



## English Language Arts (ELA) Distance Learning

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The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) defines distance learning as “students have access to appropriate educational materials and receive daily interactions with their licensed teachers.” Supporting English Language Arts learning in the period where students are working from home provides some challenges and opportunities. MDE has provided a document to help districts set up distance learning. This document builds on those delivery systems and applies them to distance learning in ELA.

### Considerations for ELA Instruction (K-12):

- Where are you now in your unit planning?
- Which standards are you working on now?
- What standards are aligned with the next learning?
- How might you bundle standards for distance learning lessons?
- What delivery system(s) will be used and how can instruction be aligned and differentiated to that delivery system?
- How might you prioritize high impact learning opportunities that support student mastery of identified standards?
- How will instructional feedback be given within the distance learning model?
- How familiar are your students with particular digital platforms and tools (from using them previously in class)? Do they have access to these same platforms and tools at home?
- How will you use formative assessment(s) to drive your instruction?
- Have you considered providing print passages and books, e-books, audio books (cds, online applications)?
- For struggling readers and those with characteristics of dyslexia, how will you provide differentiated access to printed content? How will audiobooks, voice-to-text, and other tools be utilized to ensure that difficulties with reading, writing and spelling do not become a barrier to student mastery of grade-level standards?

### Considerations for ELA Assessment (K-12):

- What assessment is appropriate for measuring student mastery of standards?
- What transformations can be made to existing assessments?
- How are grading practices focused on the mastery of standards (knowledge and skills) rather than on daily practice, participation, or time on task?

## Considerations for Specific Grade Bands:

### Grades K-2:

Consider the above as well as these additional considerations for grade K-2 students (pre and emergent readers).

#### Considerations for Instruction:

How will direct explicit instruction in reading be delivered through your distance learning model?

How will differentiated reading instruction in small groups be delivered through your distance learning model?

#### Considerations for Assessment:

How will teachers monitor progress of students in developing reading foundational skills through your distance learning model?

**Considerations for Family and Community Partnership:** (Imperative for K-2 students, recommended as needed for students in other grade levels)

How will schools and teachers help families and communities build a support system for K-2 grade students?

- MDE encourages an initial planning phone call between the teacher and the family to set up a system for family/teacher contact.
- Ask which person the family wants to serve as the contact person for the teacher.
- Determine how and when contact will take place, create a schedule.
- Determine the family's preferences and access regarding distance learning.

### Grades 3-5

Consider the above as well as these additional considerations for grade 3-5 students:

#### Considerations for Instruction:

How will you meet the needs of struggling readers regarding foundational and reading comprehension skills through differentiated instruction?

How will you guide students in self-selection of appropriate text in a format that suits the distance learning model?

#### Considerations for Assessment:

How and when is it appropriate to offer different options to students to demonstrate content mastery of standards?

## Grades 6-12

Consider the above as well as these additional considerations for grade 6-12 students:

### **Considerations for Instruction:**

How will you support students' self-selection of text while instructing and assessing on the standards and benchmarks?

How might this unique experience of distance learning be a springboard for connecting to resources that enhance career and college readiness?

### **Considerations for Assessment:**

How will students participate in determining the assessment method that demonstrates content mastery of the standards?

**For ELA resources**, please review the following professional organization websites:

[International Literacy Association](#)

[Minnesota State Reading Association](#)

[Minnesota Academy of Reading](#)

[National Council of Teachers of English](#)

[Minnesota Council of Teacher of English](#)

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