



ANCHOR STANDARD CHALLENGE # 26



What are the Anchor Standards?

The AZ English Language Arts K-12 Anchor Standards, the **“backbone”** of the Standards, describe the literacy skills which *all students need when they graduate*. There are **10** anchor standards for **reading** and **writing** and **6** for **speaking & listening**.

What purpose do they serve?

Keeping the college and career focus at the forefront of Kindergarten through grade 11/12 implementation is critical as the anchor standards are essential to understanding the structure and cohesive nature of the AZ ELA Standards. It is this unique design that supports the preparation of all students to be successful in school, from the beginning of school, and proficient in the Essential Skills of Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening required for an Arizona Diploma.

Visit <http://coconino.az.gov/1893/ELA-Anchor-Standards> to view previous Anchor Standard Challenges.

Speaking & Listening Anchor Standard #6:

Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

This standard is essentially asking students to differentiate between “Standard American English,” (SAE) which is the language of career and college readiness, and the other ways they have become accustomed to talking. SAE is the formal speech of job interviews, resumes, and most professional workplaces. SLS.6 urges students to realize that no matter what their everyday speech is like at home or on the street, SAE is an invaluable tool to master for their future.

SLS.5 tasks students with adapting their presentations to a specific audience, and making sure they can accommodate a formal audience if necessary. One way to help students with the “secret handshake” of formal English is to use templates. Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, in their book *They Say/I Say* argue that this is a key move to help students “enter into the conversation” of the college and career world, and they provide many templates that work with presentations, such as,

“Recent studies like these shed new light on _____, which previous studies had not addressed.”

“However, does the evidence I’ve cited prove conclusively that _____?”

SLS.6 asks students to adapt their language and tone for a specific rhetorical situation, a process known as “code switching.” An ongoing discussion of Task, Audience and Purpose (TAP), throughout the school year should provide students with the opportunity to present to different audiences for different tasks and purposes not only using SAE, but informal language as the occasion calls for. This flexibility is an important skill for students to practice, as they navigate their home lives and the workplace. The job of SLS.6 is to foster this flexibility.