



SC READY
ELA Grades 3-5

2024 Test Data Review Report

Introduction

Data Recognition Corporation and the South Carolina Department of Education Office of Assessment and Standards (OAS) convened a panel of content experts to review item data from the Spring 2024 administration of SC READY. The panel of content experts analyzed operational and field test items, including information about how students performed on each item. Based on their analyses, the panel offered the instructional insights and strategies outlined in this document to support student learning.

Operational items on the Spring 2024 SC READY ELA assessment were aligned to the 2015 ELA Standards. To be most useful for teachers, all instructional insights and strategies in this document, including those from the analysis of operational items, have been organized based on their alignment to the *2024 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready ELA Standards*.

The OAS recognizes the hard work of the panel and South Carolina educators, and offers these relevant and useful suggestions for improving instruction as an addendum to those from previous years.

General Insights

Over the course of the panel's item analyses and subsequent conversations, general instructional insights common across Grades 3-5 began to emerge. These insights are listed in this section.

- General Insight #1: Students should be asked to incorporate concepts they've learned about during reading instruction in their own writing.
 - For example, if students are learning about similes, they should be asked to attempt to include similes in their writing.
- General Insight #2: Introduce students to rich language by **intentionally incorporating above-grade level vocabulary in classroom instruction**.
- General Insight #3: Emphasize **function** over identification. Students should be able to explain the impact of a concept, why the author chose to include a concept, and how a concept helps achieve the author's goals.
 - Concepts include figurative language, point of view, author's purpose, text features, text structure, etc.
 - For example, if given a text organized using the cause and effect informational text structure, students should be able to explain how the information the author provides is affected by the text structure, and the impact the text structure has on the reader.
- General Insight #4: Normalize re-reading a text with a different purpose in mind each time. This will help students learn how to unpack the function of various concepts.
- General Insight #5: Practice annotating texts to teach new concepts and reinforce previously taught concepts.
- General Insight #6: Teach the process of making inferences.
 - **Begin teaching the process of making inferences:**
 - *First*, through simple pictures.
 - "What do you think is happening in this picture?"
 - "What is the story behind this picture?"

- “What happened before this picture?”
 - “What happens after this picture?”
 - *Next*, through small real-life scenarios.
 - “John came home and saw a giant package with a bow on his front step. What inference can you make based on this scenario?”
 - *Then*, through progressively longer chunks of text.
 - *Finally*, over the course of an entire text.
- Teach students how to make inferences across all content areas throughout the day, not just during the ELA block.
- General Insight #7: Ensure students have experience with a variety of multimedia (e.g., oral speeches, transcribed speeches, podcasts, interactive read-alouds).

Insights and Strategies Aligned to AOR.1.1

- Insight #1: Teach students that character change isn’t always drastic. Often character change is more subtle.
 - During instruction, incorporate texts that have the following types of character change:
 - no character change,
 - subtle/little character change, and
 - obvious/big character change.
 - Use a character development chart to track character change.
- Insight #2: Students should understand that setting is not just a location, but also includes the *time or timeframe* during which the story takes place.
 - Guiding questions could include:
 - How would the story be different if it was set in [one location, like a classroom] vs. [another location, like a trampoline park]?
 - How would the story be different if it happened all in one day vs. over the course of two months?
 - How does the author show a shift in setting (location and/or time)?
- Insight #3: Use a web diagram to track relationships between characters, setting, events, and theme.

Insights and Strategies Aligned to AOR.1.2

- Insight #1: Students must move beyond only identifying the meaning of figurative language, and should be able to explain the function and impact of figurative language.
 - Guiding questions could include:
 - Why does the author use [specific figurative language in a text]?
 - What effect does [specific figurative language in a text] have on the reader?
 - Why would the author choose to use [specific figurative language in a text] instead of other types of figurative language?
 - What is the impact of [specific figurative language in a text]?
 - Strategies to help students unpack the meaning and functionality of figurative language include asking students to:
 - Sketch a visual representation of specific figurative language used in a text.
 - Practice writing figurative language and having a partner draw the visual representation.

- Underline the two things being compared in a text and circle how they're being compared or what they have in common.
- Write their own figurative language that means the same thing as figurative language pulled from a mentor sentence.
 - For example, if the mentor sentence uses the phrase "as big as the world," ask students to write another example of figurative language that conveys the same idea.

