

TOON INTO READING!™

COMICS AND COMMON CORE STANDARDS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are organized around the categories (strands):

READING	RL—Reading Literature/RI—Reading Informational Text/RF—Reading Foundational Skills
WRITING	W—Writing
SPEAKING and LISTENING	SL—Speaking and Listening
LANGUAGE	L—Language

Individual grade-specific standards can be identified by the strand, grade level, and standard number. The designation **RL.2.3**, for example, stands for **Reading Literature, Grade 2, Standard 3**.

TEACHING WITH TOON BOOKS

Young readers love comics. In one of the most exciting new trends in education, teachers are using TOON Books, high-quality comics designed specifically for elementary classrooms, to further their students' progress along the CCSS. Comics are excellent teaching tools: young readers are naturally drawn to the detail in the pictures, which makes them want to read the words. Emerging readers and so-called 'reluctant' readers are enchanted by a strong visual narrative and instantly feel at ease with comics' inviting format. TOON Books provide many opportunities for students to make inferences from illustrations, integrate information from text and pictures, acquire new vocabulary supported by the pictures, and recognize the basic elements of the comics format. After reading, students participate in TOON activities like creative writing, reader's theater, and storytelling. With the pedagogical underpinnings presented here, teachers have found it easy to engage young minds in the pleasure of reading. In the words of TOON Advisor, Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist Art Spiegelman: "Comics are a gateway drug to literacy."

THE TOON LEVELS



LEVEL 1

FIRST COMICS FOR BRAND-NEW READERS

- 200–300 EASY SIGHT WORDS
- SHORT SENTENCES
- OFTEN ONE CHARACTER
- SINGLE TIME FRAME OR THEME
- 1–2 PANELS PER PAGE



LEVEL 2

EASY-TO-READ COMICS FOR EMERGING READERS

- 300–600 WORDS
- SHORT SENTENCES AND REPETITION
- STORY ARC WITH FEW CHARACTERS IN A SMALL WORLD
- 1–4 PANELS PER PAGE



LEVEL 3

CHAPTER-BOOK COMICS FOR ADVANCED BEGINNERS

- 800–1000+ WORDS IN LONG SENTENCES
- LONG STORY DIVIDED INTO CHAPTERS
- BROAD WORLD AS WELL AS SHIFTS IN TIME AND PLACE
- READER NEEDS TO MAKE CONNECTIONS AND SPECULATE

TOON LEVELS AND COMMON CORE STANDARDS

While the CCS Standards apply to all literature and non-fiction books, comics' unique blend of words and pictures and the TOON Books' unique use of controlled vocabulary means that they lend themselves extremely well to teaching along all the standards. The following standards stand out as particularly excellent examples of comics' fit with the CCSS:

		READING	WRITING	LISTENING & SPEAKING	LANGUAGE
LEVEL 1	Kindergarten	RL.K.1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9 RI.K.1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9	W.K.1, W.K.2, W.K.3	SL.K.1, SL.K.2, SL.K.5, SL.K.6	L.K.4, L.K.5
	Grade 1	RL.1.1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9 RI.1.1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9	W.1.2, W.1.3, W.1.7	SL.1.1, SL.1.2, SL.1.4, SL.1.5	L.1.4, L.1.5
LEVEL 2	Grade 2	RL.2.1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9 RI.2.1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9	W.2.3	SL.2.1, SL.2.2, SL.2.4	L.2.4, L.2.5
	Grade 3	RL.3.1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9 RI.3.1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9	W.3.3	SL.3.1, SL.3.2, SL.3.4	L.3.4, L.3.5

TOON INTO READING!™

CCSS.ELA-Literacy **RL/RI**—READING STANDARDS FOR **LEVEL ONE TOON BOOKS**

LEVEL 1

FIRST COMICS FOR BRAND-NEW READERS

- 200-300 EASY SIGHT WORDS • SHORT SENTENCES • OFTEN ONE CHARACTER
- SINGLE TIME FRAME OR THEME • 1-2 PANELS PER PAGE

KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

	RL.1/RI.1	RL.2/RI.2	RL.3/RI.3
K	With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including key details. / With prompting and support, identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.	With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story. / Describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.
1st	Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson. / Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.	Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details. / Describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.

CRAFT AND STRUCTURE

	RL.4/RI.4	RL.5/RI.5	RL.6/RI.6
K	Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text. / With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.	Recognize common types of texts (e.g., storybooks, poems). / Identify the front cover, back cover, and title page of a book.	With prompting and support, name the author and illustrator of a story and define the role of each in telling the story. / Identify the role of each in presenting the ideas or information in a text.
1st	Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses. / Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text.	Explain major differences between books that tell stories and books that give information, drawing on a wide reading of a range of text types. / Know and use various text features (e.g., headings, tables of contents) to locate key facts or information in a text.	Identify who is telling the story at various points in a text. / Distinguish between information provided by pictures or other illustrations and information provided by the words in a text.

INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND IDEAS

	RL.7/RI.7	RI.8	RL.9/RI.9
K	With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear (e.g., what moment in a story an illustration depicts). / Name the author and illustrator and define the role of each in presenting the ideas or information.		With prompting and support, compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories. / With prompting and support, identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).
1st	Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.	Identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.	Compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in stories. / Identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).

RANGE OF READING AND LEVEL OF TEXT COMPLEXITY

	RL.10/RI.10
K	Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.
1st	With prompting and support, read (prose and poetry / informational texts) of appropriate complexity for grade 1.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy SL—SPEAKING AND LISTENING STANDARDS
AND W—WRITING STANDARDS FOR LEVEL ONE TOON BOOKS**

COMPREHENSION AND COLLABORATION

	SL.K.1	SL.K.2	SL.K.3
K	Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.	Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.	Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.
	SL.1.1	SL.1.2	SL.1.3
1st	Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.	Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.	Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.

PRESENTATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND IDEAS

	SL.K.4	SL.K.5	SL.K.6
K	Describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail.	Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.	Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.
	SL.1.4	SL.1.5	SL.1.6
1st	Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.	Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.	Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation.

TEXT TYPES AND PURPOSES

	W.K.1	W.K.2	W.K.3
K	Compose opinion pieces.	Compose informative/explanatory texts.	Narrate a single event or several loosely linked events.
	W.1.1	W.1.2	W.1.3
1st	Write opinion pieces.	Write informative/explanatory texts.	Write narratives recounting two or more appropriately sequenced events.

PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF WRITING

RESEARCH TO BUILD AND PRESENT KNOWLEDGE

	W.K.5	W.K.6		W.K.7	W.K.8
K	Respond to peers and add details to strengthen writing.	Explore digital tools to produce and publish writing.	K	Participate in shared research and writing projects.	Recall information or gather information to answer a question.
	W.1.5	W.1.6		W.1.7	W.1.8
1st	Focus on a topic, respond to peers and strengthen writing.	Explore digital tools to produce and publish writing.	1st	Participate in shared research and writing projects.	Recall information or gather information to answer a question.

EASY TO READ COMICS
TOON BOOKS™
 AN IMPRINT OF CANDLEWICK PRESS

*Silly Lilly
 and the Four Seasons*

by Agnès Rosenstiehl

Hardcover ISBN: 978-0-9799238-1-4

Paperback ISBN: 978-1-935179-23-8

Guided Reading Level = E

Lexile Level = BR

by Julia Phillips,
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ELA COMMON CORE STANDARDS

KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS	
After reading, ask students about the illustration on the copyright page. What does this picture show? Have students guess, based on this illustration, why the author included “Spring” stories at both the beginning and the end of the book.	RL.K.1, RL.1.1
Ask students to retell the story in their own words. What seasons were shown? What did Lilly do in each season? Ask students to retell the story while focusing on Lilly’s activities and emotions. Do they like to play in the same ways as Lilly does each season?	RL.K.2, RL.1.2
Before you read the book, have students predict the different clothes Lilly might wear in different seasons. Then, lead them through the stories and have them describe what she does wear, and why she would be wearing those clothes.	RL.K.3, RL.1.3

CRAFT AND STRUCTURE	
Help students identify compound words like “snowball”. Can they tell what a snowball is from the pictures? Ask them to look at page 27 and guess what makes a snowball “good” or “great”. On page 23, Lilly describes the apple as “not so pretty”. What about the apple is not pretty? What does Lilly mean on page 35 when she says, “I’m flying!”	RL.K.4, RL.1.4
This book gives information about seasons changing and tells a story about a little girl. Point out that Lilly is not a real person, but the world really does go around. Ask them to point out other facts presented in this book.	RL.K.5, RL.1.5
Point out that the author and illustrator of this book are the same person. Ask students to look at the last panels on pages 17 and 35. Who is saying “Ha!” in these panels? Why is this word red and outside the speech balloons?	RL.K.6, RL.1.6

INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND IDEAS	
On pages 10-11, what does Lilly do as she says, “I like to dance...I like to jump...And I like to nap!” Can you find other examples of Lilly acting out words? On page 17, the first panel shows Lilly holding a shell and asking, “Hello... Anybody there?” In the second panel, she says, “Ha! Yes there is!” What changed between the two panels?	RL.K.7, RL.1.7
Ask students to look at Teddy’s face throughout the story. Does his expression change? Point out that he is smiling on page 9, serious on page 10, and angry on page 29. Ask students to compare his expressions with Lilly’s.	RL.K.9, RL.1.9

SPEAKING AND LISTENING / WRITING	
Pair students up and have them each read either Lilly’s lines or the title text. Then have them read it again, switching roles. Ask them to describe their favorite parts. Ask students to describe similar ways they have played in each season. Prompt them for details: have they picked apples? Have they made snowballs?	SL.K.2, SL.1.2, SL.K.4, SL.1.4, SL.K.6, SL.1.6
Ask students to compose a comic narrative about their favorite season. Then ask them to label and describe what they have chosen to draw and write about from their favorite season.	W.K.3, W.1.3, W.K.8, W.1.8