

Step Up to Writing and the Common Core Standards Initiative for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (6-12)

6th Grade – 12th Grade

COMMON CORE STANDARDS FOR READING LITERATURE AND/OR INFORMATIONAL TEXTS

1. *Key Ideas and Details* – Core Standards provided the **WHAT!**

Students in 6-12 will be expected to...

- Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and make logical inferences from it;
- Cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from text;
- Determine central ideas or themes of text and analyze their development;
- Summarize the key supporting details and ideas of a text;
- Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Step Up to Writing strategies and tools provide the HOW!

Students are given a variety of **active reading strategies** to better comprehend all texts, both **fiction and non-fiction, written and visual**. From recognizing **text structures and features** to **marking and annotating a text**, students are equipped with multisensory literacy strategies for **finding main ideas and supporting details, determining themes and central ideas, analyzing and evaluating texts, making inferences, drawing conclusions and connections, and synthesizing information**. Teachers are provided with **examples to model** with their students and **guided lessons** to incorporate into **all subject areas**, not just English/language arts.

For example:

- Section 1: Writing to improve reading and listening comprehension
 - Making text connections
 - Taking effective reading and research notes
 - Making inferences and analyzing the text
 - Paraphrasing, retelling and summarizing main ideas and details
 - Asking and answering questions;
 - Recognizing text structures
 - Using informal outlines
- Section 2: Vocabulary
 - Developing a strong vocabulary across content areas
 - Learning and using new terms
 - Explaining the meanings
- Sections 4-5: Accordion (Expository/Information) Paragraphs, Essays and Reports
 - Recognizing and working with two kinds of writing: expository/informational and narrative
 - Defining *fiction, non-fiction, prose, poetry, explain, and entertain*
 - Creating informal outlines
 - Learning to organize ideas and information

- Sections 6-7: Story, Narrative, and Personal Narrative Writing
 - Understanding story structure and terms
 - Recognizing and imitating narrative patterns
 - Using story maps for prewriting
 - Using quick sketches for planning
- Section 8: Speeches
 - Developing good listening skills
 - Asking and answering questions
 - Participating in one-on-one and large group discussions
- Section 9: Specific writing assignments
 - Learning an array of writing/speaking forms and genres including persuasive, compare/contrast, cause/effect, poetry, dramatic skit, personal narrative, descriptive; news articles and more

2. *Craft and Structure* – Core Standards provide the **WHAT!**

Students in 6-12 will be expected to...

- Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings;
- Analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone;
- Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text relate to each other and the whole;
- Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Step Up to Writing strategies and tools provide the **HOW!**

To aid students in their interpretation and analysis of texts' structure and craft, *Step Up to Writing* provides a variety of strategies and activities that teach text **structure and patterns**, **word choice**, and **style**. In both reading and writing, students are challenged to identify **authors' stylistic choices** and **interpret its affects** on the overall presentation of the authors' message. Teachers can also help students recognize authors' considerations for **audience and purpose**. In *Step Up to Writing*, **teachers can model various reading and writing strategies** and use **guided lessons** to help students successfully work with texts

For example:

- Section 1: Writing to improve reading and listening comprehension
 - Making text connections
 - Taking effective reading and research notes
 - Making inferences and analyzing the text
 - Paraphrasing, retelling and summarizing main ideas and details
 - Asking and answering questions;
 - Recognizing text structures
 - Using informal outlines
- Section 2: Vocabulary
 - Developing a strong vocabulary across content areas
- Sections 4-5: Accordion (Expository/Information) Paragraphs, Essays and Reports
 - Recognizing and working with two kinds of writing: expository/informational and narrative
 - Defining *fiction, non-fiction, prose, poetry, explain, and entertain*
 - Creating informal outlines for planning, making outlines from text
 - Expository paragraph, report, and essay writing

- Writing for a variety of purposes
- Writing in first, second, and third person
- Writing for a specific audience
- Applying the writing process
- Sections 6-7: Story, Narrative, and Personal Narrative Writing
 - Understanding story structure and terms
 - Recognizing narrative patterns
 - Using story maps for prewriting
 - Using quick sketches for planning
 - Writing to entertain, to share a message, and/or to create visual images
 - Writing to share an experience
 - Applying the writing process
- Section 9: Specific writing assignments
 - Recognizing and creating a variety of text structures
 - Analyzing, describing and comparing text structures
- Section 10: Assessment and high standards
 - Learning to assess structure and craft
 - Comparing text for clarity using a below basic, basic, proficient, advanced scale

3. Integration and Knowledge of Ideas – Core Standards provide the WHAT!

Students in 6-12 will be expected to...

- Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words;
- Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a texts, including the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of evidence;
- Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Step Up to Writing strategies and tools provide the HOW!

Students are taught **strategies for reading, comprehending and analyzing** a wide range of texts in **diverse media and formats**. Teachers can tailor the various **graphic organizers, note-taking techniques**, and modes of **collecting and organizing facts** to help students **draw conclusions** from the information, **make generalizations** about topics, **synthesize** various media and viewpoints, and **analyze the effects** the media has on society and culture. Teachers are also encouraged to use the various writing assignments suggested to have students **reflect, respond to, analyze and create visual media**.

For example:

- Section 1: Writing to improve reading and listening comprehension
 - Using a variety of note taking strategies to increase comprehension necessary for evaluating, analyzing, etc.
 - Writing, or sharing orally, summaries to demonstrate comprehension
 - Asking and answering questions as preparation for analyzing, integrating, etc.
- Sections 4-5: Accordion (Expository/Information) Paragraphs, Essays and Reports
 - Recognizing and working with two kinds of writing: expository/informational and narrative
 - Defining *fiction, non-fiction, prose, poetry, explain, and entertain*
 - Creating informal outlines
 - Expository paragraph, report, and essay writing

- Writing for a variety of purposes
- Writing in first, second, and third person
- Writing for a specific audience
- Applying the writing process
- Sections 6-7: Story, Narrative, and Personal Narrative Writing
 - Understanding story structure and terms
 - Recognizing narrative patterns
 - Using story maps for prewriting
 - Using quick sketches for planning
 - Writing to entertain, to share a message, and/or to create visual images
 - Writing to share an experience
 - Applying the writing process
- Section 9: Specific writing assignments
 - Learning an array of writing/speaking forms and genres including persuasive, compare/contrast, cause/effect, poetry, dramatic skit, personal narrative, descriptive; news articles and more

4. Range of Reading and Level of Complexity – Core Standards provide the WHAT!

Students in 6-12 will be expected to...

- Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

Step Up to Writing strategies and tools provide the HOW!

As with writing for a variety of purposes, reading across content areas for various purposes enables students to strengthen their **overall literacy skills**. With *Step Up to Writing* students are taught **active reading strategies** to **improve their comprehension** of texts – **fiction and non-fiction**, and within **specific subject areas**. Students are not only given opportunities to read **different forms and genres**, but to also practice crafting their own texts in these forms and genres.

From recognizing **text structures and features** to **marking and annotating a text**, students are equipped with multisensory literacy strategies for **analyzing and evaluating texts, making inferences, summarizing and retelling information, drawing conclusions, comparing/contrasting texts, and synthesizing information**. Teachers are provided with **examples to model** with their students and **guided lessons** to incorporate into **all subject areas**, not just English/language arts.

Teachers use tools when they **model and practice strategies** with students. Teachers demonstrate, guide, and provide numerous opportunities to apply strategies independently as students read.

For example:

- Section 1: Writing to improve reading and listening comprehension
 - Making text connections
 - Taking effective reading and research notes
 - Making inferences and analyzing the text
 - Paraphrasing, retelling and summarizing main ideas and details
 - Asking and answering questions;
 - Recognizing text structures
 - Using informal outlines
- Section 2: Vocabulary
 - Developing a strong vocabulary across content areas

- Sections 4-5: Accordion (Expository/Information) Paragraphs, Essays and Reports
 - Recognizing and working with two kinds of writing: expository/informational and narrative
 - Defining *fiction, non-fiction, prose, poetry, explain, and entertain*
 - Creating informal outlines
- Section 8: Speeches
 - Asking and answering questions
 - Developing good listening skills
 - Participating in one-on-one and large group discussions
- Section 9: Specific writing assignments
 - Learning an array of writing/speaking forms and genres including persuasive, compare/contrast, cause/effect, poetry, dramatic skit, personal narrative, descriptive; news articles and more

COMMON CORE STANDARDS FOR WRITING

1. *Text Types and Purposes* – Core Standards provide the **WHAT!**

Students in 6-12 will be expected to...

- Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence;
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content;
- Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

***Step Up to Writing* strategies and tools provide HOW!**

With *Step Up to Writing*, students learn to **write for a variety of audiences and purposes**; they **learn different formats through explicit instruction and guided lessons**; they **apply and practice a number of writing strategies** to various writing assignments **across subject areas**; they **communicate/publish their work** using appropriate mediums such as newspapers, bulletins, web sites, display boards, books.

Students **perfect writing skills** by learning **strategies that are visual and broken down into manageable steps**. Teachers are encouraged to **use content from various subjects to introduce, teach, practice, and apply these strategies**; students and teachers are encouraged to **apply the strategies in all subject areas**; strategies are reinforced by lessons and assignments given by subject area teachers.

Students learn, practice, and apply all *Step Up to Writing* strategies using various media and technology.

For example:

- Poster boards with text
- Pictures or other visuals to match Quick Sketch for story writing
- Informational outlines, in TelePrompTer format, for science reports or other oral presentations
- Graphs and charts to illustrate technical/business writing
- Brochures, pamphlets, and other informational formats
- Formal and informal letters

- Finely crafted final drafts for information and expository text
- Notes and study guides

A sampling of the more than 40 writing forms and genres in *Step Up to Writing!*

- **Exposition:** Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, and 10
- **Literary analysis:** Sections 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, and 10
- **Narrative account or procedure:** Sections 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10
- **Persuasive essay:** Sections 4, 5, 8, and 9
- **Reflective essay:** Sections 1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9
- **Technical/business writing:** Sections 4, 5, 8, and 9
- **Informative writing:** Sections 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, and 10

2. Production and Distribution of Writing – Core Standards provide the WHAT!

Students in 6-12 will be expected to...

- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience;
- Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach;
- Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Step Up to Writing strategies and tools provide the HOW!

With *Step Up to Writing*, students are taught to move through the **writing process** until a final polished draft is ready to be shared. Students use a **flexible eight-step writing process** that guides students through **prewriting, planning, drafting, revising, editing, writing a final copy, proofreading, and sharing/publishing**. Students learn to “tailor” the writing process for a variety of writing tasks; they use strategies and tools to help them learn.

Students learn to **write for a variety of audiences and purposes**; they **learn different formats through explicit instruction and guided lessons**; they **apply and practice a number of writing strategies** to various writing assignments **across subject areas**; they **communicate/publish their work** using appropriate mediums such as newspapers, bulletins, web sites, display boards, books.

For example:

- Section 1: Writing to improve reading and listening comprehension
 - Responding to the text
 - Making text connections
 - Taking effective reading and research notes
 - Making inferences and analyzing the text
 - Paraphrasing, retelling and summarizing main ideas and details
 - Asking and answering questions;
 - Recognizing text structures
 - Using informal outlines
- Sections 4-5: Accordion (Expository/Information) Paragraphs, Essays and Reports
 - Recognizing and working with two kinds of writing: expository/informational and narrative
 - Defining *fiction, non-fiction, prose, poetry, explain, and entertain*
 - Creating informal outlines

- Expository paragraph, report, and essay writing
- Writing for a variety of purposes
- Writing in first, second, and third person
- Writing for a specific audience
- Applying the writing process
- Sections 6-7: Story, Narrative, and Personal Narrative Writing
 - Understanding story structure and terms
 - Recognizing narrative patterns
 - Using story maps for prewriting
 - Using quick sketch for planning
 - Writing to entertain, to share a message, and/or to create visual images
 - Writing to share an experience
- Section 9: Specific writing assignments
 - Learning an array of writing/speaking forms and genres including persuasive, compare/contrast, cause/effect, poetry, dramatic skit, personal narrative, descriptive; news articles and more
- Section 10: Assessment and high standards
 - Setting high standards and clear expectations
 - Using checklists for revision and Peer review
 - Editing with CUPS – capitalization, usage, punctuation, and spelling

3. Research to Build and Present Knowledge – Core Standards provide the WHAT!

Students in 6-12 will be expected to...

- Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation;
- Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources;
- Assess the credibility and accuracy of each source;
- Integrate the information gained from sources while avoiding plagiarism;
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research

***Step Up to Writing* strategies and tools provide the HOW!**

Students learn a number of important skills that help them engage in the information literacy process and prepare them for **short and longer research assignments**. Students master skills such as **taking notes**, making **outlines**, generating **questions**, and creating **thesis statements** that make research and writing about research possible.

