knowledge*, students share what they have learned to a particular audience in a variety of formats (e.g., blog, pamphlet, presentation).

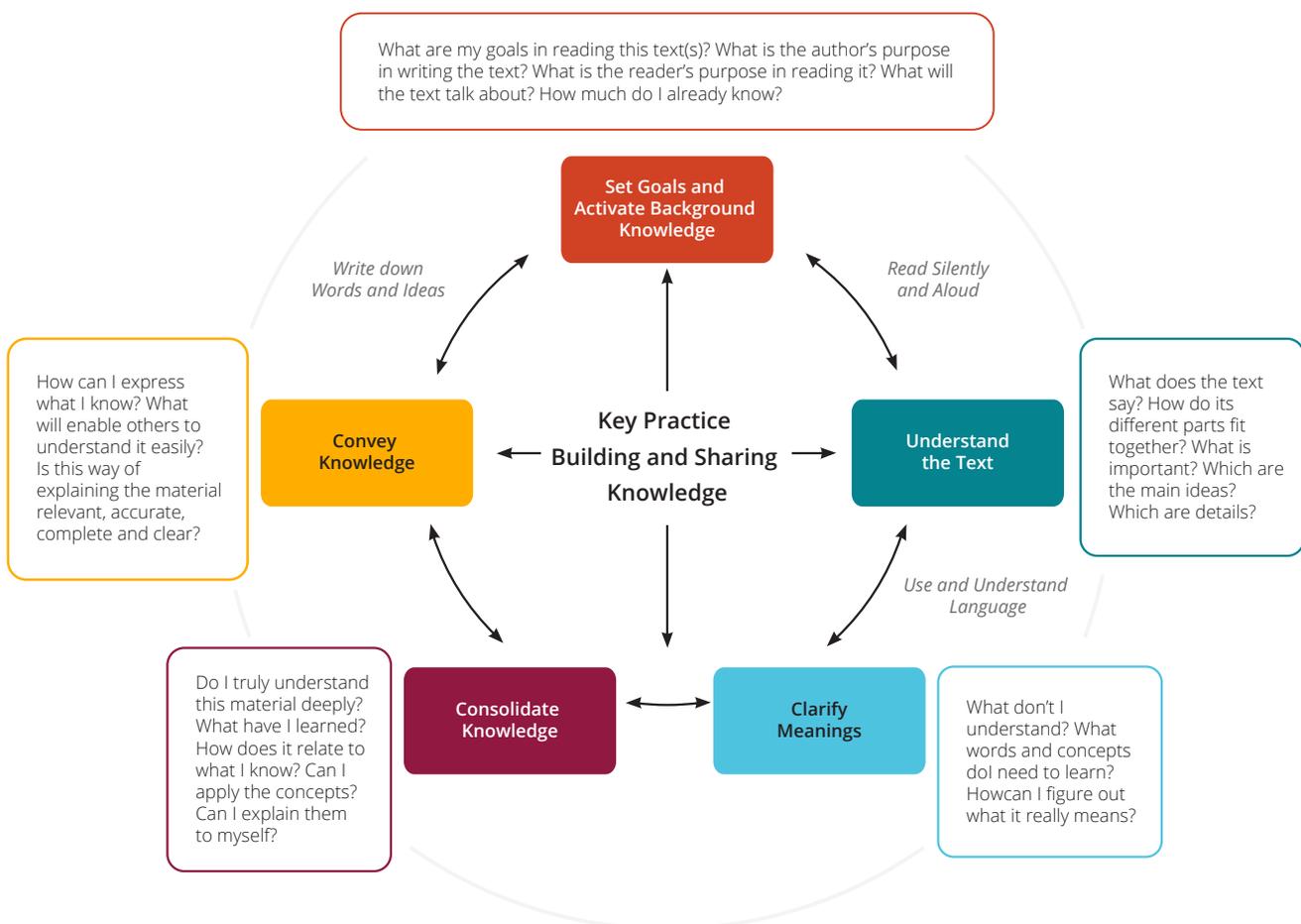


Figure 1: Building and Sharing Knowledge Key Practice Diagram.

