**Subject Matter Knowledge Matrix**

**Middle School: Humanities, 5-8**

Students in Massachusetts must meet rigorous academic standards, which are outlined in the [Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/). To do so, they must have access to educators with strong content knowledge and pedagogical skills, the building blocks of effective instructional practice.

In support of this, the [Subject Matter Knowledge Guidelines](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/domains/instruction/smk-guidelines.docx) set forth the content knowledge expectations for educator licensure in Massachusetts. Through these expectations, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) seeks to ensure that educators entering the workforce have sufficient content knowledge in their licensure area to support students in mastering the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

While the Curriculum Frameworks serve as an anchor, the intent is not that educators should simply know the content included in the Frameworks. Rather, educators must move beyond basic or functional knowledge to a level of fluency or expertise with the academic standards such that they can teach and support students in mastering the content.

The figure below shows a steady progression, not in the amount of information one knows, but in the depth and ability to use that information for a specific purpose. The boxes below the continuum outline some assessments used to determine varying levels of content knowledge. The depth at which the knowledge and application of content knowledge must be demonstrated is dependent on the stage of development for an individual educator (i.e. Basic, Functional, Fluent, or Expert) and/or license type (Provisional, Initial, or Professional).



This worksheet should be completed for Middle School: Humanities, 5-8 programs, for which Subject Matter Knowledge expectations come from multiple [Curriculum Frameworks](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/). Within this document you will find sections covering the following SMK expectations:

[English Language Arts and Literacy](#_English_Language_Arts)

* English Language Arts and Literacy Anchor Standards
* English Language Arts and Literacy Practices

[History and Social Science](#_History_and_Social)

* History and Social Science Scope, Sequence, and Content Progression
* Standards for History and Social Science Practices

# English Language Arts and Literacy Anchor Standards

The English Language Arts and Literacy Anchor Standards define general, cross-disciplinary literacy expectations that must be met for PK-12 students to be prepared to enter college and the workforce ready to succeed.

To create a strong vertical progression of learning, educators should have the content knowledge to support PK-12 students in mastering the anchor standards across grade levels. Teachers need to be able to access knowledge from prior grades, and teachers who are aware of later content can make better choices about what to emphasize, what language to use, and what larger contexts to provide for their students. This expectation allows teachers to meet students where they are and prepare them for where they are going.

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| **Instructions*:***The content knowledge below must either be covered directly through program coursework or screened during the admissions process. For each row, list the numbers/abbreviations/titles of the **sponsoring organization’s required courses where the anchor standards are explicitly targeted and coherently addressed**. Then, **briefly describe where in the syllabus each anchor standard is covered** (i.e., unit name, week number, objective number). Course identifiers should match those of submitted syllabi and content knowledge for each grade level should not be spread across too many courses.    The PK-12 grade-specific standards found in the full [English Language Arts and Literacy Curriculum Framework](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html) define end-of-year expectations for each grade level relative to the anchor standards. As such, the Framework, including the Guiding Principles which are also available in Appendix A of this document, should be consulted when designing programs to ensure appropriate content coverage and rigor for each licensure field’s grade span. sponsoring organizations should prioritize content fluency in the grade span for the license while ensuring functional content knowledge in the two grade levels below and above the grade span.  |

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| **Key Ideas and Details**  | **Course(s) or Screening**  |
| *Example Row*  | *EDU 101 – Weeks 5-7*  |
| **Reading 1.** Read closely to determine what a text states explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from a text.  |   |
| **Reading 2.** Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.  |   |
| **Reading 3.** Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.  |   |
| **Craft and Structure**  | **Course(s) or Screening**  |
| **Reading 4.** Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.  |   |
| **Reading 5.** Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of a text relate to each other and the whole.  |   |
| **Reading 6.** Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.  |   |
| **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**  | **Course(s) or Screening**  |
| **Reading 7.** Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.  |   |
| **Reading 8.** Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.  |   |
| **Reading 9.** Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.  |   |
| **Reading 10.** Independently and proficiently read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts.   |   |
| **Text Types and Purposes**  | **Course(s) or Screening**  |
| **Writing 1.** Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.  |   |
| **Writing 2.** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.  |   |
| **Writing 3.** Write narratives to develop experiences or events using effective literary techniques, well-chosen details, and well-structured sequences.  |   |
| **Production and Distribution of Writing**  | **Course(s) or Screening**  |
| **Writing 4.** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.  |   |
| **Writing 5.** Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.  |   |
| **Writing 6.** Use technology to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.  |   |
| **Research to Build and Present Knowledge**  | **Course(s) or Screening**  |
| **Writing 7.** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.  |   |
| **Writing 8.** When conducting research, gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.  |   |
| **Writing 9.** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, interpretation, reflection, and research.  |   |
| **Range of Writing**  | **Course(s) or Screening**  |
| **Writing 10.** Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.  |   |
| **Comprehension and Collaboration**  | **Course(s) or Screening**  |
| **Speaking and Listening 1.** Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.  |   |
| **Speaking and Listening 2.** Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.  |   |
| **Speaking and Listening 3.** Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.  |   |
| **Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas**  | **Course(s) or Screening**  |
| **Speaking and Listening 4.** Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, vocabulary, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.  |   |
| **Speaking and Listening 5.** Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.  |   |
| **Speaking and Listening 6.** Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.  |   |
| **Conventions of Standard English**  | **Course(s) or Screening**  |
| **Language 1.** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.  |   |
| **Language 2.** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.  |   |
| **Knowledge of Language**  | **Course(s) or Screening**  |
| **Language 3.** Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.  |   |
| **Vocabulary Acquisition and Use**  | **Course(s) or Screening**  |
| **Language 4.** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.  |   |
| **Language 5.** Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.  |   |
| **Language 6.** Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge  |   |