Insights and Strategies Aligned to AOR.2.1

- Insight #1: Teach theme as a full statement/complete idea, not a one-word topic.
 - Intentionally use the word "theme" in instruction as opposed to only using the words "lesson" or "moral."
 - Teach students how to determine the theme of a text by asking them to:
 - *First*, choose the character who learns something in the text.
 - *Then*, list the important events that happened to the character.
 - *Finally*, determine the theme based on what the character learns as a result of those important events.
- Insight #2: Teach students how to differentiate between key details that develop a theme and details that do not help develop the theme.
 - Strategies to help students determine the key details that develop a theme include:
 - Providing students with examples of key details and non-examples of key details.
 - Giving students the theme of a text and asking them to determine the key details that develop the theme.
 - After students have chosen what they think are the key details that develop the theme, ask them to retell the story using only the key details they have chosen.
 - Follow up by asking students if the details they've chosen are enough to show how the theme was developed.
 - Asking students to choose key details that directly connect to each part of a provided theme.

Insights and Strategies Aligned to AOR.2.2

- Insight #1: Central idea should not be taught as or conflated with main idea.
 - A central idea is one that is important enough to the author's purpose that the author spends a significant amount of time elaborating on the idea in the text.
 - A central idea can be the central idea of the passage as whole OR the central idea of a section of text in the passage.
 - Strategies to help students determine the central idea of a whole text or section of text include:
 - Having students play a matching game in which they correctly match a series of provided central ideas to the corresponding provided sections of text.
 - Asking students to write a subheading for a provided section of text.
 - Providing students with a subheading and having them write the text that would fit under the provided subheading.

- Insight #2: Teach students how to differentiate between supporting details that develop a central idea and details that do not help develop a central idea.
 - Strategies to help students determine the supporting details that develop a central idea include:
 - Giving students a sorting task with details from a text and having them sort the details into “important detail” and “not important detail” categories.
 - Providing students with examples of supporting details and non-examples of supporting details.
 - Giving students a central idea from the text and having them determine the supporting details that develop the central idea.
 - After students have chosen what they think are the supporting details, ask them to retell the text using only the supporting details they have chosen.
 - Follow up by asking students if the details they have chosen are enough to show how the central idea was developed.
 - Asking students to choose supporting details that directly connect to each part of a provided central idea.
 - Providing students with a central idea and having them highlight evidence from the text that develops the central idea.
 - Students can have a competition to see who can provide the strongest evidence.

Insights and Strategies Aligned to AOR.3.1

- Insight #1: Teachers should intentionally use the word “perspective” during instruction.
 - The definition of perspective should align with the new *2024 SC CCR ELA Standards*.
 - Perspective is defined as how the narrator and/or characters perceive what is happening within the story.
- Insight #2: Teachers should model how to compare the perspective of two or more characters.
 - Strategies to help students better understand the perspective of a character and compare the perspectives of multiple characters include:
 - Using a “Saying + Actions = Meaning” graphic organizer to determine a character’s perspective.
 - Graphic organizer includes a section for what a character said, a section for what a character did, and a section to synthesize what the combination of the character’s words and actions indicate about the character’s perspective.
 - Using a Venn diagram to compare the perspectives of two characters.
 - Teaching students how dialogue can reveal the perspective of a character by revealing *how* they say what they say.
 - Having students take on the role/identity of a character and debate a topic based on the character’s perspective.
- Insight #3: Instruction around point of view should go beyond identification.
 - Point of view is defined as the type of narrator used to tell a story.
 - Students should do more than just identify the point of view (first-person, second-person, third-person) of a text; students also need to understand and explain how the point of view impacts the information in the text.

- Guiding questions could include:
 - What do I know as a result of this point of view?
 - What would I know (or not know) if the story were told from a different point of view?
 - If the point of view changes, does my knowledge as a reader get bigger or smaller?
- Ask students to annotate the point of view of a text at the beginning of their reading.

