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The Three Key Shifts in ELA/Literacy

Common Core Key Shift	What It Means
Shift 1: Regular Practice with Complex Texts and Their Academic Language	The ELA/literacy standards highlight the growing complexity of the texts students must read to be ready for the demands of college, career and life. The standards call for a staircase of increasing complexity so that all students are ready for the demands of college- and career-level reading. Closely related to text complexity is a focus on academic vocabulary.
Shift 2: Reading, Writing, and Speaking Grounded in Evidence from Texts	The Common Core emphasizes using evidence from texts to present careful analyses, well-defended claims, and clear information. Rather than asking questions students can answer solely from their prior knowledge and experience, the standards call for students to answer questions that depend on their having read the right texts with care. The reading standards focus on students' ability to read carefully and grasp information, arguments, ideas, and details based on evidence in the text. Students should be able to answer a range of text-dependent questions, whose answers require inferences based on careful attention to the text.
Shift 3: Building Knowledge through Content-Rich Nonfiction	Students must be immersed in information about the world around them if they are to develop the strong general knowledge and vocabulary they need to become successful readers and be prepared for college, career, and life. Informational texts play an important part in building students' content knowledge. Further, it is vital for students to have extensive opportunities to build knowledge through texts so they can learn independently.

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