

How can students be supported through accelerated learning in English language arts?

During the school year, many students miss learning opportunities or struggle to understand literacy concepts and skills. Since literacy skills are built in a recursive, rather than linear, process, it is essential to scaffold learning in order for students to master the English language arts concepts and skills needed for success in future courses and after high school.

The information in this document was developed to provide flexible, evidence-based guidance for districts to consider as they develop plans to support accelerated learning in English language arts.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

Acquiring English language arts knowledge and skills is a [recursive learning endeavor](#) where students revisit concepts again and again as they learn to read and write. Students read and write from elementary grades through high school, but do so at increasing levels of complexity as they refine their grasp and mastery of language arts concepts with increasingly complex texts. In reading a text, recursive processes might include rereading earlier portions in light of later ones, looking ahead to see what topics are addressed or how a story ends and skimming through text to search for particular ideas or events. In creating a written composition, recursive processes include moving back and forth among the prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing stages of writing.

[Accelerated learning](#) is an intervention strategy that provides students with extra time and support to address unfinished learning.

Accelerated learning, accomplished through designing and implementing learning experiences that increase the rate of learning, starts where students are in their learning and focuses on where they need to go next. This can be done in a variety of ways – through one-on-one or small-group tutoring, summer learning experiences, acceleration academies offered during the school year or within the classroom setting.

To accelerate learning within the classroom, it is important to use current data from high-quality, evidence-based screeners, diagnostic assessments and formative assessments to best determine where students are. Teachers can [scaffold](#) instruction up instead of bringing content down to meet [current grade-level expectations](#) through modeling and explicit instruction, and use intervention time to provide targeted instruction on specific skills.

KEY INSIGHTS

- Adopt [evidence-based](#) methods of teaching English language arts across the curriculum.
- Leverage [high-quality instructional materials](#) that align to the Oklahoma Academic Standards.
- Provide academic enrichment learning opportunities that provide options for students to use English language arts standards in social studies, fine arts, science and engineering, civics and physical activity.
- Use the [Oklahoma ELA Curriculum Frameworks](#) to plan for instruction and align materials vertically.

SEE ALSO

- [How can summer enrichment experiences support student learning, well-being and success?](#)
- [How can schools plan instruction that supports accelerated learning?](#)
- [How can student learning be supported at home during the summer?](#)

Teachers can also collaborate with partners – including community-based organizations (e.g., YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, etc.), libraries, child-care centers, [21st Century Learning Centers](#) and tribal nations – to build on existing programs that can support English language arts to reach more students and achieve stronger shared outcomes. It is always a good idea to share classroom reading lists with community partners so students have access to support outside the typical school day.

ATTENDING TO EQUITY

Being mindful of individual student needs is critical to ensure English language arts instruction is equitable and appropriate for all age groups, learning abilities and language proficiencies.

Attend to best practices for [emerging bilingual students](#), [adolescent literacy](#), [secondary students who struggle with writing](#) and [elementary students](#).

All learners have the right to hear the voices of their heritage in the literature they encounter. They must be given the opportunity to speak with the voices they choose in the writing they create. Classroom and school libraries must be inclusive of race, ethnicity, culture and all perspectives that reflect the richness of human experience.

RECOMMENDED ACTION STEPS

- Gain ideas about how to establish accelerated learning programs for literacy and review [recommendations for effective expanded learning time](#) from the Education Trust.
- Access elementary and secondary resources to gain awareness of depth of knowledge, writing instruction and culturally responsive teaching and learning at appropriate grade levels.
- Use the [Oklahoma English Language Arts Curriculum Framework](#) to vertically plan for instruction to address learning opportunities. The [vertical progressions](#) articulate 25 literacy skills from the reading and writing strands, showing what students should be able to do from one grade level to the next. These documents will provide awareness of depth of knowledge, writing instruction and culturally responsive teaching and learning at appropriate grade levels.
- Provide opportunities for [educators to collaboratively plan](#) English language arts experiences, establish learning goals and outcomes for students based on multiple sources of data, and adjust learning opportunities based on the diverse needs of students.