# English Language Arts and Literacy Practices

The English Language Arts and Literacy Practices describe abilities that English educators at all levels should seek to develop in their PK-12 students. They are not standards themselves but instead offer a portrait of students who meet the standards set out in this document and are ready for college, careers, and civic participation. These practices complement the content standards so that students increasingly engage with the subject matter as they grow in maturity and expertise throughout the elementary, middle, and high school years.

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| **Instructions*:***Initial licensure program candidates must reach a level of fluent content knowledge to be endorsed. They must be able to apply content in a range of contexts and vertically connect content to build students’ knowledge. As such, sponsoring organizations must have at least one course covering the practices at the fluent level.   Please list the numbers/abbreviations/titles of the **required courses where practices are explicitly targeted and coherently addressed**. Then, **briefly describe where in the syllabus each practice is covered** (i.e., unit name, week number, objective number). Course identifiers should match those of submitted syllabi and practices should not be spread across too many courses. |

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|  **English Language Arts and Literacy Practices**   | **Fluent** *Initial* *Licensure*   |
| *Example Row*  | *EDU 101 – Weeks 5-7*  |
| **1. Demonstrate independence.** Students can, without significant scaffolding, comprehend and evaluate complex texts across a range of types and disciplines, and they can construct effective arguments and convey intricate or multifaceted information. Likewise, students are able independently to discern a speaker’s key points, request clarification, and ask relevant questions. They build on others’ ideas, articulate their own ideas, and confirm they have been understood. Without prompting, they demonstrate command of standard English and acquire and use a wide-ranging vocabulary. More broadly, they become self-directed learners, effectively seeking out and using resources to assist them, including teachers, peers, and print and digital reference materials.   |   |
| **2. Build strong content knowledge**. Students establish a base of knowledge across a wide range of subject matter by engaging with works of quality and substance. They become proficient in new areas through research and study. They read purposefully and listen attentively to gain both general knowledge and discipline-specific expertise. They refine and share their knowledge through writing and speaking.   |   |
| **3. Respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.** Students adapt their communication in relation to audience, task, purpose, and discipline. They set and adjust purpose for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language use as warranted by the task. They appreciate nuances, such as how the composition of an audience should affect tone when speaking and how the connotations of words affect meaning. They also know that different disciplines call for different types of evidence (e.g., documentary evidence in history and experimental evidence in science).   |   |
| **4. Comprehend as well as critique**. Students are engaged and open-minded—but discerning—readers and listeners. They work diligently to understand precisely what an author or speaker is saying, but they also question an author’s or speaker’s assumptions and premises and assess the veracity of claims and the soundness of reasoning.   |   |
| **5. Value evidence**. Students cite specific evidence when offering an oral or written analysis or interpretation of a text. They use relevant evidence when supporting their own points in writing and speaking, making their reasoning clear to the reader or listener, and they constructively evaluate others’ use of evidence.   |   |
| **6. Use technology and digital media strategically and capably.** Students employ technology thoughtfully to enhance their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language use. They tailor their searches online to acquire useful information efficiently, and they integrate what they learn using technology with what they learn offline. They are familiar with the strengths and limitations of various technological tools and mediums and can select and use those best suited to their communication goals.   |   |
| **7. Come to understand other perspectives and cultures.** Students appreciate that the twenty-first-century classroom and workplace are settings in which people from often widely divergent cultures and who represent diverse experiences and perspectives must learn and work together. Students actively seek to understand other perspectives and cultures through reading and listening, and they can communicate effectively with people of varied backgrounds. They evaluate other points of view critically and constructively. Through reading great classic and contemporary works of literature representative of a variety of periods, cultures, and worldviews, students can vicariously inhabit worlds and have experiences much different than their own.  |   |

# History and Social Science Scope, Sequence, and Content Progression

The History and Social Science Scope, Sequence, and Content Progression outlines the core history and social science knowledge that students should learn from PK through grade 12.

