



SEALASKA
HERITAGE

With TIDES Education Associates

ALASKA NATIVE LANGUAGE ARTS K-3 READING STANDARDS

September 16, 2024



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Dear Deputy Commissioner Joel Isaak,

Thank you for the opportunity to lead the Alaska Native Language Arts K-3 Reading Standards development. We offer these standards to you with gratitude for the State of Alaska's investment in this work. These Alaska Native Language Arts K-3 Reading Standards are intended to uplift Native languages to be held on equal footing with English reading standards.

Families, communities, schools, districts, and the State all have roles to play if these standards are to be successful. This document provides guidance to districts, and the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools provides guidance for students, educators, curricula, schools, and communities. In this letter, we offer some suggestions for ways the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (DEED) can further support Alaska Native languages in our schools.

First, it is crucial that DEED understand that the diversity of Alaska Native language programming across the State, including everything from full immersion to ad hoc heritage language instruction, makes it impossible to adopt a one-size-fits-all approach to attaching timelines to the standards. In this document, we have decoupled the standards from grade levels, but an investigation into the chronological impacts that different program structures have on bilingual literacy development is a project worthy of future investment. This investigation could aid districts and the State in setting reasonable expectations for literacy development in Alaska Native Language Arts, while also honoring the Indigenous view of time in which everything happens when it is supposed to happen.

Second, the State must understand that implementing these standards will require an investment in resources beyond what is typical for other bodies of standards. People throughout the country and world write books and create instructional materials in English or for Western education, and we all draw on one another's work. But there is only one place in the world creating resources in Alaska Native languages, and for most Alaska Native languages, there are only a handful of fluent speakers/writers with the skills to do so. Significant public investment must be made into developing and disseminating rich, culturally relevant Alaska Native language learning materials for all of Alaska's heritage languages. Similarly, there must be a concerted public effort to develop, support, and validate Alaska Native language instructors, both within and outside the university system.

Finally, there was significant statewide interest and excitement surrounding developing these standards, but many of the suggestions that came up organically were beyond the scope of this project. This energy allows us to offer suggestions for next steps DEED could take to support implementation of these standards, such as:

- 
- Convening a group of language educators to create exemplars for how standards can be applied in major Alaska language groups, to help educators viscerally understand the intent of the standard.
 - Bringing various Alaska Native language revitalization efforts and agencies together in a collective impact coalition by identifying and supporting a backbone organization to do the coordination work.
 - Leading collaborative development of standards-aligned instructional and assessment frameworks.
 - Partnering with tribes and other Alaska Native organizations to develop new language learning opportunities both within and outside the education system.
 - Supporting districts to develop local, language-based standards specific to the structures, culture, and communities they serve.
 - Funding the development of books, resources, and curricula in Alaska Native languages.

We look forward to working together throughout the standards adoption process and invite discussions and dialogue that can help us better understand one another's perspectives.

Sincerely,

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Acknowledgments

These standards were co-created with statewide stakeholders, led by Nancy Douglas and Shgen George of TIDES Education Associates with the support of Sealaska Heritage Institute. We extend our deepest gratitude to the working group participants:

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Continued on the following page.

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Ts'qalts'ema Dek'isen Kari Shaginoff

Ahtna, Nay'dini'aa na' kayax ts'insyaaden
(Chickaloon Village I am from). Educator,
Siił du' baan (I am a mom), Siił du' tsucde
(I am a grandmother).



Introduction

“It takes just one generation to lose a language
and three generations to reclaim it back.”

— Keiki Kawai’ae’a, Ph.D.

Director,

Ka Haka ‘Ula o Ke’elikōlani College of Hawaiian Language,
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Here we present a draft of academic standards for Alaska Native Language Arts K-3 Reading. Learning standards are designed to be guideposts for schools. They clearly and concisely communicate what students are expected to know and be able to do at each stage of their educational journey. The Alaska Board of Education has adopted standards for K-12 students in a variety of subjects, including the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools. Several of these standards documents made attempts to integrate Alaska Native content and perspectives, but until now, explicit standards for Alaska Native languages have been of notable absence.

