



Smarter Balanced
Construct Relevant Vocabulary for
English Language Arts and Literacy

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Construct Relevant Vocabulary for English Language Arts: Introduction

“Construct relevant vocabulary” refers to any English language arts term that students should know because it is essential to the construct of English language arts. As such, these terms should be part of instruction.

These are words that may appear in assessment stems or options on the ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment even though the EDL Core Vocabularies in Reading, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies might identify these terms as above grade level for general use. Because these terms are part of instruction in the ELA classroom they are considered construct relevant and thus allowable for this use.

The following list of “construct relevant vocabulary” was compiled by the Smarter Balanced ELA Team Leads. This list

- is **not** intended to be a default vocabulary curriculum; instead, the list of terms is intended as an instructional resource to ensure that teachers remember to embed these terms into their instruction.
- includes words that will not be glossed.
- is a working document. It is neither “finished” nor is it all-inclusive.

Note: Some words are not repeated in subsequent grades because it is assumed students are familiar with them because they have been part of ELA instruction in previous grades.

Grade 3

affix	global notes	pre-writing
antonym	grammar usage	presentation (listening stimulus)
article/magazine article/ newspaper article	heading	punctuation/punctuated
audience (as in writer's audience)	illustration	purpose for writing (informative, opinion, narrative writing)
author	imaginary	quotation/direct quotations/ quoting directly
capitals/capitalization	infer/inference(s)/ inference(s) made	reason(s)
central idea	inform	relationship
character(s)	information	report
character's actions	informational paper/ informational article	research
characters' relationships	Internet	research report
clear language	introduce setting/ characters/problems (writing)	revise
conclude/conclusion	introduction	root word
conclusion drawn/drawing a conclusion	key details	sentence/pair of sentences/set of sentences/line
connect ideas (transitions in writing)	lesson/moral	setting
convince/convincing (in opinion writing)	main character	similar
definition	main idea	skim
describe/description/descriptive details/realistic details	meaning	source(s)
develop ideas (evidence/ elaboration)	mental picture (writing)	speaker (used in listening items)
dialogue	message (e.g., author's message)	specific word choice
dictionary/dictionary entry	narrator	spell check
draft	notes	spelling errors
edit	opening (beginning)	stanza
encyclopedia	opinion/agree/disagree	support/supporting details
errors	opposite	synonym
event	order of events	title
examples	organize(d)/organization of ideas	topic
explain	paragraph	trustworthy source
facts	passage	underlined
flashback	phrase	verb(s)/verb tense
	plot	
	point of view	

Grade 4

account	global notes	reason(s)
adjectives	grammar usage	relationship
affix	heading	report
antonym	imaginary	research
appropriate information	infer /inference(s)/	research question
article/magazine article/newspaper	inference(s) made	research report
article	inform	revise
audience (as in writer's audience)	information	root word
author	informational paper/	section
author's message	informational articles	sensory details/language
author's point of view	Internet	sentences/set of sentences/pair of
blog	introduction	sentences/line/statement
capitals/capitalization	key details	setting
central idea	key events	similar
characters	key idea	skim
character's actions	main characters	sources
characters' relationships	main idea	speaker
chart/graph/diagram/table	main problem	specific/exact word(s)/
clear language	meaning	word choice(s)/language
comma	mental picture (writing)	spell check
compare/contrast	narrative (story)	spelling errors
conclude/conclusion/	narrator	stanza
concluding statement	notes	summary/summarize(s)
conclusion drawn/drawing a	opening (beginning)	supporting details/evidence/
conclusion	opinion(s)/agree/disagree	reasons
conflict	opposite	synonym
connect ideas (transitions in writing)	order of events	theme
convince	organize(d)/organization of ideas	timeline
definition(s)	paragraph	title
describe/description/descriptive	passage	topic
details/realistic details	phrase	transitions
develop ideas (evidence/	plot	trustworthy source
elaboration)	poem	underline
dialogue	point of view/view (point)	verb/tense shift
dictionary/dictionary entry	pre-writing	webpage/website
draft	presentation (listening stimulus)	writer's message
edit	punctuation/punctuated	
encyclopedia	purpose (e.g., author's or speaker's	
errors	purpose)	
event	purpose for writing (informative,	
evidence	opinion, narrative writing)	
example	quotes/quotation/direct	
explain	quotations/quoting directly/	
flashback	quotation marks	

