



# Maryland College and Career Ready Standards for Language Clarifications

## Maryland College and Career Ready (MCCR) Standards for Language Clarifications – Standard 1

The English Language Arts Department at MSDE facilitated teams of educators from across the state to participate in writing Clarifications for the MCCR Standards at grades Pre-K through twelve. These serve as resources to educators across this state and others as we implement these Standards. Educators from the local systems worked together to create clarification statements that make up a coherent document that reflects the instructional shifts necessary to achieve the MCCR Standards. The Clarification statements detail for educators the skills necessary for students to demonstrate proficiency in each grade level standard in Reading Literature, Reading Informational Text, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language. These Clarifications are an integral part of the MCCR Standards toolkit.

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**L1 ANCHOR STANDARD: DEMONSTRATE COMMAND OF THE CONVENTIONS OF STANDARD ENGLISH  
GRAMMAR AND USAGE WHEN WRITING OR SPEAKING.**

**Pre-Kindergarten -Demonstrate beginning understanding of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when engaged in literacy activities.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student engaged in a literacy activity such as interactive read alouds, shared reading, or shared writing must be able to recognize the conventions of Standard English.

Students will be able to correctly form upper and lower case letters when writing their first name. It is essential that students learn early through teacher modeling and practice to demonstrate an understanding of subject/verb agreement, correct verb tense, and noun/pronoun agreement, prepositions, singular and plural nouns when speaking.

Students will use and understand question words such as who, why, what, when, where, and how when speaking and writing. Students will respond to questions in complete sentences.

**Kindergarten - Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student must be able to demonstrate effective use of Standard English conventions in both speaking and writing.

Students demonstrate the ability to print most upper and lowercase letters

It is essential that students learn early through teacher modeling and practice to demonstrate the use of frequently occurring nouns and verbs, subject/verb agreement, correct verb tense, noun/pronoun agreement, regular plural nouns, question words, and frequently occurring prepositions.

Students will produce and expand sentences in shared language activities using modifiers such as adjectives and adverbs (e.g. I see a dog/I see a big brown dog.)

**Grade One -Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student must be able to demonstrate effective use of Standard English conventions in both speaking and writing.

By first grade students will continue to build upon previous skills by practicing to print all upper and lowercase letters, use common, proper, and possessive nouns, adjectives, prepositions, singular and plural nouns with matching verbs, personal, possessive, and indefinite pronouns (e.g., I, me, my; they, them, their; anyone, everything.)

First graders will continue to build on their knowledge of verbs to convey a sense of past, present, and future (e.g., Yesterday, I walked home; Today I walk home; Tomorrow I will walk home).

Students will use frequently occurring conjunctions (e.g., and, but, or, so, because) in oral and written language and determiners such as articles (a, an, and the) and demonstratives (this/these; that/those) (e.g. “I see a horse” or “I see an octopus”).

Students will produce and expand complete simple and compound declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences in response to prompts. Declarative sentences are statements. (The car is red.) Interrogative sentences ask questions. (What is for lunch?) Imperative sentences give a command. (Pick up your pencil.) Exclamatory sentences express strong feelings (I love broccoli!).

**Grade Two - Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student must be able to demonstrate effective use of Standard English conventions in both speaking and writing. Students will use collective nouns (e.g. colony, team, herd, troop) in speaking and writing. The teacher will provide opportunities for students to identify collective nouns and distinguish between common, proper, possessive, and collective nouns.

Students will form and use frequently occurring irregular plural nouns (e.g., feet, children, teeth, mice, fish) in speaking and writing.

Students will use and identify reflexive pronouns (e.g., myself, ourselves) in speaking and writing.

Students will form, identify and use the past tense of frequently occurring irregular verbs (e.g., sat, hid, told) in speaking and writing. Provide opportunities for students to analyze writing models for correct use of irregular verbs.

Students will identify and distinguish between adjectives and adverbs. For example, adjectives modify nouns/adverbs, ‘She is wearing a blue dress.’ Adverbs modify verbs, ‘He is running quickly.’

Students will produce, expand, and rearrange complete simple and compound sentences both orally and in writing (e.g., The boy watched the movie; The little boy watched the movie; The action movie was watched by the little boy).