Without standards, educators face challenges in effectively communicating learning expectations and progress to students, families, the public, and policymakers. The standards in this document address the need for Alaska Native Language Arts K-3 Reading Standards. These standards are designed to elevate Native languages to the same level of importance as English, supporting the continued development of Alaska Native language use in schools and language revitalization programs across Alaska.

Just a few generations ago, well remembered in our oral history, all of Alaska was Indigenous territory. Alaska Native languages are the Indigenous languages of this land and have been spoken here for tens of thousands of years. Up until 1930, less than 100 years ago, Alaska Native people made up the majority of Alaska’s population, speaking twenty-three different languages despite colonial efforts to eradicate them. Those twenty-three Alaska Native languages are now considered official by the State of Alaska, meaning that they are acceptable to use for government and legal purposes, and are taught and used in schools.

A clear statewide policy directive mandates that all students should be able to read at grade level by the end of third grade. House Bill (HB) 114, also known as the Alaska Reads Act, became law on July 15, 2022 (Chapter 40, SLA 2022), with an effective date of July 1, 2023. This law permits reading instruction to be conducted in and through Alaska Native languages as well as English. The standards provided herein offer crucial



support for instruction in Alaska Native languages, affirming that reading in an Alaska Native language is valid for demonstrating reading proficiency. They represent a significant step toward normalizing Alaska Native language instruction and offer a practical means to support the development and use of Alaska Native languages in schools and language programs across the state.



Overview

In the Indigenous worldview, languages are deeply integrated and interrelated with culture; a language cannot exist apart from the culture it embodies. Alaska Native languages and cultures are all unique, and efforts to revitalize these languages must be driven by the Indigenous communities themselves. These standards strive to honor the diversity of approaches to Alaska Native language learning used throughout the state, and at the same time define the commonalities among languages so they can be used anywhere, within any school district or language program.

The team of educators who developed these standards drew deeply from the connections their cultures share with the land (*see fig. 1 on the following page*). Before the current era of climate change and glacial retreat, glaciers symbolized ancestral knowledge, with the expansive ice fields reflecting the gradual accumulation of that wisdom over generations. The movement of glacial ice mirrors the passing of knowledge from one generation to the next. This wisdom flows into the river of our oral traditions—song, dance, and storytelling—which form the foundation our students need to become whole human beings. Small streams, representing our modern understanding of the written word, also feed into this river, ultimately leading us to the vast ocean of opportunity we call literacy. This interconnected, land-based cultural literacy is at the core of our work on the Alaska Native Language Arts K-3 Reading Standards.

Because of this entanglement of culture with Alaska Native language literacy, a particular challenge during the development process was parsing out language-specific standards from the philosophical and practical values that are inseparable from Indigenous language learning. If these standards are to align with cultural education and Indigenous knowledge, educators and policymakers must embrace our holistic teaching traditions. **The standards as presented reflect the following philosophical and practical values, which are essential to Alaska Native languages and cultures.**

To meaningfully communicate progress in learning that is important to us as Alaska Native people, **it is essential that the standards reflect our worldview.** With this in mind, we modeled the standards on existing sets used in Alaska schools but thoughtfully adapted them to align with Alaska Native cultures. For example, while the Alaska English Language Arts standards distinguish between literature and informational text, we, as Indigenous people, find truth in our oral histories, which may be interpreted literally as fiction. These Comprehension Standards, however, recognize a developmental progression that deepens our understanding of both oral and written literature through maturation and participation in culturally grounded settings where our oral histories are shared. The progression of understanding has

Be Still & Listen → Oral Language → Literacy



Figure 1.



been classified into four levels: Literal, Connected, Implied, and Allegorical, which are further described below.

These developmental stages may be tied to grade- or age-based milestones, but we are less beholden to a fixed, linear timeline than Western education is. As such, we have decoupled them from age and grade levels and leave that to individual communities and programs at this time.