Learning progressions are defined for each skill within the key practice. For example, the *Consolidate* phase includes learning progressions for Comparing, Contrasting and Organizing Ideas, Integrating Multiple Modalities, and Summarization. For the Summarization progression, students at Level 1 can recognize or state the central idea of a text or conversation and remember its more salient details. At Level 2, students can summarize a short informational text in a single written sentence by stating its main point or an important theme in their own words. At Level 3, students can accurately rate the relative importance/centrality of different parts of a text based upon its content and also create a text summary that includes both the central thesis or theme and major subpoints. At Level 4, students can identify and paraphrase the main and subordinate ideas in a complex text where much of the structure is implicit and can only be inferred from the content, and can correctly evaluate the accuracy of a given summary. They also can appropriately vary the level and selection of detail included in a summary, depending on the purpose for which the summary is being written. Teachers can use the higher levels of the learning progressions as models for the kinds of expert behaviors that we would like students to develop. These higher-level descriptions also can inform the development of rubrics or guidelines for evaluating sources that can be used during in-class exercises. The appendix provides a selection of some of the learning progressions that make up this key practice.

What Does the Key Practice Look Like in Student Work?

Student responses to assessment tasks may reflect different learning progression levels. For example, when asked to provide a summary about whether advertising should be banned for children, students may provide the following responses:

- “The article is telling what people think about advertising for children. Some people think it’s bad but some think it has no effect at all.” (Level 1)
- “The article “Trying” is a conflict between two different opinions. One states that commercial ads for children under the age of twelve is harmful. The other states that commercial ads for children under the age of twelve is not harmful. Most parents say that it does not affect their children. They often say that the parents or playmates are the influence to unwise decisions, like choosing unhealthy products or things they don’t need. Sweden thinks banning these ads is a great idea, but others strongly disagree.” (Level 2)
- “This article talks about both sides of the advertisement debate. It says that Sweden banned ads for children under twelve in 1991 because children do not understand the purpose of ads until the age of twelve. Sweden then tried persuading other European countries to ban advertising. Going to the other side, a large percentage of European parents surveyed believed that advertising had little effect on their children, and many other surveys showed no proof that advertising was harmful to children.” (Level 3)

Each response emphasizes different criteria for the production of a coherent and accurate summary; student responses at lower levels of the learning progression contain errors, are often incomplete, and miss the central idea and/or two or more important ideas, while student responses at higher levels are concise and clear, expressed in the students’ own words, and are complete and accurate. Examining student responses for evidence of their level of understanding will help a teacher target the next learning opportunity for students.

How Can We Help Students Make Progress with this Key Practice?

In the classroom, teachers can use the *Building and Sharing Knowledge* key practice as a model for encouraging deep comprehension and learning new content. For example, before reading a text on invasive species, specific goals for reading should be established to help orient students to the important information (e.g., What are invasive species? How do they harm the environment? How can we stop the spread of invasive species?). At first, the teacher may help students create the goals but, over time, students should be given opportunities to set their own goals. Second, students should consider what they know about the topic before reading. This helps set a structure they can use to build upon when they subsequently read the text. It also provides an opportunity to teach some key concepts to students with low knowledge before reading and to help scaffold their understanding while reading. Students should be encouraged to use a host of reading strategies to help build a succinct and organized model of the text. These strategies may include paraphrasing, using text structure to build a graphic organizer and drawing inferences across key ideas. During and after reading, students should be encouraged to check their understanding and correct any gaps, errors or prior misconceptions they have about the text (e.g., nothing can be done to stop the spread of invasive species). After reading, students should

use a set of strategies that deepen their understanding by elaborating and self-explaining the text, as well as testing their memory for the key ideas (e.g., recalling key ideas when the texts are not present). Finally, activities that require students to share what they know to a given audience also should be encouraged. In essence, reading comprehension is a strategic and iterative process that takes effort; the process should be scaffolded and modeled over time until students can independently process text at a deep level.

