

## Connections to the PARCC Assessment

The proposed PARCC Assessment System will be designed to measure knowledge, skills, and understandings essential to achieving college and career readiness. The assessment will call for students to demonstrate higher-order, critical thinking skills through a variety of item types designed to reflect the rigor of the CCSS. In ELA/Literacy, the knowledge, skills, and understandings include the following areas as defined by the standards:

- **Reading complex texts:** This requires students to read and comprehend a range of grade-level complex texts, including texts from the domains of ELA, science, history/social studies, technical subjects, and the arts. Because vocabulary is a critical component of reading comprehension, it will be assessed in the context of reading passages. Both close, analytic reading and comparing and synthesizing ideas across texts are expected. Students will read short passages (a few paragraphs long) and longer or extended passages (several pages long by the time students are in high school). Nonetheless, the length of texts is less important than the focus on student engagement with appropriately complex, literary, and content rich texts to build deep knowledge about a topic (or unit of study).
- **Writing effectively when using and/or analyzing sources:** This requires students to demonstrate the interrelated literacy skills of reading carefully and closely; gathering evidence to support an explanation, summary, claim, or comparison about what is read; and analyzing, integrating, and presenting the supporting evidence in writing. Additionally, when using sources, students also demonstrate understanding when writing narrative descriptions of events and procedures as well as writing about experiences based on what is read. Both require students to demonstrate their understanding gained from reading skillfully and closely through cogent and coherent writing.
- **Conducting and reporting on research:** This expands on "writing effectively when analyzing sources" to require students to demonstrate their ability to gather resources, evaluate their relevance, and report on information and ideas they have investigated (i.e., conducting research to answer questions or to solve problems).
- **Speaking and listening:** This requires students to demonstrate a range of interactive oral communication and interpersonal skills, including (but not limited to) skills necessary for making formal presentations, working collaboratively, sharing findings, and listening carefully to the ideas of others.
- **Language use for reading, writing, and speaking:** This requires students to have a strong command of grammar and spoken and written academic English.

The importance of these skills is reflected in the emphasis the Model Content Frameworks place on students' needing regular opportunities to grapple with the close, analytic reading of grade-level complex texts and to construct increasingly sophisticated responses in writing. The Model Content Frameworks therefore provide a helpful guide in preparing students for the future PARCC assessments.