Grade 5

affix	first paragraph	sensory details/language
antonym	flashback	setting
appropriate information	focus	similar
article	global notes	skim
audience (as in writer's audience)	grammar usage	source(s)
author	headings	speaker
author's message	imaginary	specific/exact word (s)/
author's point of view	infer/inference(s)/	word choice(s)/information
blog	inference(s) made	spell check
capitals/capitalization	inform	spelling errors
cause/effect	informational	stanza
central idea	paper/informational article	statement/sentence/set of
characters	Internet	sentences/pair of sentences/line
character's actions	introduction	summary/summarize(s)
characters' relationships	key detail(s)	supporting evidence/reasons
chart/graph/diagram/table	key events	synonym
clear language	key point	theme
comma(s)	main idea	thesaurus
compare/contrast	main problem	timeline
conclude/conclusion/	meaning	title
concluding statement	mental picture (writing)	topic
conclusion drawn/drawing a	narrative	transition words/phrases
conclusion	narrator	trustworthy source(s)
concrete details	notes	verbs/verb tense/shifts
conflict	opinion(s)/agree/disagree	webpage/website
connect ideas - (transitions in	opposite	
writing)	organize(d)/organization of ideas	
convince	paragraph	
create	passage	
definition(s)	phrase	
describe/description/descriptive	plot	
details/ realistic details	point of view/view (point)	
determine	pre-write	
develop ideas (evidence/	presentation	
elaboration)	punctuation/punctuated	
dialogue	purpose (e.g., author's or	
dictionary entry	speaker's purpose)	
draft	purpose for writing (informative,	
edit	opinion, narrative writing)	
effect	quotations/direct quotations/	
effective beginning /ending	quoting directly/quotation marks	
elaborate/elaboration of ideas	reasons	
errors	relationship	
essay	report	
event	research	
evidence	research question	
example	research report	
explain	revise	
	root word	

Grade 6

accurate/inaccurate information	flashback	resolve/resolution
affix	focus	revise
analysis	global notes	root word
antonym	grammar usage	sensory language/details
appropriate information	heading	sequence of events
argument	imaginary	setting
argumentative article/text/ essay	inclusion	skim
audience (as in writer's audience)	infer/inference(s)/	source(s)
author's intent	inference(s) made	stanza
author's message	integrate information/ideas	style
author's point of view	interaction	summarize
blog	interpretation	support
capitalization	introduction	synonym
central idea	justify	text structures
character's action/	key detail	(compare/contrast; cause effect;
characters' relationship/	key event	problem/solution; pro/con)
characters' interaction	logical progression of ideas	theme
claim	logical sequence of events	thesis/controlling idea
closure	mental picture (writing)	title
compare/contrast	multi-paragraph	tone
comparison	multiple meanings	topic
conclude/conclusion	narrative/narrative writing	transitions/transition words/
conclusion drawn	narrator	phrases
concrete/specific/	observation	trustworthy source(s)
realistic details	opinion	visualize
conflict/tension	organize/organization	website
connections/relationships	paraphrase/paraphrasing	
between ideas (transitions in	phrase	
writing)	plagiarism/plagiarize/	
contradict	plagiarizing	
controlling idea/thesis	plot	
conventions	point of view/viewpoint	
credible sources	pre-write	
describe/description	precise/specific language	
develop ideas (evidence/	presentation	
elaboration)	punctuation/punctuated	
dialogue	purpose (e.g., author's or	
draft	speaker's purpose)	
edit	purpose for writing (explanatory,	
editorial	argumentative, narrative writing)	
effective beginnings/endings	quotation/quoting	
elaborate/elaboration of ideas	reference/identify sources	
essay	relationship	
establish a claim	relevant	
evidence	relevant supporting evidence/	
example	reasons/details/information	
excerpt	represent	
explanatory article/text/	research	
essay/writing	research question	

Grade 7

accurate/inaccurate information/
accuracy of information
acknowledge/address opposing
viewpoint/counterclaims
address potential
counterarguments/opposing
claims
affix
analysis
antonym
argument
argumentative text/article/
essay/writing
audience (as in writer's audience)
author's intent
author's message
author's point of view
author's purpose
blog
capitalization
central idea
character's action/
characters' interaction/
characters' relationships
claim
compare/contrast
comparison
conclude/conclusion
conclusion drawn
concrete details/words/
phrases/language
conflict/tension
context
contradict
controlling idea/thesis
conventions
counterargument
counterclaim
credible
definition
develop ideas (evidence/
elaboration)
dialogue
draft
edit
editorial
elaborate/elaboration of ideas
essay
establish a claim
evidence