Depth of Knowledge Indicators

1. **Literal:** Engaging students with text in a most basic sense without deeper meaning. Retelling and describing on a surface level without interpretation.
2. **Connected:** Linking text to what is already known involves drawing on the background knowledge students have gained through cultural life experiences that begin in the womb. This engages students with the text, connecting with their understanding of cultural knowledge and creating a relationship between the reader and the material.
3. **Implied:** Gathering information from clues suggested but not directly expressed within a text involves making inferences, predictions, and conclusions based not only on the material but also on the student's cultural experience. This reinforces cultural knowledge and fosters engagement with the content, which simultaneously deepens understanding of the material.
4. **Allegorical:** Metaphor, simile, and hyperbole are prevalent in Alaska Native cultures in both traditional oral expression and ceremonial oratory and in modern-day written texts. Students are thinking at this level when they use knowledge of this practice in order to understand the extended symbolism and abstract ideas beyond the literal meaning of events, environments, and characters. This expands students' cultural knowledge.

Traditionally, Alaska Native knowledge has been perpetuated through oral narrative. Honoring this tradition means that **these standards emphasize listening, thinking, speaking, and understanding** in addition to reading text. Students must hear, deeply comprehend, and share their traditional oral narratives in their Native languages if they are to read in them. Alaska Native languages are vibrantly rooted in the specifics of place, and the full meaning of our stories can only be expressed in our own languages. Our traditional narratives embed and communicate our specific cultural values and knowledge, and learning them lays an essential foundation for Western academic success for Alaska Native students.



In order for the Alaska Native Language Arts K-3 Reading Standards to be effective in supporting reading instruction in Alaska Native languages, education systems must implement the standards within the cultural and philosophical grounding described above. Doing so further requires that certain **practical implementation values** be shared.

Alaska Native language programs must be led by Alaska Native people. Non-Native allies can support these efforts by listening deeply to Indigenous people, asking respectful questions to better understand our experience and expertise, and by questioning their own assumptions and implicit biases. Allies can create space within Western systems for Indigenous language and culture to flourish by reducing administrative and structural burdens on language revitalization programming and embracing Indigenous evaluation methods.

Success requires robust public investment. The Alaska Constitution lays the responsibility of providing K-12 public education with the State. The most extensive longitudinal study of language minority student achievement to date found that “the most powerful predictor of academic success” was schooling for at least four to seven years in the heritage language (Alaska Comprehensive Center et al., 2012). For Alaska Native students to achieve equitable academic success, public education must include high-quality Alaska Native language instruction. The Alaska Native Language Arts K-3 Reading Standards are a step in that direction; however, additional investment in program development and ongoing operational support is necessary. This includes continued support for developing skilled Indigenous language teachers and instructional materials and resources, such as a rich collection of Alaska Native language books.

Finally, **schools and teachers must create the conditions necessary for maximum learning**, including Native language-first, print-rich classrooms and structures that nurture emotional safety. Educators must foster independence to develop students’ curiosity and spark a love of learning. Students must have choice and voice in their classrooms. These are best educational practices that transcend cultures. As Indigenous cultures have adapted to changing conditions since time immemorial, the education system too must adapt to use the best educational practices that both Western and traditional knowledge have to offer. We owe our grandchildren nothing less.



*“Ch’a tlákwdáx haa dachxán
haa kináa kei wtusinúk.*

Aaá.

X’atulitseen.

*Tsu kushtuyáx daa sá yaa
tushigéiyi át du jeedéi yatx
gatooteeyín haa dachxánx
siteeyi káa.”*

“Even from long ago we have
placed our grandchildren high
above ourselves.

Yes.

We cherish them.

Even those things we treasure
we used to offer up to
them, to those who are our
grandchildren.”

— K̓aal.átk’ Charlie Joseph
(Tlingit of the Kaagwaantaan clan)



Guidance for Districts

The standards writers offer the following guidance to districts that will implement the Alaska Native Language Arts K-3 Reading Standards:

1. Successful Alaska Native language learning requires a systems change approach

The Alaska Native Language Arts K-3 Reading Standards were developed with the understanding that they will be applied to culturally sustaining and land-based educational environments. We cannot wait for school systems to fundamentally change before we start teaching Indigenous languages, and teaching Indigenous language does not automatically make the environment culturally sustaining or land-based. Districts must intentionally invest in shifting practices throughout the content areas to embed Alaska Native culture and language across the curriculum and the grade levels and adopt holistic and culturally responsive pedagogies. Indigenous knowledge is inherently interdisciplinary, as content areas are interconnected and not taught in isolation within an Indigenous worldview.