Using the Key Practice Diagram and Learning Progressions

Teachers can use the Key Practice diagram and Learning Progressions to deepen their own understanding of how reading, writing and critical thinking skills work together in the practice of *Building and Sharing Knowledge*, and how they might help their students develop these skills. In the classroom, the diagram can be used with students to model the process of *Building and Sharing Knowledge* through strategic and metacognitive processing.

For More Information

For further reading, O'Reilly, T., Deane, P., & Sabatini, J. (2015). *Building and Sharing Knowledge Key Practice: What Do You Know, What Don't You Know, What Did You Learn?* (Research Report No. RR-15-24).

Appendix: Select Learning Progressions Relevant to Each Phase of the Building and Sharing Knowledge Key Practice¹

Set Goals and Activate Background Knowledge Phase

	Genre Differentiation	Verbal and Conceptual Association	Knowledge Telling
Level 1	Recognizes a range of familiar written forms and has some sense of what kind of content they are likely to contain; produces short texts focused on particular goals.	Can apply comprehension and brainstorming strategies that recursively use associations to create lists of potentially relevant ideas.	Can apply generate-and-test strategies, in which one generates part of what one has in mind, pauses, considers what has been produced, and makes another attempt if unsuccessful.
Level 2	Can exploit genre templates as text analysis and generation strategies.	Can apply comprehension and brainstorming strategies that involve scanning a text or generating examples to compile lists of words that illustrate a theme or concept.	Can apply closed-loop idea-generation strategies by rereading text as one produces it.
Level 3	Controls metalanguage that supports discussion and analysis of text structure in different genres.	Can apply brainstorming strategies that require identification of abstract conceptual relations, such as those needed to perform classic analogy tasks.	Can apply reflective strategies in which knowledge telling is focused on clarifying one's own thoughts and understandings in an ambiguous situation.
Level 4	Can differentiate evaluations of text quality to reflect differences in genre priorities.	Can apply strategies that require skimming and scanning a text, analyzing conceptual relationships, and generating notes that identify ideas and relationships that appear to be important.	Can apply freewriting strategies in which one imagines a specific purpose and audience, produces text structured to suit that situation, and mines the results for materials that can be adapted to the task at hand.
Level 5	Writes flexibly in a variety of genres, changing structural and stylistic features appropriately given differences in discipline, genre, audience, task and purpose.	Can apply explicit strategies for mapping out the conceptual content of a domain, whether to support comprehension/synthesis or exposition of content, such as brainstorming to produce accurate, detailed concept maps for a specific knowledge domain.	Can apply freewriting strategies in which one assumes one or more roles that imitate other participants in a discourse and produces text consistent with the persona one has adopted, and then mines the result for materials that can be adapted to the actual task.

¹Note that for the three tables with learning progressions, the breaks between the columns are intended as a reminder that a student may have an uneven profile of understanding across the levels of the progressions. In other words, a student may display evidence of Level 4 on Genre Differentiation but Level 2 on Knowledge-Telling.