Insights and Strategies Aligned to AOR.4.1

- Insight #1: Like theme, author's purpose should be taught as a full statement/complete idea, not a one-word action (persuade, explain, describe, convince, etc.).
 - The purpose should be framed as the author's desired outcome as a result of their writing.
 - Guiding questions could include:
 - What does the author hope to accomplish in writing this passage?
 - What effect does reading the passage have on the reader?
 - What does the text tell me about? What does the text make me wonder?
 - What does the text make me feel and why does the author want me to feel it?
- Insight #2: Ensure students have exposure to a variety of primary and secondary source documents.
 - When comparing a primary and secondary source:
 - *First*, read both sources.
 - *Next*, do a deep dive read into the first source.
 - *Then*, do a deep dive read into the second source.
 - *Finally*, compare the sources.

Insights and Strategies Aligned to AOR.5.1

- Insight #1: Students should have in-depth knowledge of the different literary text structures.
 - Students must understand *how* structural components of narratives, dramas, and poems add meaning and organize information in the text. It's not enough for students to just identify if a text is a narrative, poem, or drama.
- Insight #2: Students should re-read a literary text multiple times with a different purpose for re-reading each time.
 - For example, if reading a poem:
 - *During the first read*, students might focus on understanding the overall plot.
 - *During the second read*, students might focus on the figurative language used throughout and the impact it has on the poem and/or reader.
 - *During the third read*, students might focus on determining the theme.
 - *During the fourth read*, students might focus on analyzing how specific stanzas contribute to the overall structure or development of the poem.
- Insight #3: If possible, have students read a narrative, poem, and drama about the same event/story and compare how the information is presented differently across the three literary text structures.
 - Students can do a gallery walk and leave sticky notes about what they notice about each text structure.

Insights and Strategies Aligned to AOR.5.2

- Insight #1: Students should have in-depth knowledge of the purpose and function of text features in informational texts.
 - Guiding questions include:
 - How would the passage be different without [specific text feature]?
 - Why did the author include [specific text feature]?
 - What is added through the author's use of [specific text feature]?
 - How would the information be different if it was presented using a [different text feature] instead of the text feature the author originally used to present the information?
 - Strategies to help students understand the function of various text features include:
 - Teaching students how to preview an informational text specifically for text features.
 - Teaching students how to make predictions about what the text around a text feature will focus on about based on the text feature's content.
- Insight #2: Students should re-read an informational text multiple times with a different purpose for re-reading each time.
 - For example, if reading an article:
 - *During the first read*, students might focus on previewing the text for anything that might be difficult to understand.
 - *During the second read*, students might focus on understanding the central ideas in the article.
 - *During the third read*, students might focus on determining the purpose of text features in the article.
 - *During the fourth read*, students might focus on analyzing how the text structure impacts the information in the article.
 - *During the fifth read*, students might focus on determining what information should be included in a summary of the article.
- Insight #3: If possible, have students read informational texts about the same topic that use a variety of text structures, and compare how the information is presented differently across the various text structures.
 - Students can do a gallery walk and leave sticky notes about what they notice about each text structure.
 - Incorporate mentor texts that obviously make use of the text structure and subtly make use of the text structure.
 - Guiding questions could include:
 - Which text structure did the author use?
 - How do I know this text structure was used?
 - Why did the author use this text structure?
 - How does the purpose of the text change based on the text structure used?
 - How does the information in the text change based on the text structure used?

Insights and Strategies Aligned to AOR.6.1

- Insight #1: Summarizing is a high-demand skill that must be reviewed and reinforced throughout grades 3-5.
 - Summarizing will become a more complex process as the texts students read become more complex.

- Insight #2: Begin summarizing small sections of text first, then move into summarizing larger sections of text, and finally entire texts.
 - Strategies to help students learn how to summarize a text include:
 - Teaching students how to summarize **outside of ELA first**.
 - Build a classroom routine in which students are summarizing parts of their day. This could be at the end of the day or during natural breaks in the day.
 - Watch short video clips and have students practice summarizing them.
 - Using the “too much, too little, not true” sorting activity.
 - First, have students read sample summaries that are too long, too short, or contain information that is not true, and then, sort the summaries into “too much,” “too little,” or “not true” categories.
 - Allowing students to practice writing summaries and then ranking the summaries as a class based on the efficacy of the summary.
 - Having students first highlight important details in a text and then determine which of the highlighted details are needed for a summary. Be sure to emphasize that not every highlighted detail is needed for a summary.
- Insight #3: Provide exemplar summaries and have students notice and name the characteristics that make each summary an exemplar.

