

Skills instruction and practice

A targeted approach to skills

Amplify's approach

The Amplify program tracks progress against the standards with various formative assessments, end-of-the-unit essays, and four standards-based benchmark assessments to ensure that students are making progress towards mastery. But, teachers can't consider and adjust to the results of this standards-based assessment daily or even weekly, across the 150 or more students that each teacher sees every day. Amplify's classroom testing suggests that on a daily basis, teachers can respond more effectively to data by focusing on a smaller set of skills that describe the various cognitive experiences students need to practice day in and day out with increasingly complex text.

Thus, the Amplify program calls out a set of skills derived from the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy that enable the teacher to focus instruction, track student progress, and respond quickly to data with instructional solutions that will accelerate progress for all students every day. By boiling down the standards to essential skills teachers can measure daily progress and ensure that every student is mastering the key metrics, such as the ability to independently comprehend and write about complex text that are most directly linked to success on year-end state tests, and most important, on high school level work and beyond.

The Program Organization Maps show the relationships between the Amplify daily skills and the CA CCSS so that teachers can continuously confirm that progress in one area equals progress in the other. To create a more streamlined approach that allows for daily monitoring, Amplify has integrated speaking and listening skills into the essential reading and writing habits.

Amplify tracks skills daily in the areas of:

Reading in 3 categories:

- The analytic cycle:
 - Select, describe, explain, connect
- Understanding
 - Level 1: literal, level 2: implicit
- Foundational capacities in reading
 - Background knowledge of the world and the word: Vocabulary
 - Grammar and sentence mechanics
 - Logical structure and rhetoric
 - Fluency
 - Reading habits

Writing in 2 categories:

- Writing skills:
 - Focus, showing, use of evidence, logical structure, conventions
- Writing habits:
 - Produce writing, observe, share, respond, revise

Organization of skills section

In this section, you will find descriptions of the skills and examples of how the skills are taught in Amplify's lessons. Following the descriptions of all of the skills, there are two longer sections that describe Amplify's approach to vocabulary and grammar in more depth. These are two particularly challenging areas in ELA instruction, and Amplify has provided extensive instructional tools for teachers to help students meet those challenges.

Most importantly, after you read about the skills, keep reading the following section, about Amplify's approach to assessment, to find out how to track these skills and accelerate student progress on a daily basis in the midst of generating all of the other scores based on standards and grades that your school requires.

Also, note that Amplify's professional development experts recognize that the overview in these pages is not a "how to" guide. A teacher new to the Amplify program should rest assured that this approach is introduced gradually to teacher and student during the first 10 Get Started lessons in the first unit. Success in Lesson One motivates and prepares participants for success in Lesson Two, and so on. The Professional Development section of this guide explains the preparation and follow up that teachers require to be successful on that journey. Once immersed in Amplify's program, new and experienced ELA teachers will recognize how the approach brings each and every student success in the bread and butter of an ELA class: close reading of complex text, regular writing practice and revision, and dynamic discussion.