Additionally, students are encouraged to **incorporate technology throughout the writing and research process** as they present writing that effectively conveys a message to their audience. This includes using technology as a means of **planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing** writing; or crafting **visual narratives and visual aids** to accompany writing or speeches.

Teachers can use and adapt *Step Up* strategies to help students:

- Generate **effective research questions** and **thesis statements**
- **Locate, select, and use information** from a **variety of** research material
- **Evaluate, interpret, and select** information to use
- **Communicate research findings** through a variety of means, both **written and spoken**
- **Use technology** effectively to communicate research findings
- **Incorporate research findings without plagiarizing, cite sources, and use quotations**

For example:

- Section 1: Writing to improve reading and listening comprehension
 - Responding to the text
 - Making text connections
 - Taking effective reading and research notes
 - Making inferences and analyzing the text
 - Paraphrasing, retelling and summarizing main ideas and details
 - Asking and answering questions;
 - Recognizing text structures
 - Using informal outlines
- Sections 4-5: Accordion (Expository/Information) Paragraphs, Essays and Reports
 - Recognizing and working with two kinds of writing: expository/informational and narrative
 - Defining *fiction, non-fiction, prose, poetry, explain, and entertain*
 - Creating informal outlines
 - Expository paragraph, report, and essay writing
 - Writing for a variety of purposes
 - Writing in first, second, and third person
 - Writing for a specific audience
 - Applying the writing process
 - Mastering topic sentences, thesis statements, and leads
 - Selecting Key supporting statements
 - Including elaboration, evidence, and examples
 - Adding quotations and documentation
- Section 8: Speeches
 - Creating a thesis
 - Mastering leads
 - Blocking out support
 - Adding accurate, effective detail and elaboration
 - Adding a conclusion
- Section 9: Specific writing assignments
 - Learning an array of writing/speaking forms and genres including persuasive, compare/contrast, cause/effect, poetry, dramatic skit, personal narrative, descriptive; news articles and more
 - Recognizing the organization used in each of the se forms
 - Applying the writing process and strategies to each of these forms
- Sections 1-10: Common Language, Knowledge, Standards, High Expectations
 - Customizable CD tools for use in the classroom, as overhead transparencies, in computer/writing labs, and with computer projectors
 - Strategies for planning, organizing, and developing ideas during the drafting process including graphic organizers, two-column notes, and webbing/mapping
 - Use of the computer to draft paragraphs, essays, and reports
 - Effective peer review
 - Self-evaluating writing; monitoring student progress; editing with CUPS – capitalization, usage, punctuation, and spelling
 - Checklists for revision, scoring guides, and “samples for student writers”
 - Practical and effective assessment

4. *Range of Writing* – Core Standards provide the **WHAT!**

Students in 6-12 will be expected to...

- Write routinely over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Step Up to Writing strategies and tools provide the **HOW!**

Students use **writing for learning** as they apply strategies in **all subject areas** for all kinds of content. Students learn to take **practical, helpful notes** that can be **personalized during a lesson, discussion, or extra reading**. Writing helps **improve class discussion and peer sharing**. Writing is used to **improve viewing and listening** skills. Students realize that if they want to learn something, they must write. Expository/information writing pushes students to **clarify their thinking** and **demonstrate what they know and understand**.

Students must be given the opportunity to practice writing for both **formal and informal contexts**. As students practice their writing skills – **planning, organizing, developing, and revising/editing their ideas into a coherent and polished text** – they become more confident at writing in **timed or on-demand situations** such as state and district assessments or college-entrance exams.

For example:

- Section 1: Writing to improve reading and listening comprehension
 - Responding to the text
 - Making text connections
 - Taking effective reading and research notes
 - Making inferences and analyzing the text
 - Paraphrasing, retelling and summarizing main ideas and details
 - Asking and answering questions;
 - Recognizing text structures
 - Using informal outlines
- Sections 4-5: Accordion (Expository/Information) Paragraphs, Essays and Reports
 - Recognizing and working with two kinds of writing: expository/informational and narrative
 - Defining *fiction, non-fiction, prose, poetry, explain, and entertain*
 - Creating informal outlines
 - Expository paragraph, report, and essay writing
 - Writing for a variety of purposes
 - Writing in first, second, and third person
 - Writing for a specific audience
 - Applying the writing process
 - Mastering topic sentences, thesis statements, and leads
 - Selecting Key supporting statements
 - Including elaboration, evidence, and examples
 - Adding quotations and documentation
 - Using informal outlines
 - Playing the thinking game, Train of thought, and accordion races
 - Using “Stretch, don’t stack” activities
- Sections 6-7: Story, Narrative, and Personal Narrative Writing
 - Understanding story structure and terms
 - Recognizing narrative patterns
 - Using story maps for prewriting
 - Using quick sketches for planning
 - Writing to entertain, to share a message, and/or to create visual images

