



# THE ANCHOR STANDARD CHALLENGE # 3



Big Event → One person  
 One Person → Big Event  
 Problem → Solution  
 Cause → Effect  
 Part → Whole  
 Similarities & Differences  
 Analogies  
 Sequence of Events  
 R13

## 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.

## Where do I find them?

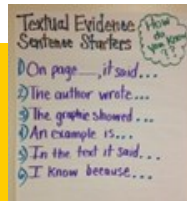
The AZ ELA Anchor Standards can be found on <http://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/k-12standards/english-language-arts-standards/>.

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

## What is the challenge?

Create the Most **Creative** and **Used** School Anchor Charts by teachers, administrators and students...

1. Every week/biweekly add a new Anchor Standard to the work/lunchroom. As teachers implement the Anchor Standard at their grade levels have them record it on the chart! Bonus... At staff meetings have discourse around the Anchor Standard.
2. Create Anchor Standard Charts for students. See the great anchor chart that has been used in many classrooms.
3. Share your success with us by sending us pictures, anecdotes, and videos of your use of Anchor Charts. Send information to [kdonatell@coconino.az.gov](mailto:kdonatell@coconino.az.gov). A special prize will be awarded to the school that has the most success using the charts!



## Reading Anchor Standard #4:

Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

## R.4 Explained

Reading Anchor Standard 4 focuses on the words and phrases that authors choose to use in their writing. In a report on college and career readiness, ACT (2006) notes that a characteristic of complex text is the author’s use of language, which is often intricate. In Reading Standard 4, students are expected to be able to interpret and analyze the words an author used in a text and the way the author uses words and phrases to bring meaning to the text. This standard helps fulfill expectations that students be able to “determine, even when the language is richly figurative and the vocabulary is difficult, the appropriate meaning of context-dependent words, phrases, or statements in virtually any passage” (ACT, 2006, p.37).

There are two different skills included in the Word Play standard. The first deals with **word meaning** and the second deals with the **impact of the word choice**. The first skill for each grade level standard asks that students determine the meaning of words. This means that students need to have some instruction in context clues and the practice of noting when they don’t understand the meaning or way that a word is used in a text.

The second skill set involved in the Word Play standard asks students to look at how words interact with the reader. **This is not a study of vocabulary words in isolation or a dictionary exercise.** This skill is about that invitation. How do the words engage the reader? Students are looking at how specific word choices set the tone or alter the meaning of the text.

You want to focus on students recognizing that a word or phrase can be used to create different tones, take on multiple meanings, and help readers to experience the text differently through these choices. Here are the basic types of meaning students will need to consider:

1. **Technical/ Literal/ Denotative:** This type of word meaning is about understanding the actual definition of the word. A student could look up the word and figure what it actually standards for. The contextual meanings are still literal dictionary meanings, but students may need to be able to determine what is most appropriate due to the content and context of the piece.
2. **Connotative:** This type of meaning is the opposite of the denotative or literal meaning of a word. When students consider the connotative meaning they are really considering different associations, feelings, and tones that those words evoke. The use of the adjectives, abrasive and blunt, to describe a person has very different feelings than candid and straight-forward. Both sets of words could rightfully describe the same person, but each word choice establishes a very different connotative meaning.
3. **Figurative:** Figurative language is helpful when the author wants to build an image in the reader’s mind. While technical and connotative are pretty straight forward, the definition of what counts as figurative can be exhaustive. Don’t get bogged down in teaching every single literary device in an effort to classify it as a way to develop figurative meaning. Focus on figurative language as a counterpart to the connotative or literal definition of a word.

The goal is to teach students ways to evaluate words and phrase—not get them to memorize lists.