We see our students succeeding and contributing to our communities when they can make connections between our language and history and the world around them, the environment, and the global community. Connecting oral and written text to life means Native languages are deeply intertwined with both oral and written texts, reflecting their integral role in the lives of our people and in Alaska. These languages are not confined to isolated language learning programs or specific times of the day; rather, they are embedded in our daily lives and used across a variety of contexts.

2. Learning to read in Alaska Native languages starts with oral and implied language skills

Oral tradition, and the associated thinking and memory skills, are of primary importance in Alaska Native cultures. Educators must cultivate these thinking and memory skills by cultivating the silent narrative in students, which allows them to think in and about their language to create meaning and develop as whole human beings. Learning to read in our heritage languages provides additional reinforcement and respect for language learning and an additional means to respond to and interact with our languages and cultures, especially for students who are deeply enmeshed with our text-dependent modern culture.

Learning to read in Alaska Native languages is more than explicitly decoding different sounds, words, speech patterns, and writing systems, all of which vary among the different languages and have evolved over time. To read in an Alaska Native language is to understand a distinct communication system, both because it is rooted in the Indigenous worldview that holds cultural understanding and respect as central values,



and because there are essential implicit communicative elements such as hand gestures, tonal variations, and body language that cannot be ignored.

3. Native language literacy requires time and resources, for both students and educators

Alaska Native students come to school with varying degrees of familiarity with the distinct communication system of their Native language. For those who speak their language at home, or in communities where the Native language and culture are predominant, students may come to school with an innate understanding of the Indigenous worldview and the implicit elements of their language. Students who learned English at home in a Westernized community may be acquiring their heritage language and even culture from scratch. Even when speaking English, students' speech may be based on the traditional communication style of their ancestral language. It takes different students using different approaches to language learning different amounts of time to reach the stages of language development outlined in these standards. Districts are encouraged to add local language details to the standards and align the developmental phases with the timelines of the programs offered.

Alaska Native organizations across the state are collaborating to develop Indigenous language books and instructional materials. Because of the land-based nature of Indigenous knowledge and language, Alaska Native instructional materials must be developed or adapted to fit the place. Educators need to be equipped with the time, space, and skills needed to develop appropriate resources. Districts are encouraged to support these efforts by intentionally allocating additional teacher preparation time for identifying and cataloging existing materials and for developing new materials and resources. Instructional and reading materials must focus on local and traditional content, and may include translations of global literature, at a variety of levels targeted towards the developmental stages of language acquisition and reading.

4. Trust Indigenous educators

Accountability for heritage language instruction must remain within the language communities themselves, free from the constraints of a Western perspective. Fluency in a heritage language does not automatically qualify someone to teach it, just as being an outstanding Indigenous educator doesn't necessarily make one a language instructor. Educational systems need to adapt by providing time and professional development opportunities for Native language speakers and exceptional Indigenous teachers to collaborate, sharing their knowledge and incorporating the Indigenous expertise and worldview that underpin heritage language learning.



The best language instructors have the skills to read to students in the Native language and to tell traditional stories from memory, with awareness and attention to both verbal and non-verbal communication. This can come in many forms—it may be that a certified Indigenous teacher has the expertise to do it themselves, or the teacher may bring in community members and Elders to share local caches of knowledge. In all cases, appropriate traditional intellectual property conventions must be adhered to. This includes knowing who has permission to share traditional knowledge, how and when to do so appropriately, and participating in reciprocity such as gifting or compensation. Local and traditional content must be prioritized, because it is the context in which our languages have the deepest meaning. When teachers are not the language experts, they can reinforce student learning by listening carefully, modeling being a learner, and honoring the expert guests.

This style of learning in our Indigenous languages will look different from an English language education, and educational systems must create new expectations as language programming evolves, rather than relying on expectations that are based on a monolingual experience. Indigenous evaluation methods must be used to show and measure success both for students and the programs.

These standards have been developed to ensure that future generations will not only restore our Native languages but also embed them as a core part of our school curricula. We are the middle generation, working to heal the trauma of language loss while creating systems that will empower our children to reclaim it.

“Haa tóo yéi yatee. It is inside of us.”