- Writing to share an experience
- Applying the writing process
- Section 8: Speeches
 - Using components of a good speech
 - Applying good listening skills
 - Participating in discussion
- Section 9: Specific writing assignments
 - Learning an array of writing/speaking forms and genres including persuasive, compare/contrast, cause/effect, poetry, dramatic skit, personal narrative, descriptive; news articles and more

COMMON CORE STANDARDS FOR SPEAKING AND LISTENING

1. Comprehension and Collaboration – Core Standards provide the WHAT!

Students in 6-12 will be expected to...

- Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively;
- Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally;
- Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Step Up to Writing strategies and tools provide the HOW!

Students are given the tools and strategies for **planning, drafting, revising, and communicating** their message to a **variety of audiences**, both **formally and informally** and in a **variety of patterns**. Students learn that oral communication, like written communication, relies on producing a **coherent message** tailored to the **specific audience, purpose, and message**. Teachers are given strategies and activities to aid students in **analyzing their audience** and crafting a speech or written text that considers **audience background and expectations**.

Students learn that oral communication, like written communication, relies on a **single thesis statement supported by well-developed main ideas, reasons, details, and facts**. Strategies for producing a **coherent message** – ranging from writing a **successful introduction and conclusion** to using **effective and appropriate transitions**, from **incorporating interesting anecdotes and stories** to accomplishing **specific speaking patterns** – are offered throughout *Step Up to Writing*.

For example:

- Sections 4-7: Expository Writing, Narrative Writing, and Personal Narratives
 - Recognizing and working with two kinds of writing: expository/informational and narrative
 - Defining *fiction, non-fiction, prose, poetry, explain, and entertain*
 - Understanding story structure and terminology
 - Considering audience, purpose, and message in word choice
 - Writing in 1st, 2nd and 3rd person
 - Planning and organizing for a specific text structure
 - Creating a thesis statement

- Writing an effective lead
- Using appropriate transitions
- Choosing and elaborating on main ideas, reasons, and facts
- Writing a successful conclusion or ending
- Writing dialogue
- Developing characters
- Applying tools to support grammar and usage
- Section 8: Speeches
 - Planning and organizing speeches
 - Giving effective speeches
 - Asking and answering questions
 - Improving impromptu speaking, informational and how-to speeches, and persuasive speeches
 - Focusing on the audience
 - Delivering oral book reports
 - Developing good listening skills
 - Participating in a discussion
- Section 9: Specific writing assignments
 - Learning an array of writing/speaking forms and genres including persuasive, compare/contrast, cause/effect, poetry, dramatic skit, personal narrative, descriptive; news articles and more
- Section 10: Assessment and high standards
 - Using quick checks for self-evaluation
 - Using practical and effective scoring guides that provide feedback on *organization, content, style, and grammar/mechanics/usage*
 - Analyzing examples of *below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced* writing
 - Recording and monitoring own progress

2. Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas – Core Standards provide the WHAT!

Students in 6-12 will be expected to...

- Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning;
- Present information, findings and supporting evidence such that the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience;
- Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentation;
- Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Step Up to Writing strategies and tools provide the HOW!

Students are given the tools for **planning, drafting, revising, and communicating** their speeches to a variety of audiences. Students learn that oral communication, like written communication, relies on a **single thesis statement supported by well-developed main ideas, reasons, details, and facts**. Strategies for producing a **coherent message** – ranging from writing a **successful introduction and conclusion** to using **effective and appropriate transitions**, from **incorporating interesting anecdotes and stories** to accomplishing **specific speaking patterns** – are offered throughout *Step Up to Writing*. Teachers are given strategies to help students **increase their vocabulary, vary their sentence structures**, and **develop a strong speaking style**; as a result, students become more **skillful and confident communicators** in a variety of **occasions and contexts**.