excerpt
explanatory article/text/
essay/writing
flashback
focus
global notes
grammar usage
heading
illustrate
inclusion
infer/inference(s)/
inference(s) made
integrate information/ideas
interaction
interpretation
introduction
justify
key events
logical progression of ideas
logical sequence of events
mental picture/image
multi-paragraph
multiple meanings
narrative/narrative writing
observation
organize/organization of ideas
paraphrase/paraphrasing
phrase
plagiarism/plagiarize/plagiarizing
plot
point of view/viewpoint
pre-write
precise/concise language
presentation
punctuation/punctuated
purpose (e.g., author's or
speaker's purpose)
purpose for writing (explanatory,
argumentative, narrative writing)
quotation(s)/quoting
reference/identify sources
relationship(s)
relevant
relevant supporting evidence
research
research question
resolve/resolution
revise
root word
sensory language/details

sequence of events
setting
skim
source(s)
stanza
style
summarize
support
synonym
text structure (compare/contrast;
cause/effect; problem/solution;
pro/con)
theme
thesis/controlling idea
tone
topic
transitions/transition words/
phrases
trustworthy source(s)
visualize
website

Grade 8

accurate/inaccurate information/	evidence	sequence of events
accuracy of information	excerpt	setting
acknowledge/address opposing	explanatory article/text/	shift in narrator's perspective/
viewpoint/counterclaims	essay/writing	point of view
address potential	flashback	skim
counterarguments/opposing	focus	stanza
claims	global notes	style
affix	grammar usage	summarize
analysis	heading	support
antonym	illustrate	synonym
argument	inclusion	text structure (compare/contrast;
argumentative text/essay	infer/inference(s)/	cause/effect; problem/solution;
audience (as in writer's audience)	inference(s) made	pro/con)
author's intent	integrate information/ideas	theme
author's message	interaction	thesis/controlling idea
author's point of view	interpretation	tone
author's purpose	introduction	topic
blog	justify	transitions/transition
capitalization	key events	words/phrases/clauses
central idea	logical progression of ideas	trustworthy source(s)
character's action/	logical sequence of events	visualize
characters' interaction/	motive	voice (consistent/appropriate)
characters' relationships	multiple meanings	website
claim	narrative/narrative writing	
clarify claim/counterclaim	observation(s)	
clause	paraphrase/paraphrasing	
compare/contrast	phrases	
comparison	plagiarism/plagiarize/	
conclude/conclusion	plagiarizing	
conclusion drawn	plot	
concrete details/words/phrases/	point of view/viewpoint	
language	pre-write	
conflict/tension	precise/concise language/	
context	word choice	
contradict	presentation	
controlling idea/thesis	punctuation/punctuated	
conventions	purpose (e.g., author's or	
counterargument	speaker's purpose)	
counterclaim	purpose for writing (explanatory,	
credible	argumentative, narrative writing)	
develop ideas (evidence/	quotation(s)	
elaboration)	reference sources	
dialogue	relationships	
draft	relevant/irrelevant	
edit	relevant supporting evidence	
editorial	resolve/resolution	
elaborate/elaboration of ideas	revise	
essay	root word	
establish a claim	sensory details/language	

Grade 11

acknowledge/address opposing viewpoint/counterclaims
address potential counterarguments/opposing claims
affix
analysis
antonym
argument
audience (as in writer's audience)
author's intent
author's point of view
author's purpose
bias
blog
capitalization
central idea
character's action/
characters' interaction
claim
clarify claims/counterclaims
compare/contrast
colon/semi-colon
comparison
conclude/conclusion
conclusion drawn
concrete details/words/
phrases/language
conflict/tension
context
contradict
conventions
counterarguments
counterclaim
credible/credibility
develop ideas (evidence/
elaboration)
dialogue
effective use of
analogy/metaphor/simile
essay
establish a claim
evidence
excerpt
explanatory article/text/
essay/writing
flashback
grammar usage
hypothesis

inclusion
inconsistent information (research)
infer/inference(s)/inference(s)
made
integrate information/ideas
interaction
interpretation
justify
logical progression of idea
mood
multiple meanings
narrative
opposing claim
organization
parallel structure/parallelism
paraphrase/paraphrasing
perspective
phrases/clauses
plagiarism/plagiarize/
plagiarizing
position
precise/concise language
presentation
punctuation
purpose (e.g., author's or speaker's purpose)
purpose for writing (explanatory, argumentative, narrative writing)
quotation
reference sources
relevant/irrelevant
relevant supporting evidence
resolve/resolution
root word
sensory language
setting
shifts in narrator's perspective
stanza
style
summarize
synonym
techniques (e.g. exaggeration, repetition, making a comparison, including a question)
text structures
(compare/contrast; cause effect; problem/solution; pro/con)
theme

thesis/controlling idea
tone
transition words/phrases/
clauses/sentences/paragraphs
viewpoint/point of view
voice (consistent use of verb voice)