**Grade Three - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student will identify and use a variety of parts of speech in their spoken and written language. When analyzing their writing, a third grader should be able to edit and revise these parts of speech in order to produce an effective message in their speech or writing. When reading, students will be able to use these cues as a means for comprehending the intended meaning of the text.

Explain the function of noun, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in general and their functions in particular sentences.

A third grader will be able to identify, label, and explain the function of pronouns. Their knowledge of pronouns should include but are not limited to personal pronouns, such as I, we, you, he, she, it, us, they, them, etc. and possessive pronouns such as mine, yours, his, hers, ours, theirs, etc.

A third grader will be able to convert singular nouns to plural nouns using multiple rules. Some examples are: raisin/raisins, bunny/bunnies, leaf/leaves, knife/knives, piano/pianos, potato/potatoes, box/boxes, key/keys. Irregular conversions should include, but are not limited to: child/children, foot/feet, woman/women, mouse/mice, fish/fish.

A third grader will have the knowledge of abstract nouns to express notions, ideas, feelings, and qualities that are not concrete. Some examples are wishes, love, freedom, and anger.

A third grader will be able to conjugate verbs using regular and irregular verb tense rules. Some regular conversion examples are: asked/ asks/ will ask; clapped/claps/ will clap. Some irregular conversion examples are: thought/ thinks/ will think; wrote/writes/ will write.

A third grader will be able to conjugate simple verbs. Simple verbs are verbs used to indicate when an action is repeated or usual in daily life. These verbs can appear in the present, past, and future. Some examples of simple verb tenses are: run/ran/ will run; eat/ate/will eat; go/went/ will go.

A third grader will be able to make a pronoun used in regular discourse and writing agree with the verb and the pronoun agrees with its antecedent. The pronoun must agree with its antecedent, the noun that it is replacing, and in the number and gender it is replacing. For example, "My little sister walks to school. She walks with her friends."

A third grader will be able to use context to determine the correct comparative and superlative adjective and adverb. Some comparative adjectives are formed by adding –er to show the comparison of two nouns. If the adjective is multi-syllabic, the word more precedes the adjective. Some superlative adjectives are formed by adding –est to show a comparison between three or more nouns. If the adjective is multi-syllabic, the word most precedes the adjective.

A third grader will be able to use coordinating conjunctions to connect words or clauses. Coordinating conjunctions connect words or word groups. Some coordinating conjunctions are: and, but, or, so, for, and yet. For example, "It is the teacher's birthday so we will have cupcakes!" Some subordinating conjunctions are: as long as, even though, before, after, because, while, when. Subordinating conjunctions begin a phrase that contains a subject and verb that cannot stand on its own. For example, "You'll do better on a test if you study every night."

A third grader will be able to use complete thoughts and sentences in their speech and writing as opposed to sentence fragments. Their writing should develop to include compound and complex sentences along with simple sentences. A complex sentence is a simple sentence along with a fragment. (e.g., I went to school on the bus). A compound sentence is two simple sentences joined together by a conjunction (e.g., I went to school even though I had a headache).

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**Grade Four - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student identifies and uses a variety of parts of speech in their spoken and written language. When analyzing their writing, a fourth-grade student is able to edit and revise these parts of speech in order to produce an effective message in their speech or writing. A student is able to use these cues as a means for comprehension of the intended meaning of the text when reading.

A fourth-grade student is able to identify, label, and explain the function of relative pronouns and adverbs. When referring to the subject of the sentence, a student uses who. (e.g., The student who draws the winning ticket picks a prize from the treasure chest. A student uses whom when referring to the direct object of a verb or preposition.

(e.g., When it was time to clean up, the art teacher asked the students whom she thought would be the most capable of putting away the materials. A student understands the difference between whose and who's in order to use the correct form for their intended meaning. (e.g., Who's going to the assembly? has a different meaning than "Whose class is attending the assembly?") Relative adverbs are used to join sentences or phrases which could also be joined by a preposition + which. (e.g., That's the classroom where Mrs. Smith teaches.) (e.g., That's the classroom in which Mrs. Smith teaches.)

A fourth-grade student is able to use the correct form of a verb to show the time frame of the action. Progressive verbs end in -ing and are combined with a form of the verb to be. These verbs show an action that is occurring at the same time as another action. The present progressive is occurring at the same time as the statement. (e.g., I was studying for the test while I watched TV; I am studying while I watch TV; I will be studying while I watch TV.)