For example:

- Section 2: Vocabulary
 - Developing a strong vocabulary across content areas
- Section 3: Sentence mastery
 - Writing better sentences
 - Varying sentence structures
 - Recognizing parts of speech and parts of a sentence
 - Playing with language
- Sections 4-7: Expository Writing, Narrative Writing, and Personal Narratives
 - Recognizing and working with two kinds of writing: expository/informational and narrative
 - Defining *fiction, non-fiction, prose, poetry, explain, and entertain*
 - Understanding story structure and terminology
 - Considering audience, purpose, and message in word choice
 - Writing in 1st, 2nd and 3rd person
 - Planning and organizing for a specific text structure
 - Creating a thesis statement
 - Writing an effective lead
 - Using appropriate transitions
 - Choosing and elaborating on main ideas, reasons, and facts
 - Writing a successful conclusion or ending
 - Writing dialogue
 - Developing characters
 - Applying tools to support grammar and usage
- Section 8: Speeches
 - Planning and organizing speeches
 - Giving effective speeches
 - Asking and answering questions
 - Improving impromptu speaking, informational and how-to speeches, and persuasive speeches
 - Focusing on the audience
 - Delivering oral book reports
 - Developing good listening skills
 - Participating in a discussion
- Section 9: Specific writing assignments
 - Learning an array of writing/speaking forms and genres including persuasive, compare/contrast, cause/effect, poetry, dramatic skit, personal narrative, descriptive; news articles and more
- Section 10: Assessment and high standards
 - Using self-evaluation quick checks for eye contact, articulation and voice in speeches
 - Participating in effective peer review
 - Recording and monitoring own progress

COMMON CORE STANDARDS FOR LANGUAGE

1. *Conventions of Standard English* – Core Standards provide the **WHAT!**

Students in 6-12 will be expected to...

- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking;
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standards English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

Step Up to Writing strategies and tools provide the **HOW!**

Students are empowered to develop a **repertoire of appropriate writing styles** and to complete final drafts that are free of mistakes and follow the **established writing conventions**. As a result, students develop the ability to **edit and proofread** their own and others' writing for **usage, punctuation, spelling, syntax, and style**. Students are taught to present writing that effectively conveys a **message to their audience for a specific purpose**.

Additionally, *Step Up to Writing* **immerses students in language** – written, oral, and visual. Teachers can use **and model the multisensory strategies** to help students improve their language skills, including **word recognition, word study, and spelling**.

For example:

- Section 2: Vocabulary
 - Developing a strong vocabulary across content areas
 - Considering audience, purpose, and message in word choice
 - Applying tools to support grammar and usage
- Section 3: Sentence mastery
 - Writing better sentences
 - Varying sentence structures
 - Recognizing parts of speech and parts of a sentence
 - Playing with language
 - Considering audience, purpose, message
 - Applying tools to support grammar/ usage
- Sections 4-7: Expository Writing, Narrative Writing, and Personal Narratives
 - Recognizing and working with two kinds of writing: expository/informational and narrative
 - Defining *fiction, non-fiction, prose, poetry, explain, and entertain*
 - Understanding story structure and terminology
 - Considering audience, purpose, and message in word choice
 - Writing in 1st, 2nd and 3rd person
 - Planning and organizing for a specific text structure
 - Creating a thesis statement
 - Writing an effective lead
 - Using appropriate transitions
 - Choosing and elaborating on main ideas, reasons, and facts
 - Writing a successful conclusion or ending
 - Writing dialogue
 - Developing characters
 - Applying tools to support grammar and usage
- Section 9: Specific writing assignments

- Learning an array of writing/speaking forms and genres including persuasive, compare/contrast, cause/effect, poetry, dramatic skit, personal narrative, descriptive; news articles and more
- Section 10: Assessment and high standards
 - Adhering to the “neat paper” rules
 - Perfecting printing and cursive writing
 - Editing with CUPS – capitalization, usage, punctuation, and spelling
 - Applying tools to support grammar and usage
 - Writing Perfect Three-Sentence Paragraph quickly and accurately
 - Using quick checks for self-evaluation
 - Implementing scoring guides
 - Monitoring student progress

2. Knowledge of Language – Core Standards provide the WHAT!

Students in 6-12 will be expected to...

- Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts;
- Apply knowledge of language to make effective choices for meaning or style;
- Apply knowledge of language to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

***Step Up to Writing* strategies and tools provide the HOW!**

To aid students in their analysis of language and culture, *Step Up to Writing* provides a variety of critical thinking strategies. In *Step Up to Writing*, **teachers can model various reading and writing strategies** and use **guided lessons** to help students successfully work with texts, writing assignments, and concepts that challenge their abilities and push them to **a higher level**. Students are given ample opportunities to independently practice **active reading skills** and **respond to what they read** in different formats.

