

READING: LITERATURE

STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS and ORGANIZATION

described by Matt Glover

Build comprehension and appreciation of literature, using knowledge of literary structure and point of view.

There are two key parts to this standard, which is meant to support readers in understanding and enjoying what they read. Point of view refers to who is telling or narrating a story. First-person and third-person are two common points of view. Point of view is not the same as perspective, which refers to a character's world view. For example, a story could be written in first-person point-of-view, but the story itself could reveal multiple perspectives related to the various characters in the story.

Structure refers to the parts of a piece of literature and how those parts are organized. This standard explores common structures found in stories, poems, and plays. Knowing about these structures and considering an author's intention in using them, supports deeper understanding of the texts students read and makes it more likely that students will fall in love with reading.

GRADE 2

Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action.

Unpacking the Standard

In kindergarten and first grade students learn to recognize the characteristics of narrative genres; specifically fairy tales, nursery rhymes and storybooks. This standard deepens students' understanding of story, introducing the idea of story structure by focusing on beginnings and endings.

Considerations for Lessons and Assessment

In this video Matt shares how teachers can develop students' understanding of story structure through five story elements (character, plot, setting, movement through time, and change). He demonstrates what this teaching might look like in the classroom, showing examples of the 'work' beginnings and endings do in a story, how transition language signals movement through time, how to recognize the turning point in a story, and consider changes in character or situation from beginning to end. He also suggests ways to assess students' knowledge of story structure.

GRADE 3

Use terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza to refer to the parts of stories, plays, and poems; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.

Unpacking the Standard

This standard significantly expands on what students are expected to know by the end of second grade, which focuses on stories with particular attention to beginnings and endings. The third-grade standard assumes students are reading longer stories organized into chapters, and also being introduced to plays and poems. This standard provides a foundation for what students will learn in fourth and fifth grades.

Considerations for Lessons and Assessment

In this video Matt shows how teachers can incorporate knowledge of story structure through the five story elements (RL.3.1 Grade 2) to read more sophisticated texts including chapter books and introduces additional structural elements, such as climax and falling action. He also shows how teachers can build on students' knowledge of story structures to scaffold learning to structures specific to poetry and plays. Teachers can help students see and use structure to better understand the texts they read during whole class read alouds, in strategic teaching that supports independent reading, or while conferring with students.

GRADE 4

Explain major differences between poems, plays, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems and drama.

Unpacking the Standard

In third grade students were introduced to the structural elements of poems and plays, while deepening their structural knowledge about prose (story). In fourth grade students are expected to explore in much greater depth the differences in these types of writing, which is especially important as the variety of texts students read becomes increasingly more complex. Teachers have supported students' knowledge about stories since kindergarten, but students' knowledge of new genres such as plays and poetry is likely less developed. This standard expects students to become more familiar with other features that distinguish one genre from another, and further, to notice how these features, including structural elements, contribute to their understanding and enjoyment of the texts they are reading.

Considerations for Lessons and Assessment

In this video Matt compares the structural elements of stories (prose), plays and poems, and addresses the important need for students to look at the shape and structure of a new kind of text and fit it with (or contrast it to) other kinds of texts they have known. In doing so, they begin to discern not only what a poem, or play, or story sounds like, but they also consider how a particular genre also supports a particular kind of meaning-making. He also suggests ways to assess understanding in the context of whole group, small group, or one-on-one interactions.

GRADE 5

Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, play, or poem.

Unpacking the Standard

The fifth-grade standard is the culmination of knowledge built around the structural elements of stories, plays and poems. By the end of fifth grade, students are expected not only to recognize structural elements in each of these genres but also to think about how each element contributes to what a reader understands from the text. Knowledge about structural elements can make reading in new genres more comprehensible as well as more enjoyable.

Considerations for Lessons and Assessment

In this video Matt reviews the structural elements students know as a consequence of the teaching related to this standard in preceding school years. He demonstrates using more complex authentic texts that fifth-grade readers are likely to encounter. Matt demonstrates teaching into this standard by mapping out structural elements—in a chapter book to reveal the structure of the story and in a poem to reveal how its parts work together. Matt suggests ways students might demonstrate their knowledge, particularly in conversation with you, the teacher, but also in writing.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Ray, K.W. (2006). *Study driven*. Heinemann.

Ray, K.W. (2005). *In pictures and in words*. Heinemann.

Serravallo, J. (2015). *The reading strategies book*. Heinemann.

What's the difference between perspective and point of view (n.d.). New York Book Editors [blog post]. Retrieved from

<https://nybookeditors.com/2016/02/whats-the-difference-between-perspective-and-point-of-view/>

Partnership for Inquiry Learning (n.d.). <http://partnershipforinquirylearning.org>.

Children's literature featured in the videos:

Cornwall, G. (2017). *Jabari jumps*. Candlewick Press.

Deffner, E. (2015, June). Fiddle fanatic. *Highlights Magazine*.

Medina, T. (2006). *Love to Langston*. Lee and Low Books.

O'Connell G. K. (2001). *Toasting marshmallows*. Clarion Books.

Palacio, R.J. (2012). *Wonder*. Random House.

Reynolds, J. (2016). *Ghost*. Atheneum Books for Young Readers.

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