— Kingeistí David Katzeek



Alaska Native Language Arts K-3 Reading Standards

These Alaska Native Language Arts K-3 Reading Standards are organized into two categories: Comprehension and Foundational Skills. Within these categories, three sets of standards are outlined. Comprehension includes: Interacting with Place, Understanding, and Vocabulary. The Foundational Skills category includes: Fluency, Phonics, and Phonological Awareness.

The standards are expected to be applied not only in direct reading instruction but in an interdisciplinary literacy environment where students are encouraged to grow in their own reading skills and comprehension as they are exposed to more complex texts and held to a high standard of rigor.

Comprehension Standards

Interacting with Place: Read and gather meaning by being aware of self, others, and the environment. <i>Students who meet this standard are able to:</i>
IP1. Identify, connect, and respond to the local environment and its impacts on self, others, and community.
IP2. Interpret nonverbal communication including facial expression, gestures, and body language.
IP3. Demonstrate skills learned by observation.
IP4. Read, interpret, and express their own feelings.
Understanding: Read and interpret oral knowledge and written text (information, history, story, oratory, and song) with a cultural and land-based perspective. <i>Students who meet this standard are able to:</i>
U1. Draw conclusions using inferences and visualization based on place and cultural background knowledge.
U2. Demonstrate learning by applying knowledge gained through a variety of activities including oral, kinesthetic, and written responses.
U3. Identify, explain, and interpret cultural histories and story structures including: perceptions of time, place, character, customs, values, and beliefs.
U4. Identify, explain, and interpret the purpose of a text or oral knowledge based on cultural factors and protocols.
U5. Demonstrate and apply self-reflective (metacognition) strategies in order to connect actions and consequences, connections to self and family, to self and community, to self and place.
Vocabulary: Use known morphology to determine unknown word meanings across a variety of subject matter. <i>Students who meet this standard are able to:</i>
V1. Determine the meaning of unknown words and phrases based on oral language level [ability] and context, utilizing a variety of known strategies.
V2. Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings and nonverbal communication.
V3. Apply learned vocabulary acquired through listening and reading in new and appropriate situations.

Foundational Skills

Fluency: Use appropriate fluency, cadence, tone, facial expression, and body language when reading or retelling to support comprehension and interpretation. <i>Students who meet this standard are able to:</i>
F1. Read and retell appropriate level text with comprehension and connection.
F2. Read texts with appropriate fluency, cadence, tone, facial expression, and body language for varied audiences.
F3. Use context clues to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.
Phonics: Know and apply phonics and word analysis skills when decoding unfamiliar words corresponding to the student's oral language level. <i>Specifics will vary by language group.</i> <i>Students who meet this standard are able to:</i>
P1. Demonstrate and apply knowledge of sound-spelling correspondences.
P2. Demonstrate and apply knowledge of sound production.
P3. Demonstrate and apply knowledge of syllabification.
P4. Demonstrate understanding of word parts (morphology).
P5. Read common high-frequency words/phrases in texts.
Phonological Awareness: Recognize and manipulate orally, words and their parts. <i>Specifics will vary by language group.</i> <i>Students who meet this standard are able to:</i>
PA1. Demonstrate understanding of words and their parts.
PA2. **Count, pronounce, blend, and segment syllables in spoken words.
PA3. Identify onset and rime in spoken words. *when appropriate to the language
PA4. Identify the origin of onomatopoeic words.
PA5. Demonstrate understanding of orally produced sounds.

** identical to ELA standards wording



K-3 Reading Standards: Comprehension

The Alaska Native Language Arts K-3 Reading Standards for Comprehension are written with “Depths of Knowledge Indicators” which serve as a leveling system that students progress through for each standard.

