



Essential ELA Skills for the Scholar

Entering Seventh Grade

Below is a list of reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills that are most essential for scholars to have fully mastered before starting ELA 7. Please practice these skills with your scholar from now and throughout the summer to ensure he's ready to rock 7th grade ELA!

Skill #1 – You can build your reading stamina until you can read for **30-45 minutes straight** with almost no breaks.

Skill #2 - After you have read something, you can summarize it by quickly explaining key events from the text.

Examples:

- *In this chapter, the main plot development is that Harry discovers... We also learn that Hermione...*
- *This article mentions 3 main climate studies and their major findings, including...*

Skill #3 - After reading a story, you can identify its theme (a message/learning about life). In a nonfiction text, you should be able to identify the central idea or the main point of the text.

Examples of themes in literature:

- *The story "The Giving Tree" explains that being generous makes one's life happier.*
- *The story "Julian is a Mermaid" teaches that you should always be true to yourself.*
- *A theme we learn from "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" is that those who are brave and kind-hearted will always prevail.*

Examples of central ideas in nonfiction:

- *The article, "100 Days After Its First Case," gives facts about which businesses are opening back up in New York City and explains how some New Yorkers feel about the re-opening.*
- *The article, "Pandemic's Cleaner Air Could Reshape What We Know About the Atmosphere" explains how scientists have been using climate data during COVID, when many people weren't driving and work places used less electricity, to better understand pollution.*

Skill #4 – You can combine information you already know and evidence from a piece of reading to make inferences or explain what you think might happen next.

Examples of inferences:

- *I can tell that Harry is stubborn because...*
- *If you read between the lines, it's clear that the author thinks President Trump's decisions are hurting the environment because...*

Skill #5 – You can explain how an author creates and develops characters in a story.

Remember STEAL:

- *S – the character's SPEECH (the words and tone used)*
- *T – the character's THOUGHTS (what's in his head / his feelings)*
- *E – the EFFECT the character has on others (or vice versa)*
- *A – the ACTIONS the character takes*
- *L – the character's LOOKS (facial expressions, body language, physical appearance)*

Skill #6 - When you read a text and someone asks you a question, you can use information straight from that text to explain your answer or support your opinion.

Examples:

- *I think that Harry Potter is wrong about Snape because in Chapter 9....*
- *I know that scientists around the world are working on climate research because in the article, it mentions...*

Skill #7 - When someone asks you a question about what you have read, you can give a clear and strong response that directly answers the question.

Skill #8 – When you read, you can identify the genre and explain main features of the genre. When you write, you can choose a genre to write in and correctly use the features of that genre.

Common Genres:

- *Realistic Fiction*
- *Historical Fiction*
- *Mystery*
- *Newspaper Article*
- *Editorial*

Skill #9 – You can explain your opinions and ideas in **your own words**, (both in writing and speaking) instead of just using words from the text.

Skill #10 – After you've written something (for example, a paragraph, essay, email, etc.), you can read over your written work to make sure it makes sense, and rewrite parts of it to make the writing clearer and stronger.

Examples of what to Rewrite:

- *Add explanations for how your evidence supports your point*
- *Add a direct quote and citation*
- *Add reasons why your point is important*

Skill #11 – You can write a professional e-mail, including:

- A short subject to capture the main point of your email
- A professional greeting, such as:
 - *Dear Mr. Morgan,*
 - *Good Morning Ms. Jones,*
- An opening greeting sentence, such as:
 - *I hope you are doing well.*
 - *I hope you're having a good day.*
 - *I hope you and your family are safe during this time.*
 - *Happy Monday!*
- Complete sentences clearly and politely explaining their point, question, etc.
- A closing sentence thanking the person for their time or help, such as:
 - *Thank you for reading my email.*
 - *I appreciate any help you can offer.*
 - *Thank you so much for considering my request.*
 - *Thank you for your time.*
- A professional closing, such as:
 - *Sincerely,*
Jordan Pierre
 - *Be Well,*
Neo Fleurimond
 - *With Gratitude,*
Tarif Rose

Skill #12 – You can have at least a **15-minute conversation** about something you've read, watched, or experienced. In that conversation you can:

- clearly state your opinions or ideas
- give examples or reasons to support your main points
- listen to your conversation partner, and directly respond to their ideas and examples (explain why you agree or disagree, etc.)