In support of a strong vertical progression of learning, educators should have the content knowledge to support PK-12 students in mastering prerequisite and advanced standards. Teachers need to be able to access knowledge from prior grades, and teachers who are aware of later content can make better choices about what to emphasize, what language to use, and what larger contexts to provide for their students. This expectation allows teachers to meet students where they are and prepare them for where they are going.

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| **Instructions*:***The content knowledge below must either be covered directly through program coursework or screened during the admissions process. For each grade level, list the numbers/abbreviations/titles of the **sponsoring organization’s required courses where the content knowledge is explicitly targeted and coherently addressed**. Then, **briefly describe where in the syllabus the content is covered** (i.e., unit name, week number, objective number). Course identifiers should match those of submitted syllabi and content knowledge for each grade level should not be spread across too many courses.    The full [History and Social Science Curriculum Framework](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html), including the Guiding Principles which are also available in Appendix A of this document, should be consulted when designing programs to ensure appropriate content coverage and rigor for each licensure field’s grade span. Sponsoring Organizations should prioritize content fluency in the grade span for the license while ensuring functional content knowledge in the two grade levels below and above the grade span.  |

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| **History and Social Science Scope, Sequence, and Content Progression**  | **Course(s) or Screening**  |
| *Example Row*  | *EDU 101 – Weeks 5-7*  |
| **Grade 3: Massachusetts, Home to Many Different People.** Students study Massachusetts and New England, beginning with their own city or town. They explore interactions among Native Peoples, European settlers and Africans, and learn about the Massachusetts people who led the American Revolution. The standards introduce students to the founding documents of Massachusetts and United States so that they may begin to discuss and apply ideas about self-government as they help develop codes of classroom rules, rights, and responsibilities.  |   |
| **Grade 4: North American Geography and Peoples.** Students learn about North America (Canada, Mexico, and the United States) and its peoples from a geographic perspective. They learn about ancient civilizations on the continent and early European exploration as they expand map reading, mapmaking, and geographic reasoning skills introduced in grades 2 and 3. They apply concepts of how geography affects human settlement and resource use, and how the westward expansion of the United States created a modern nation of 50 states and 16 territories.  |   |
| **Grade 5: United States History to the Civil War and the Modern Civil Rights Movement.** Building on knowledge of North American geography and peoples, students learn more about the history of the colonies, American Revolution, development of the Constitution, Bill of Rights, early Republic, and westward expansion of the United States. They study the sectional conflicts over slavery that led to the Civil War and the long struggle in the 19th and 20th centuries for civil rights for all  |   |
| **Grades 6 and 7: World Geography and Ancient Civilizations I and II.** Sixth grade students examine how the perspectives of political science, economics, geography, history, and archaeology apply to the study of regions and countries. They study the development of prehistoric societies and then focus on area studies of Western Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Central America, the Caribbean Islands, and South America. Grade 7 examines the physical and political geography and ancient societies of South and East Asia, Oceania, and Europe and concludes with a study of government in Greece and Rome, which serves as a prelude to the study of civics in grade 8.  |   |
| **Grade 8: United States and Massachusetts Government and Civic Life**. Students study the roots and foundations of democratic government through primary documents, such as the United States and Massachusetts Constitutions; how and why government institutions developed; how government evolves through legislation and court decisions; and how individuals exercise their rights and civic responsibilities to maintain a healthy democracy in the nation and the Commonwealth.  |   |
| **High School: United States History I and II, the Colonial Period to the Present.** Students begin their high school study of the United States with a review of the causes of the American Revolution, Constitutional principles, and events of the early Republic. They examine the causes and consequences of the Civil War, industrialization, immigration, the role of the United States in World War I, and the early 20th century quest for social justice for all citizens. In United States History II, they learn about the fundamentals of economics, the Great Depression and the New Deal, World War II, the Cold War, social, cultural, and technological change, and globalization concluding with a study of social and political movements and international events in the late 20th and early 21st centuries.  |   |
| **High School: World History I and II, 6th Century to the Present.** Building on their understanding of world geography and civilizations from middle school, students in World History I study cultural, religious, political, and economic developments in Africa, Asia, and Europe from approximately 500 CE to c. 1800. World History II examines how modern world history, beginning with the late 18th century, has been shaped by the past, how nations and empires are born, rise, interact, and sometimes fall. The standards introduce students to concepts such as colonialism, imperialism, genocide, human rights, and globalization, and the importance of ethical, political, economic, and scientific ideas in shaping nations.  |   |
| **High School Electives: United States Government and Politics, Economics, Personal Financial Literacy, and News/Media Literacy**. United States Government and Politics, a full-year course, builds on the grade 8 Civics and United States History I and II courses to deepen understanding of political science. The Economics elective, also a full- Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for History and Social Science 19-year course, examines the concepts of scarcity, supply and demand, market structures, and the role of government, the role of financial institutions, economic stabilization, and trade. Standards for personal financial literacy and news/media literacy are included and may be used as stand-alone electives or integrated into a variety of other subjects, such as family and consumer science, business, college and career readiness, journalism, history and social science, English, or mathematics. High schools may also offer electives such as Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses, or locally developed courses, such as area studies of regions of the world, anthropology, Constitutional law, criminology, sociology, state or local history and politics, world religions, human rights, and might include capstone research projects  |   |