A fourth grade student has the knowledge of modal auxiliaries, helping verbs which are not formed by adding -s, -ed, and -ing. The basic form of the verb should follow the modal auxiliary. (e.g., You can turn in your homework in the morning.)

A fourth-grade student is able to use the conventional patterns exhibited in common English. The given example shows the unspoken rule of size and shape before color. Another common rule a fourth grader may use is age before material. (e.g., The antique wooden chair.)

A fourth-grade student is able to identify prepositional phrases in text and use them in their writing and speaking in order to clarify details. A prepositional phrase begins with a preposition (during, of, on, in, by, before, etc.) and ends with the object of the preposition. For example, Students eat breakfast before school.

A fourth-grade student is able to write and speak in sentences containing a subject and predicate. A student is able to identify a fragment or run-on sentence and revise in order to make their writing or speaking clearer.

A fourth-grade student is able to use context clues to determine the correct usage of homophones. Homophones are frequently confused words because they have the same sound, but different spellings and meanings. (e.g., I went to the store to buy two pairs of shoes.)

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**Grade Five - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.**

Form and use of prepositional phrases were introduced in the fourth grade. Fifth grade students continue to build on their knowledge of phrases.

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student in fifth grade is able to use simple to complex sentences in their writing. A fifth-grade student is able to identify and use conjunctions in their writing. A conjunction shows the relationship between words and allows readers to link unknown ideas to known ones (e.g., but, and, or, although) in a sentence. I went to the store and I got some cookies.

A student will then be able to use a correlative conjunction that further extends their writing. A correlative conjunction is used for either member of a matched pair of words, of which the second is a coordinating conjunction (e.g., either/or, neither/nor). Neither my blue jeans nor my red jeans are ready for me to wear.

Prepositions link nouns, pronouns, and phrases to other words in a sentence (e.g., on, beneath, against, beside, over, during, after) are common examples. The children played after they took a nap.

Interjections show the utterance of a word or phrase expressive of emotion; the uttering of an exclamation (e.g., Hey! Oh! Ouch! Wow!) Wow! The sun is shining brightly today

Students will use correct verbs to show consistency in tense, voice, and mood in their speech and writing.

**Grade Six - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a sixth-grade student will know the correct usage of pronouns in writing and speech. A student will know how to use subjective, objective, possessive, and intensive pronouns in a sentence.

**Subjective pronoun** – function as the subject of the verb (I, you, she, he, it, we, they, who). Example: Michelle said that we can attend the party.

**Objective pronoun** – receive the action of the verb (me, you, her, him, it, them, us, whom). Example: The dog tried to bite me.

**Possessive pronoun** – shows ownership (my, your, his, her, its, our, whose, their, mine, yours, hers, ours, theirs). Example: Their car is next to the pet store.

**Intensive pronouns** – a pronoun that emphasizes a preceding noun or another pronoun (myself, yourself, himself, itself, ourselves). My mom herself paid for my flight.

Students will use correct verbs to show consistency in tense, voice, and mood in their speech and writing. A student will be able to identify and understand that a pronoun refers to the correct noun in a sentence. They will know when they are using correct grammar and punctuation in their writing and speaking to convey thoughts and meanings to improve their overall writing.

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**Grade Seven - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a seventh-grade student is able to identify different types of phrases within a sentence (e.g., verb, prepositional, appositive, etc.). A student will be able to distinguish between independent and dependent clauses. A student will then be able to explain the purpose of the phrase or clause in a specific sentence. A student will be able to differentiate between the different types of sentences: simple, compound, complex, and compound complex. A student will be able to use different types of sentences to demonstrate a connection among ideas. Building on this knowledge, a student will be able to properly place phrases and clauses within a sentence, choose appropriate sentence type, and correct misplaced and dangling modifiers in both his/her speaking and writing.

A misplaced modifier is a word or phrase placed in the sentence in such a way that the subject being modified is unclear. Incorrect: She served sandwiches to the children on paper plates. Revised: She served the children sandwiches on paper plates.

A dangling modifier is a word or phrase intended to modify someone or something not mentioned in the sentence. Incorrect: Running for the bus, my cell phone fell in a puddle. Revised: Running for the bus, I dropped my cell phone in a puddle.