Depth of Knowledge Indicators

1. **Literal:** Engaging students with text in a most basic sense without deeper meaning. Retelling and describing on a surface level without interpretation.
2. **Connected:** Linking text to what is already known involves drawing on the background knowledge students have gained through cultural life experiences that begin in the womb. This engages students with the text, connecting with their understanding of cultural knowledge and creating a relationship between the reader and the material.
3. **Implied:** Gathering information from clues suggested but not directly expressed within a text involves making inferences, predictions, and conclusions based not only on the material but also on the student’s cultural experience. This reinforces cultural knowledge and fosters engagement with the content, which simultaneously deepens understanding of the material.
4. **Allegorical:** Metaphor, simile, and hyperbole are prevalent in Alaska Native cultures in both traditional oral expression and ceremonial oratory and in modern-day written texts. Students are thinking at this level when they use knowledge of this practice in order to understand the extended symbolism and abstract ideas beyond the literal meaning of events, environments, and characters. This expands students' cultural knowledge.

Interacting with Place

Read and gather meaning by being aware of self, others, and the environment.

IP1. Read the surroundings: Identify and respond to the local environment and its impacts on you and your community.

Alaska Native people have a long history of gathering information by observation and processing that information to guide behavior and make decisions about life and cultural practice. It highlights the deep connection between the environment, cultural history, and Indigenous knowledge. These “reading standards” reflect that worldview and challenge the belief that Alaska Natives did not read prior to the development of a written language.

a. Weather	
Literal	Identify various weather conditions.
Connected	Identify and prepare for various weather patterns.
Implied	Identify indicators for weather predictions.
Allegorical	Describe how weather is used as a metaphor or symbol in cultural contexts.

b. Plants	
Literal	Identify various local plants.
Connected	Identify how plants and their life cycles connect to seasons.
Implied	Describe how different plants and their life cycles can indicate changes in other natural states or conditions.
Allegorical	Describe how different plants and their attributes are used in cultural stories, metaphors, and symbols to represent and reflect cultural ideas and values.

c. Animals	
Literal	Identify local animal species.
Connected	Identify local animal species and their seasonal life cycles.
Implied	Describe how animals play integral roles in cultural practices and stories.
Allegorical	Describe how various animals and their characteristics are incorporated into cultural stories, metaphors, and symbols to express and reflect cultural ideas and values.

d. Phenomena	
Literal	Identify local environmental phenomena.
Connected	Identify the connection between environmental phenomena and associated cultural activities.
Implied	Identify environmental phenomena and their role in cultural practices and stories.
Allegorical	Describe how local phenomena become symbols in cultural stories, revealing deeper meanings and important values.

e. Signs and Symbols	
Literal	Identify both modern and traditional local signs and symbols.
Connected	Identify both modern and traditional signs and symbols and their connection to cultural activities.
Implied	Identify both modern and traditional signs and symbols and their connection to cultural activities and how they help us make informed decisions and guide our understanding.
Allegorical	Describe how environmental signs and symbols provide cultural wisdom, knowledge, and understanding and help us navigate our choices and understanding.

f. Environmental Markers	
Literal	Identify local environmental markers.
Connected	Identify and interpret environmental markers and their connection to the land.
Implied	Identify and interpret environmental markers to make cultural connections, draw inferences, and guide actions.
Allegorical	Describe how environmental symbols embody the wisdom and history of our ancestors, representing the pathways shaped by our traditions and cultures.

g. Art	
Literal	Identify figures and forms.
Connected	Identify figures and forms and how they relate to self.
Implied	Identify figures and forms and the story they are telling.
Allegorical	Identify the story that is being told and the purpose.

IP2. Read nonverbal communication including facial expressions, gestures, and body language.

Literal	Observe with attention to facial expressions, gestures, and body language of a storyteller or reader.
Connected	Observe and identify facial expressions, gestures, and body language that enhances the reading or telling of a story or text.
Implied	Describe how certain facial expressions, gestures, and body language add unsaid meaning to a story or text.
Allegorical	Use body language, gestures, and facial expressions to add meaning to story and text.

IP3. Demonstrate skills learned by watching.

Literal	Observe and listen to Elders or culture bearers, demonstrate before trying.
Connected	Demonstrate skill by continually connecting with Elders and cultural specialists who can provide guidance and mentorship.
Implied	Apply the skills gained from Elders and cultural specialists to create something meaningful.
Allegorical	Explain how your creation fits into your culture's worldview, reflecting its deeper metaphorical significance.

IP4. Reading and interpreting our own feelings.