For example:

- Section 1: Writing to improve reading and listening comprehension
 - Responding to the text
 - Making text connections
 - Taking effective reading and research notes
 - Making inferences and analyzing the text
 - Paraphrasing, retelling and summarizing main ideas and details
 - Asking and answering questions
 - Recognizing text structures
 - Using informal outlines
- Section 2: Vocabulary
 - Developing a strong vocabulary across content areas
 - Using appropriate vocabulary for defined purposes in specific subject areas
- Section 3: Sentence mastery
 - Writing better sentences
 - Varying sentence structures
 - Recognizing parts of speech and parts of a sentence
 - Playing with language
 - Considering audience, purpose, message
 - Applying tools to support grammar/ usage
- Sections 4-7: Expository Writing, Narrative Writing, and Personal Narratives
 - Recognizing and working with two kinds of writing: expository/informational and narrative

- Defining *fiction, non-fiction, prose, poetry, explain, and entertain*
- Understanding story structure and terminology
- Considering audience, purpose, and message in word choice
- Sections 8-9: Specific speaking/writing assignments
 - Learning an array of writing/speaking forms and genres including persuasive, compare/contrast, cause/effect, poetry, dramatic skit, personal narrative, descriptive; news articles and more

3. **Vocabulary Acquisition and Use – Core Standards provides the WHAT!**

Students in 6-12 will be expected to...

- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference material, as appropriate;
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meaning;
- Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level;
- Demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

Step Up to Writing strategies and tools provide the HOW!

Vocabulary development and word analysis are critical components of the *Step Up to Writing* program. Students are given a multitude of strategies to **learn, comprehend, and use new vocabulary words**. The activities are not simply used in English/language arts, but encourage vocabulary development within **specific content areas**. Teachers model various strategies such as **analyzing word/sentence structures, creating concept maps to extend understanding of a word, and creating meaningful sentences that demonstrate understanding of a word's definition and usage**. Writing assignments – both **informational/expository and narrative** – challenge students to use new vocabulary words appropriately in the context of their own writing; **scoring guides and other assessment tools** give feedback to the students about their progress.

For example:

- Section 1: Writing to improve reading and listening comprehension
 - Responding to the text
 - Making text connections
 - Taking effective reading and research notes
 - Making inferences and analyzing the text
 - Paraphrasing, retelling and summarizing main ideas and details
 - Asking and answering questions
 - Recognizing text structures
 - Using informal outlines
- Section 2: Vocabulary
 - Mastering vocabulary
 - Teaching tips for reading dictionary definitions and pronouncing words
 - Breaking down definitions
 - Using correct pronunciation
 - Developing concept maps
 - Creating meaningful vocabulary sentences with context

- Using vocabulary note cards to develop definition/synonyms/antonyms/part of speech
- Categorizing vocabulary words and content-specific terminology
- Understanding homonyms/homophones/ homographs, and
- Developing subject-specific vocabulary
- Section 3: Sentence mastery
 - Identifying parts of speech and parts of a sentence
 - Playing with language
 - Analyzing sentence structures
 - Writing with a variety of accurate and interesting sentences
- Sections 4-7: Expository Writing, Narrative Writing, and Personal Narratives
 - Recognizing and working with two kinds of writing: expository/informational and narrative
 - Defining *fiction, non-fiction, prose, poetry, explain, and entertain*
 - Understanding story structure and terminology
 - Considering audience, purpose, and message in word choice
- Section 9: Specific writing assignments
 - Learning an array of writing/speaking forms and genres including persuasive, compare/contrast, cause/effect, poetry, dramatic skit, personal narrative, descriptive; news articles and more
- Section 10: Assessment and high standards
 - Using quick checks for self-evaluation
 - Using practical and effective scoring guides that provide feedback on *organization, content, style, and grammar/ mechanics/usage*
 - Analyzing examples of *below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced* writing
 - Recording and monitoring own progress

REFERENCES

Auman, Maureen. *Step Up to Writing*. 3rd edition. Boston: Sopris West Educational Services, 2008.

Common Core State Standards Initiative. "Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects." 3 March 2011. <http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_ELA%20Standards.pdf>