



New standards are triggering three major changes in instruction:

1. There is an increased emphasis on building a strong vocabulary so that your child can read and understand challenging material.
2. Teachers will provide more challenging reading and ask more questions that will require your child to refer back to a passage he or she has read.
3. In addition to stories and literature, there will be more reading that provides facts and background knowledge in science and social studies.

SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AT HOME

Encourage your child to read a self-selected text for at least 15 minutes each day.

Look for opportunities in everyday places to **build your child's vocabulary**.

Get a library card, and **let your child select books**.

Use technology to help build your child's interest in reading.

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR TOMORROW'S WORLD

To better prepare children for the higher demands of college and careers, public schools are improving education with the Hawaii Common Core – learning goals to help all children stay on track to graduate with the skills they need to be successful. Please ask your child's teacher for more information, or visit bit.ly/CommonCoreHI.

Sample exercise

With Hawaii Common Core, students are being asked deeper, text-based questions.

Previous ELA question:

In "Letter from Birmingham Jail," Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. discusses nonviolent protest. Discuss, in writing, a time when you wanted to fight against something that you felt was unfair.

Hawaii Common Core ELA question:

What can you infer from King's letter about the letter that he received?

The Common Core-aligned question puts a premium on students being able to read and comprehend complex text.

- A key reading standard asks students to "Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text."
- Students are challenged to closely read Dr. King's letter so that they can make an inference about the letter he was responding to. (The non-Common Core question could be answered by students who have not spent the time reading and closely analyzing Dr. King's text.)

READ IT

"Letter from Birmingham Jail"
by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/letter-birmingham-jail

- This is also an equity issue as it allows all students – not just those who may have prior knowledge – to take part in the discussion and writing.

A sample of what your child will be learning in middle school:

7TH GRADE

- Citing several sources of evidence when offering an oral or written analysis of a book, essay, article, or play.
- Organizing/focusing writing, including supporting statements and conclusions with evidence that is accurate and reliable.
- Conducting research in response to a specific question by drawing on evidence from several credible literary or informational sources to support an analysis or reflection.
- Avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citations (e.g., footnotes, bibliography).
- Evaluating a speaker's key points and reasoning, asking questions, and stating his or her own well-supported ideas in discussions.
- Presenting claims and findings to others emphasizing main points, making eye contact, speaking loudly enough, pronouncing words clearly, and using formal English when the situation calls for it.

8TH GRADE

- Citing the evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what is explicitly stated and/or implied from a book, article, poem, or play.
- Analyzing where materials on the same topic disagree on matters of fact, interpretation, or point of view.
- Building writing around strong central ideas or points of view; supporting the ideas with sound reasoning and evidence, precise word choices, and different sentence structures.
- Planning and conducting research projects that include several steps and use many credible and documented print and digital sources.
- Analyzing the purpose of information presented in media (e.g., print, TV, web) and evaluating its social, political, or commercial motives.
- Using strong, active verbs to create a clear picture for the reader.
- Interpreting figures of speech (e.g., irony, puns) and developing a large vocabulary of general academic words and phrases.