Understand the Text Phase

	Outlining	Knowledge-Based Inference	Discourse Fluency and Control
Level 1	Can recognize salient structural elements of books and other printed or electronically published materials, including such elements as covers, titles and headings, chapters, indexes, and glossaries.	Can generate expectations about what will come next in a text that are justified based upon the information that a text has presented thus far.	Can develop a simple text by choosing a focus and using it as a cue to retrieve information from memory. Can apply strategies that use asking and answering questions as a method for developing textual content.
Level 2	Can conceptualize text content in terms of key organizational elements (e.g., causal/temporal sequences). Can deploy simple strategies to plan or represent text structure, using straightforward organizing tools such as T-charts and lists.	Can distinguish between plausible and implausible continuations based upon the information presented in a text thus far.	Can fluently traverse the points in a mental plan, shifting focus to generate content relevant to each point in turn.
Level 3	Can apply strategies that use hierarchical multilevel graphical representations of text macrostructure. Can interpret formal markers of document structure to understand the relative importance of different parts of text.	Can generate linking inferences that account for unexpected text segments by drawing upon information that can be deduced from the propositional content of the preceding text.	Can handle complex text-generation tasks that require maintaining focus across a hierarchy of goals and subgoals.
Level 4	Outlines fluently in a variety of genres. Can apply multidimensional graphical organizing tools such as complex tables and charts to the task of organizing content.	Can generate bridging inferences for unexpected text segments by drawing upon generally shared background knowledge, even when not particularly salient.	Can fluently produce complex texts whose outline structure is clear and connected to the content, while making effective use of formal devices such as footnotes to indicate connections between different text parts.
Level 5	Can efficiently infer a variety of connections and potential ways to organize material that may not be explicitly indicated by formal features of the text being read.	Can generate contextualizing inferences that account for unexpected text segments by linking them to features of the social situation, purpose and audience.	Can fluently and flexibly produce complex texts in a wide variety of disciplines and genres whose outline structure is clear and organically connected to the content, while making effective use of formal devices such as cross-references to indicate connections across text.

Clarifying Ideas Phase

	Multiple Meanings	Sentence Context	Paraphrasing
Level 1	Can distinguish between words they know and words they have not previously encountered. Uses common, everyday vocabulary in multiple senses. Creatively extends word usage to cover novel situations.	Can produce speech in which words are typically used in context. Can attempt repairs of odd-sounding sentences.	Recognizes synonyms and near-synonyms. Can deploy editing strategies in which one adds synonyms or short explanatory phrases to clarify a text.
Level 2	Can distinguish homonyms and identify which of several known meanings a word has in sentence context. Is explicitly aware of lexical ambiguity and can manipulate such ambiguities to create puns and other forms of word play.	Controls word choice well enough to consider and propose alternative words to express a desired meaning.	Can recognize when two expressions are direct paraphrases or restatements of the same underlying proposition. Can produce multiple simple paraphrases by substituting synonyms or applying simple sentence transformations.
Level 3	Coins new words and uses them productively following regular patterns of metonymy and zero derivation. Can identify abstract features that motivate metaphoric extensions of a word's basic meaning.	Distinguishes semantic ill-formedness from problems with the plausibility of the situation described by a sentence. Infers key features of word meanings from use in sentence context.	Can quote or paraphrase a passage accurately. Can deploy comprehension strategies in which one reads a passage, paraphrases it, and then compares the original to the paraphrase to determine where one's understanding of the original passage may have been deficient.
Level 4	Flexibly interprets relatively rare metaphorical extensions. Produces a wide range of metaphorical and metonymic extensions from a word. Is aware of ambiguities in sentence structure and can manipulate ambiguity to create humor or word play.	Infers key features of word meanings from use in sentence context, particularly semantic types. Can generate sentences that illustrate the meaning of a word.	Can deploy comprehension strategies in which annotations are used to create and sustain richer knowledge of key facts and details from a source text. Can read a passage and paraphrase it accurately in one's own words.
Level 5	When reading in a specialized discourse, can recognize technical uses of words and make reasonable inferences about their precise meaning based on constraints imposed by that disciplinary context.	Can analyze a range of uses of a word and is sensitive to fine shades of meaning, including tone. Can reliably identify places in a text where word choice can be improved.	Can recognize and distinguish parallel passages and exact quotes shared across a pair of texts. Can paraphrase selected information from a source and embed that paraphrase effectively into a longer text.