# Standards for History and Social Science Practice

The Standards for History and Social Science Practice describe the processes and skills that history and social science educators at all levels should seek to develop in their PK-12 students. The practices encompass civic knowledge, dispositions, and skills and reflect the range of disciplinary skills often used by historians, political scientists, economists, geographers, and ordinary citizens. Designed for integration with the content standards, the seven practices encompass the processes of inquiry and research that are integral to a rich and robust social science curriculum and the foundation for active and responsible citizenship. All seven practices can be applied from PK–12 and across all social science disciplines.

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| **Instructions*:***Initial licensure program candidates must reach a level of fluent content knowledge to be endorsed. They must be able to apply content in a range of contexts and vertically connect content to build students’ knowledge. As such, sponsoring organizations must have at least one course covering the practices at the fluent level.   Please list the numbers/abbreviations/titles of the **required courses where practices are explicitly targeted and coherently addressed**. Then, **briefly describe where in the syllabus each practice is covered** (i.e., unit name, week number, objective number). Course identifiers should match those of submitted syllabi and practices should not be spread across too many courses. |

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|  **Standards for History and Social Science Practice**   | **Fluent** *Initial* *Licensure*  |
| *Example Row*  | *EDU 101 – Weeks 5-7*  |
| **1. Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions.** * Civic knowledge includes the core knowledge in the Content Standards relating to civics and government, economics, geography, and history.
* Civic intellectual skills encompass knowing how to identify, assess, interpret, describe, analyze and explain matters of concern in civic life.
* Civic participatory skills encompass knowing how to make and support arguments, use the political process to communicate with elected officials and representatives of government, and plan strategically for civic change.
* Civic dispositions encompass values, virtues, and behaviors, such as respect for others, commitment to equality, capacity for listening, and capacity for communicating in ways accessible to others.
 |   |
| **2. Develop focused questions or problem statements and conduct inquiries**. The ability to develop focused research questions in history and social science or define the dimensions of a particular policy problem is central to learning in these disciplines. Students learn that each field in the social sciences (political scientist, economist, geographer, historian) has its own ways of defining questions.  |   |
| **3. Organize information and data from multiple primary and secondary sources.** Student researchers gather and organize information from a variety of online, print, and other sources. In the history and social science fields, they pay close attention to whether the source is primary or secondary. Primary sources are documents written or created during the period under study (e.g., census data, a map, an interview, a speech, or an artifact such as a building, painting, or tool) and considered first-hand accounts. Secondary sources are later interpretations or commentaries based on primary sources. Often students will use primary and secondary sources together to compose an argument, because each source provides a different type of information.   |   |
| **4. Analyze the purpose and point of view of each source; distinguish opinion from fact.** Students need exposure to readings that represent a variety of points of view in order to become discerning and critical readers. They need to be able to identify the purpose of a document and the point of view of its author. As students search primary sources for answers to questions, they begin to understand that eyewitness accounts of the same event can differ.  |   |
| **5. Evaluate the credibility, accuracy, and relevance of each source.** Students investigating a question using online sources often find all too much material, some of it conflicting. The ability to be discerning and skeptical consumers of information is a crucial college, career, and civic skill. Students should learn how and why to assess, verify, and cite sources.  |   |
| **6. Argue or explain conclusions, using valid reasoning and evidence.** The strength of an argument or explanation lies in its logical development of ideas, acknowledgement of counterclaims, and use of reliable supporting evidence. Effective arguments and explanations often go beyond text alone to include well-chosen and relevant visual elements such as photographs, maps, and displays of quantitative data. Students’ ability to adapt a presentation to the task, purpose, and audience and their ability to respond to questions are important skills for civic participation.  |   |
| **7. Determine next steps and take informed action, as appropriate.** One of the main goals of teaching history and the social science is to provide opportunities for students to practice using the knowledge and skills that enable them to participate in civic life. For example, engaging in discourse about public policy beyond the classroom through social media, letters to the editor, oral presentations in public settings, or community service-learning projects.  |   |