Empire State Information Fluency Continuum

PK-12 Priority Skills

The information and inquiry skills required for in-depth learning
May 1, 2019

A K-12 continuum of the information literacy and inquiry skills that are essential for all students to learn was originally developed in 2009 by school librarians in New York City under the auspices of the Office of Library Services and Director Barbara Stripling. In 2012, the NYC Information Fluency Continuum was endorsed by the School Library System of New York State (SLSA) and renamed the Empire State Information Fluency Continuum (ESIFC). Individual school library systems throughout the state then endorsed the ESIFC through their Councils; library systems have continued to provide professional development and support for librarians to teach these information skills in collaboration with classroom teachers.

In 2019, SLSA approved re-imagining the ESIFC to adapt to the changing information, education, and technology environments, as well as the increasing diversity in our student populations. The Section of School Librarians of the New York Library Association (SSL) joined with SLSA in asking Dr. Barbara Stripling to undertake this work. This document is a result of this effort by Dr. Stripling and the feedback and perspectives of school library system directors and building-level librarians from across the state.

The re-imagined ESIFC includes increased or new attention to pre-kindergarten, multiple literacies, digital citizenship and civic responsibility, multiple perspectives, personalization of learning, design thinking, student voice and agency, and social and emotional growth. Different sections provide a PK-12 continuum of skills, identification of priority skills for every grade level, and graphic organizer assessments for the priority skills.

The heart of the ESIFC is our students. It is our mission as school librarians and educators to prepare each one of our students to develop the skills and agency to be both critical consumers and creators of information as they navigate and succeed in their academic and personal lives.

We invite all educators to collaborate with their school librarians and use the ESIFC to guide the teaching of information skills as an integral aspect of learning in every classroom and at all grade levels. Together, we can ensure student success.

Sincerely,

Dr. Barbara Stripling
Professor Emerita, Syracuse University
President of the American Library Association, 2013-2014
President of the New York Library Association, 2016-2017
INTRODUCTION

Inquiry is a fundamental building block of teaching and learning that empowers students to follow their sense of wonder into new discoveries and insights about the way the world works. The empowered learner calls upon information/inquiry skills to connect with what he or she knows, ask intriguing questions about what is not known, investigate the answers, construct new understandings, and communicate to share those understandings with others.

Students need to use the skills of inquiry to learn. Developing these skills must follow a coherent spiral of instruction and practice throughout the years of schooling, Pre-Kindergarten through grade 12, to enable all our children to become independent life-long learners.

The Empire State Information Fluency Continuum (ESIFC) was originally developed by the New York City School Library System and published in 2009 to provide a substantive guide for educators and librarians seeking to develop those essential information and inquiry skills for students in kindergarten through grade 12.

The ESIFC has now been reimagined to respond to changes in the information and learning environment and to the increasing diversity in our students. This ESIFC reflects several new aspects that will enable librarians and classroom teachers to integrate the teaching of information fluency skills across the curriculum and across all grade levels as they empower students to develop confidence and agency to pursue their own paths to personal and academic success.

The reimagining of the ESIFC has been guided by the following parameters:

- The focus is to provide standards for the Information-Fluent Learner and a clear continuum of skills and strategies that may be taught by the school librarian, whether in collaboration with classroom teachers or in independent lessons as dictated by school environments. A collaborative approach by the librarian and the classroom teacher is by far the most effective way to teach information fluency/inquiry skills and strategies. This continuum is designed to facilitate that collaboration.

- The inquiry standard is framed by an inquiry cycle that engenders active learning and the formation of new understandings.
• The reimagined ESIFC has added or strengthened skills in several areas:
  o Multiple literacies, including visual and media literacy
  o Use of technology for learning, including digital literacy skills
  o Pre-kindergarten
  o Personalization of learning
  o Evaluation of multiple perspectives
  o Digital citizenship and civic responsibility
  o Design thinking, including innovation and creation
  o Student voice and agency
  o Social and emotional growth

• The ESIFC includes graphic organizers that may be adopted or adapted for assessment of student learning.

• The ESIFC includes a taxonomy of authentic reactions to research, the REACTS Taxonomy, to provide creative alternatives for student research products at six levels of thought.

• The ESIFC is informed by and aligned with the new AASL Standards Framework for Learners, the ISTE Standards for Students, New York State Next Generation English Language Arts Learning Standards, New York State P-12 Science Learning Standards, New York State K-12 Social Studies Framework, and The College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for State Standards in Social Studies (National Council for the Social Studies).

The Empire State Information Fluency Continuum documents are written and organized to enable educators to start with a broad framework (the Anchor Standards and Indicators) and then move progressively to more specific and detailed views. The following Table of Contents lays out the organization of the whole ESIFC and provides suggestions about the situations in which each section might be most useful.
SECTION ONE: Framework of Anchor Standards
The Framework provides a top-level view of the information fluency standards. You may refer to this document when you are communicating to other educators about the substance of the library curriculum and deciding on the priorities for teaching in your own school.

- Framework of Anchor Standards and Indicators

SECTION TWO: PK-12 Continuum
You will use these documents to see the progression of specific skills for all the standards and indicators from pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. The fact that they are organized into grade-level groups will enable you to assess where the students are in their development and teach the appropriate skill for their level, even if they are behind or above the expected level. The most important skills have been identified as priority skills and highlighted in bold to enable you to focus your teaching.

- Continuum with Priority Skills in Bold: PK-2
- Continuum with Priority Skills in Bold: 3-5
- Continuum with Priority Skills in Bold: 6-8
- Continuum with Priority Skills in Bold: 9-12

SECTION THREE: Priority Skills
You can use the documents in this section if you wish to focus primarily on priority skills and understand how the priorities change and build on each other through the grades. The first chart lays out the entire progression from PK-12; the others are in grade-level bands to enable you to coordinate from one grade level to the next.

- Priority Skills: PK-12
- Priority Skills: PK-2
- Priority Skills: 3-5
- Priority Skills: 6-8
- Priority Skills: 9-12

SECTION FOUR: Brochure of Priority Skills
The brochure can be used in conversations with teachers, administrators, and parents to provide them a broad overview of the priority information fluency skills the students need to develop as they progress through the grades.

- Brochure: PK-12 Priority Skills

SECTION FIVE: Priority Skills and Assessments Organized by Grade Level
These documents will be most helpful if you are planning lessons and units for specific grade levels. For each grade level, you will find a chart of the priority skills and assessments for all four standards and then the coinciding graphic organizers.

- Priority Skills and Assessments by Grade Level

SECTION SIX: Graphic-Organizer Assessments Organized by Standard
This section is a repository of all the graphic organizers. They are organized by standard so that, if you are teaching a skill during the Investigate phase of inquiry, for example, you will be able to browse through all of the graphic organizers for Investigate and then adopt or adapt any organizer that matches your lesson.

- Priority Skills and Assessments by Standard and Phase of Inquiry

SECTION SEVEN: A Taxonomy of Reactions to Research
The REACTS Taxonomy will be most useful when you are planning research assignments and you would like for students to share their new understandings in authentic and engaging ways. The example products listed for every level of the taxonomy require students to think and create with their researched information, rather than simply copy or parrot back the facts.

- REACTS Taxonomy