Literal	Express feelings verbally to others, articulate emotions clearly and directly.
Connected	Share feelings and explain the connections between actions and consequences.
Implied	Use our feelings to relate and understand the perspectives of others.
Allegorical	Describe how our emotions help us define and understand our place in our community and connect us with our culture, ancestors, and land.

Understanding

Read and interpret oral knowledge and written text (information, history, story, oratory, and song) with a cultural and land-based perspective.

U1. Draw conclusions and make inferences based on visualization of place and background cultural knowledge.

Literal	Use details from text and text features to construct mental images to demonstrate understanding of a story or history.
Connected	Use details from text and text features to construct mental images to demonstrate understanding of the environment of the story or history.
Implied	Use details from text and text features to construct mental images to demonstrate understanding of a character's actions and motivation in a story or history.
Allegorical	Use details from text and text features to construct mental images to demonstrate understanding of cultural significance of locations, actions, and meaning.

U2. Demonstrate learning by applying knowledge gained through a variety of activities including oral, kinesthetic, and written responses.

Literal	Demonstrate understanding by following directions given orally or in text.
Connected	Demonstrate understanding by giving oral directions or information to another person.
Implied	Demonstrate understanding by making generalizations to new contexts.
Allegorical	Demonstrate understanding by applying background cultural knowledge to interpret new learning and apply that learning to self, shown by a change in one's actions.

U3. Identify, explain, and interpret cultural histories and story structures including: perceptions of time, place, character, customs, values, and beliefs.

Literal	Describe the overall structure of a story.
Connected	Identify the structure of a story and its cultural importance.
Implied	Explain the structure of a story and the implied and inferred cultural meanings.
Allegorical	Compare and contrast the literal and figurative meanings of a story and the intended impact on the reader/listener.

U4. Identify, explain, and interpret the purpose of a text or oral knowledge based on cultural factors and protocols.

Literal	Retell familiar stories, demonstrating a basic understanding of the purpose.
Connected	Retell stories demonstrating an understanding of how the reader/listener is connected with the purpose.
Implied	Determine the story's purpose, both explicit and implied, by identifying details that support the interpretation.
Allegorical	Determine the story's purpose, both explicit and implied, by considering the individual's context (conditions at the time of the telling/reading of the story/history) as it relates back to self.

U5. Demonstrate and apply self-reflective (metacognition) strategies in order to connect actions and consequences, connections to self and family, to self and community, to self and place.

Literal	Describe how a story affects personal feelings and senses.
Connected	Describe how actions and traits in a story affect personal reactions and of those in the story.
Implied	Describe how a character's actions and the conditions of the environment impact the behavior of the community.
Allegorical	Compare and contrast the character's actions and environment of the story to the reality of the community.

Vocabulary

Use known morphology to determine unknown word meanings across a variety of subject matter.

VI. Determine the meaning of unknown words and phrases based on oral language level [ability] and context, utilizing a variety of known strategies.

Literal	Identify base and root words and define their meaning.
Connected	Identify, read, and apply affixes in the language.
Implied	Conjugate words to add or alter meaning.
Allegorical	Conjugate more complex words to add or alter meaning.

V2. Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings and nonverbal communication.

Variations in sounds of words with different meanings are in the phonics section.

Literal	Demonstrate use of the same word in different ways.
Connected	Demonstrate use of the same word in various situations.
Implied	Demonstrate use of the same word with different meanings.
Allegorical	Demonstrate changing the meaning of a word or phrase.

V3. Apply learned vocabulary acquired through listening and reading in new and appropriate situations.

Literal	Identify words and phrases that supply rhythm or sensory images and meaning in a story, poem, or song (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) and describe how they make a reader feel or what a reader might see in their mind.
Connected	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal meanings from use of figurative language (e.g., exaggeration in tall tales).
Implied	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including use of figurative language and literary devices (e.g., imagery, metaphors, similes).
Allegorical	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including use of figurative language and literary devices (e.g., imagery, metaphors, analogies, hyperbole).