**Grade Eight - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student is able to explain the function of a verbal (gerunds, infinitives, and participles) as well as their function when used in a particular sentence. A student is able to describe the differences between verbs in the active voice and the passive voice in order to achieve particular effects in their writing. In addition, a student is able to form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood. A student is then able to recognize the relationship that exists between the mood of a verb and the purpose of the sentence. Building on this understanding, a student understands the effect that verb, voice, and mood have on meaning. A student is able to recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb, voice, and mood when they occur in their own writing.

A **verbal** is a word that is derived from a verb but is used as another part of speech. There are three types of verbals.

A **gerund** is a verb form which ends in –ing and is used as a noun. Singing is my favorite hobby.  
(subject)

A **participle** is a verb form ending in –ing or –ed but functions as an adjective. The lawyer’s closing argument was unconvincing. (modifies argument)

An **infinitive** is a verb form introduced by the word “to.” The most functional of the three verbals, an infinitive can be used as a noun, adjective or an adverb. To sing in class was her secret wish. (noun)  
The last student to sing was applauded. (adjective modifying student) Many people find it comforting to sing. (adverb)

Verbs can be either active or passive in voice.

An **active voice** indicates that the subject of the sentence performs the action expressed in the verb. The dog bit the boy is an example of the active voice. The subject (dog) performs the action expressed in the verb (bit).

The **passive voice** indicates that the subject of the sentence receives the action expressed in the verb. In this sentence, The boy was bitten by the dog, the author uses the passive voice. The subject (boy) receives the action expressed in the verb (was bitten). A passive verb does not always state the person or thing creating the action. For example, The boy was bitten. (Who did the biting?)

The **mood** of a verb indicates the attitude with which a statement is made.

**Indicative mood** is used to state a fact or opinion.

She sang the National Anthem.

I am hungry.

**Imperative mood** is used to express a command or request.

Stand in line over there to pay for your things.

Just don't say a word.

**Interrogative mood** is used when in a state of questioning.

Will you leave me alone now?

Did you have practice today?

**Subjunctive mood** is used to express a condition contrary to fact.

If I were finished my report, I could go to the movie.

My mother asked that I do the dishes.

**Conditional mood** is used to describe a condition that is currently not real but would need to become real in order for the independent clause to come true.

If her were any taller, he'd be a giant.

If today were Saturday, I could be sleeping.

**Grades Nine and Ten - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.**

To show proficiency of the skills in this standard, a student is able to identify and use parallel structure when writing or speaking. A student is able to use various types of phrase and clauses when writing and speaking. A student will analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of a variety of phrases and clauses in writing and speech.

A student will use various types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, participial, prepositional, absolute) and clauses (independent, dependent; noun, relative, adverbial) to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing or presentations.

**Parallel construction** occurs when the kinds of words or phrases being used are structured consistently throughout the sentence.

Example: In my hometown, folks pass the time shooting pool, pitching horseshoes, and playing softball. (All three activities are –ing words; they are consistent or parallel.)

**Absolute phrase** consists of a noun and a participle. An absolute phrase resembles a clause because it has a subject and a verbal. Rather than modifying a specific word, an absolute phrase will describe an entire clause.

Example: Legs quivering, our old dog, Gizmo, dreamed of chasing squirrels. (The phrase legs quivering is modifying the entire clause)

**Adverbial clauses** modify or place some condition upon a verb. It is a subordinate clause that is used as an adverb.

Example: Although the Wright brothers suffered many failures, they were finally successful. (Although the Wright brothers suffered many failures modifies the verb were.)

**Noun clauses** are used in place of a noun. Noun clauses can appear as subjects, direct or indirect objects, predicate nominatives, or as objects of prepositions.

Example: What made later aviation possible was the determination of people who kept dreaming and believing. (The noun clause, what made later aviation possible is acting as the subject of the sentence.)

Example: The cat, who loves leftovers, purred for a treat. (who loves leftovers is a relative clause modifying the cat.)

### **Grades Eleven and Twelve - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.**

For college and career readiness, a student demonstrates mastery of the skills in this standard by applying standard English grammar and usage conventions (e.g., phrases, clauses, verbal, parallel structure) when writing or speaking. A student must be able to defend convention choices that are contested by referencing appropriate resources.

A student is able to apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested.

A student will also resolve issues of complex or contested usage, consulting references (e.g., Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of English Usage, Garner's Modern American Usage) as needed.