Consolidate Knowledge Phase

	Summarization	Comparing, Contrasting and Organizing	Integrate Multiple Modalities
Level 1	Can recognize the main theme of a text and remember its more salient details.	After reading two texts, decide whether they are very similar, somewhat alike or different. List similarities and differences between the content described in a pair of texts, as long as features are salient.	Identifies common information between two representations of the same or similar concepts. Produces short statements that describe how two versions of an informational text illustrate or give information about the same concepts or ideas.
Level 2	Can summarize a short narrative in a single written sentence.	Integrates information from multiple texts on the same topic or theme and maps out shared and distinguishing features that capture how each text is related to the others.	Identifies unique or discrepant information between two or more representations. Produces texts that compare two or more representations or descriptions of a concept, describing unique features and how the unique features inform one's understanding of the topic.
Level 3	Can accurately rate the relative importance/centrality of different parts of a text based upon its content. Can create a text summary that includes the central thesis and major subpoints, accurately representing the text macrostructure.	Recognizes common information and mutual relevance when information is presented in different modes. Applies recoding to make information easier to process or problems easier to solve, depending on one's purposes.	Recognizes common information and mutual relevance between sources when information is presented in different modes. Produces notes and writings that transform and recast information drawn from sources in terms of familiar opinions, perspectives, categories and language, to suit one's purposes.
Level 4	Can effectively apply analytical highlighting strategies to capture different aspects of a text's content and signal their relation to a particular purpose for analysis.	Interprets similarities and differences among texts that require multiple levels of analysis (e.g., analyzing how an idea is transformed when it is transferred or is reworked).	Recognizes points of agreement even when the source documents are written from fundamentally different perspectives. Produces reviews that recast information in terms that express one's own perspectives and evaluations, while using terms which are familiar to one's audience.
Level 5	Interprets the structure of texts flexibly in light of their rhetorical purpose and disciplinary context. Can select analysis strategies appropriate to specific text types, showing sensitivity to both text structure and specific disciplinary concerns.	Can analyze similarities and differences among texts in which one text can be viewed as the analogical key to another, as in cases of allegory and symbolism.	Draws on a wide range of canonical source texts to provide points of reference when interpreting and recasting information from other texts. Evaluate sources from multiple perspectives that are valued in a discipline. Considers how information from sources would be viewed by a particular character, historical figure, or an influential theory or position.

Convey Knowledge Phase

	(P)Review	Framing an Exposition	Knowledge Telling
Level 1	Can annotate a text by addressing the factual adequacy of specific facts and statements. Can apply search and verification strategies that target specific statements for verification.	Can restate facts about a topic after reading a straightforward exposition. Can apply strategies that elicit information by asking and answering questions.	Can apply generate-and-test strategies, in which one generates part of what one has in mind, pauses, considers what has been produced, and makes another attempt if unsuccessful.
Level 2	Can annotate a text by focusing attention on specific sections and requesting clarification of their relevance within the larger text. Can apply strategies that determine whether information is relevant to the central purpose of the text.	Can produce a coherent, focused paragraph that introduces and develops a topic, while clearly indicating logical relations among ideas. Can apply strategies using conceptual relations to explore a topic.	Can apply closed-loop idea-generation strategies by rereading text as one produces it.
Level 3	Can apply restructuring strategies that identify organizational problems in a text and trigger inferential processes to reevaluate what organizing pattern would actually provide the clearest method for rearranging textual content.	Can write a multiple-paragraph exposition that successfully carries out a series of subordinate rhetorical goals, providing appropriate structural markers and transitional cues to convey a clear understanding.	Can apply reflective strategies in which knowledge telling is focused on clarifying one's own thoughts and understandings in an ambiguous situation.
Level 4	Can apply stylistic reevaluation strategies that trigger social reasoning processes to reevaluate how well they support the text's rhetorical purposes and define how suitable they are for the target audience.	Can frame a document whose introduction, body and conclusion link effectively with the knowledge and interests of the audience. Can apply editing and revision strategies that generate questions to be answered for a given audience.	Can apply freewriting strategies in which one imagines a specific purpose and audience, produces text structured to suit that situation, and mines the results for materials that can be adapted to the task at hand.
Level 5	Can apply rhetorical reevaluation strategies that identify deviations from genre structure norms and trigger social reasoning processes to reevaluate how well these deviations support the text's rhetorical purpose.	Can analyze in detail how a text presents its subject matter, identifying what the text highlights and what it deemphasizes or obscures, taking full account of the text's intended discipline and genre.	Can apply freewriting strategies in which one assumes one or more roles that imitate other participants in a discourse and produces text consistent with the persona one has adopted.