Vocabulary Insights and Strategies

- Insight #1: Teach a diverse range of grade-level appropriate affixes, base words, and root words.
 - Grades 3: Teach a diverse range of prefixes and suffixes
 - Grades 4-5: Teach a diverse range of prefixes, suffixes, base words, Greek roots, and Latin roots
 - Strategies to teach a diverse range of affixes, base words, and/or root words include:
 - Developing a system to “collect” prefixes, suffixes, base words, Greek roots, and/or Latin roots.
 - As you teach students new affixes and/or roots, have a visible place students can easily refer back to that defines the affix and/or root.
 - Ways to “collect” affixes and/or roots include:
 1. An interactive wall of affixes and/or roots.
 2. A running listing in students’ notebooks.
 3. An interactive running tally anchor chart.
 - Add the affix and/or root to the tally chart after students learn about it.
 - Have a daily “scavenger hunt” in which students add tallies to the chart when they find the affix and/or root in their own reading.
 - Build nonsense words using affixes and/or roots.
 - After teaching the meaning of affixes and/or roots, have students build nonsense words using previously taught affixes and/or roots.
 - Once built, students should trade nonsense words with their peers and try to determine the meaning of the words based on the affixes and/or roots in each word.

- Insight #2: Teach students how to use context clues by having them determine the meaning of nonsense words based on sentence-level and/or paragraph-level context clues.
- Insight #3: Teach students how grammar and conventions can be a type of context clue to help determine the meaning of new words.
 - E.g., how commas or a colon can be used to punctuate an appositive phrase

Writing Insights and Strategies

- Insight #1: Whatever concepts students learn about in reading, ensure they are intentionally including those concepts in their writing.
 - For example:
 - If students are learning about metaphors, develop writing assignments in which students are expected to attempt to include metaphors in their writing.
 - If students are learning about the problem/solution informational text structure, develop writing assignments that require students to use that text structure in their informational writing.
- Insight #2: Employ a wide variety of strategies to help students determine the best way to organize their writing.
 - Strategies to help students organize their writing include:
 - Showing students writing exemplars and having them notice and name what makes the sample an exemplar.
 - Students should reference this list of characteristics when they are writing in an effort to emulate the characteristics.
 - Giving students sentence strips and having them order the sentences in a way that creates the most logical, smooth progression of ideas.
 - Providing students with the beginning, middle, or end of a sentence or paragraph and having them fill in the missing portions of text.
 - At the sentence level, this could look like leaving a transition word blank and having students fill in a transition word based on context.
 - At the paragraph level, this could look like leaving a sentence(s) out and having students fill in the missing text with a sentence(s) that makes sense based on context.
 - Teaching how certain transition words signal a relationship between parts of a sentence.
 - For example, the use of “but” typically means that the information before and after the transition is contradictory.

Grammar and Conventions Insights and Strategies

- Insight #1: Incorporate a spiral review structure for all previously learned grammar and convention rules.
 - As you teach students new grammar and convention rules, add them to the spiral review.
 - In addition to a separate spiral review structure, spiral review should be incorporated during the editing process in writing.
 - This can be done through writing conferences in writing workshop or through a peer editing process using an editing checklist.
 - The [grammar and convention matrix](#) is a helpful resource that provides an overview of what students should have learned and will learn later.

- **Insight #2: Read and unpack the sub-indicators listed in C.4.1**
 - These sub-indicators clearly indicate the grammar and convention rules students are expected to have mastery of by the end of each grade level.
 - Note, correct adjective order is something to focus on that might otherwise be neglected.

Research Insights and Strategies

- **Insight #1:** Choose high-interest content to facilitate the process of asking and answering questions.
 - Keep a running list of questions students organically ask throughout the day. Use these questions in lessons that model the research process.
 - Teach students to preview a text with the question “what questions do I think will be answered in this part of the text?” in mind.
- **Insight #2:** Have students provide a justification for every step in the research process.
- **Insight #3:** Offer students a wide variety of sources and teach them how to determine which source would be most useful in researching a particular topic or question.
- **Insight #4:** Allow students to investigate a wide range of sources through stations.
 - Gather an assortment of sources such as books, photos, songs, or videos and set each type of source up at separate stations.
 - Have students visit each station to determine whether the source answers their research question; if not, discuss why.
 - Students could also do this as a stationary activity or as a group activity, if needed.
 - Make sure students understand what the word “reliable” means.