K-3 Reading Standards: Foundational Skills

From the Alaska English/Language Arts and Mathematics Standards, June 2012:

“These standards are directed toward fostering students’ understanding and working knowledge of concepts of print, the alphabetic principle, and other basic conventions of the English writing system. These foundational skills are not an end in and of themselves; rather, they are necessary and important components of an effective, comprehensive reading program designed to develop proficient readers with the capacity to comprehend texts across a range of types and disciplines. Instruction should be differentiated: good readers will need much less practice with these concepts than struggling readers will. The point is to teach students what they need to learn and not what they already know—to discern when particular children or activities warrant more or less attention.”

While Native societies had signs, symbols, and arts that are read, written text is relatively new to Alaska Native languages. We recognize that foundational reading skills, as outlined in the Alaska State English Language Arts Standards, are also relevant to our Indigenous languages. The standards may differ, but the underlying concepts remain the same.



Fluency

Use fitting fluency, cadence, tone, facial expression, and body language when reading or retelling to support comprehension and interpretation.

F1. Read and retell appropriate level text with comprehension and connection.

F2. Read text with appropriate fluency, cadence, tone, facial expression, and body language for varied audiences.

F3. **Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.

** identical to ELA standards wording



Phonics

Know and apply phonics and word analysis skills when decoding unfamiliar words corresponding to the student's oral language level.

Specifics may vary by language group.

P1. Demonstrate basic knowledge of sound-spelling correspondences.

- a. Demonstrate basic knowledge of one-to-one sound-letter correspondences by producing the sound.
- b. Distinguish between letter sounds with and without diacritical marks.
- c. Know spelling sound correspondences for various letter combinations such as: long vowels, digraphs, letter-controlled vowels, and consonants.

P2. Demonstrate basic knowledge of sound production.

- a. Identify where sounds are produced in the mouth.
- b. Demonstrate mouth formations when producing sounds.
- c. Distinguish between differences in sounds made in English and Alaska Native language.

P3. Demonstrate basic knowledge of syllabification (*if it applies to language group).

- a. Decode single syllable words.
- b. Decode multisyllable words and phrases.
- c. Recognize syllable patterns.
- d. Distinguish between and identify types of syllables.

P4. Demonstrate basic understanding of word parts (morphology).

Identify and read base words in the language.

- a. Identify and read root words in the language.
- b. Identify, read, and apply affixes in the language.
- c. Describe conditions used when applying affixes.

P5. Read common high-frequency words in a variety of developmentally appropriate texts.



Phonological Awareness

Recognize and manipulate orally, words and their parts.

Specifics may vary by language group.

PA1. Demonstrate understanding of words and their parts.

- a. Isolate and count sounds in a word.
- b. Isolate and count words in a sentence.
- c. Identify word boundaries.

PA2. **Count, pronounce, blend, and segment syllables in spoken words.

- a. Count syllables in a word.
- b. Identify syllable breaks in words.
- c. Identify types of syllables.

PA3. Identify onset and rime in spoken words.

- a. Identify the initial sound of a word.
- b. Produce words with the same onset.

PA4. Define the origin of onomatopoeic words.

- a. Define the origin of onomatopoeic words.
- b. Recognize the origin of words borrowed from neighboring Indigenous languages.
- c. Recognize the origin of words borrowed from colonizing languages and other languages (Russian, English, Filipino, etc.).

PA5. **Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).

- a. Count, identify and pronounce each of the phonemes in a word.
- b. Identify final and medial sounds.
- c. Blend, segment, and manipulate phonemes.
- d. Delete, add, and substitute phonemes.

** identical to ELA standards wording



Reference

Alaska Comprehensive Center, Alaska Native Educators, & Education Northwest. (2012). Guide to Implementing the Alaska Cultural Standards for Educators. <https://www.asdn.org/wp-content/uploads/Implementing-AK-cultural-standards-1.pdf>

Glossary

Land-based education helps students understand their connection to the land, including the water and sky, and their role in the wider universe. Land-based education is based on Indigenous worldviews and beliefs, and is a way to pass on knowledge to future generations. Indigenous scholars say that the land is a primary source of knowledge and strength for Indigenous peoples, and that removing them from their land is a way to erase their culture.

Onset refers to the initial consonant, consonant digraph, or consonant blend sounds which have two phoneme sounds that get blended when pronounced.

Rime refers to the sounds following the onset which include the vowel and any final consonants.

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This report features formline designs by Tlingit artist Amos Wallace.