

21st Century Phrase List

This high-frequency phrase list includes high-frequency phrases from an analysis of a 39-million-word corpus drawn from the most widely used current textbook series for reading/language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science in grades 1-12. The analysis resulted in the identification of 176 most frequent primary grade reading phrases that appear within core textbooks. These phrases can be used for reading instruction and assessment and are more aligned with the reading demands students face in the 21st century.

Top 10 most frequent Unigrams, Bigrams, and Trigrams by Grade Level

Unigrams							
Rank	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
1	the	the	the	the	the	the	the
2	a	a	a	a	of	of	of
3	to	to	to	of	a	a	and
4	and	and	of	to	to	and	a
5	is	of	and	and	and	to	to
6	of	in	in	in	in	in	in
7	in	is	is	is	is	is	is
8	you	you	you	you	that	you	that
9	how	how	how	that	you	that	for
10	are	are	that	are	for	for	as

Bigrams							
Rank	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
1	in the	in the	of the	of the	of the	of the	of the
2	how many	of the	in the	in the	in the	in the	in the
3	is a	how many	to the	to the	to the	of a	to the
4	of the	is a	on the	on the	on the	to the	of a
5	you can	to the	how many	is a	of a	is the	and the
6	on the	on the	is a	is the	is the	on the	on the
7	write the	at the	is the	of a	and the	is a	is the
8	do you	is the	of a	in a	in a	and the	in a
9	is the	you can	in a	from the	from the	in a	from the
10	to the	in a	from the	how many	United States	what is	is a



Trigrams							
Rank	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
1	look at the	look at the	the United States	the United States	the United States	what is the	the United States
2	how can you	the United States	what is the	what is the	what is the	the number of	what is the
3	words to know	what is the	as you read	the number of	the number of	to find the	one of the
4	draw a picture	to help you	to find the	one of the	of the united	do you think	the number of
5	how do you	you can use	the number of	part of the	as you read	the graph of	shown in figure
6	unit unit unit	do you think	look at the	as you read	part of the	the United States	do you think
7	you can use	to find the	do you think	to find the	do you think	the area of	as you read
8	I can read	as you read	part of the	do you think	one of the	one of the	part of the
9	essential question how	you need to	compare and contrast	of the united	to find the	the value of	in the united
10	high frequency words	to make a	how can you	in the united	compare and contrast	the length of	the end of

Top 10 most frequent Unigrams, Bigrams, and Trigrams by Domain

Unigrams					
Rank	Math	Science	Social Studies	Reading & ELA	All
1	the	the	the	the	the
2	of	of	of	and	of
3	a	a	and	a	a
4	and	and	to	to	and
5	to	in	in	of	to
6	is	to	a	in	in
7	in	is	that	that	is
8	you	that	for	you	that
9	for	are	is	is	you
10	that	you	on	I	for



Bigrams					
Rank	Math	Science	Social Studies	Reading & ELA	All
1	of the	of the	of the	of the	of the
2	of a	in the	in the	in the	in the
3	is the	to the	to the	to the	to the
4	in the	of a	United States	on the	of a
5	find the	is the	and the	and the	is the
6	to the	on the	the united	in a	on the
7	is a	in a	on the	from the	and the
8	what is	from the	from the	of a	in a
9	number of	and the	by the	at the	is a
10	how many	is a	for the	is a	from the

Trigrams					
Rank	Math	Science	Social Studies	Reading & ELA	All
1	what is the	shown in figure	the United States	as you read	what is the
2	the number of	what is the	one of the	ideas and details	the United States
3	to find the	as shown in	of the united	key ideas and	the number of
4	the graph of	the number of	do you think	do you think	one of the
5	the area of	the amount of	in the united	one of the	do you think
6	the value of	the mass of	how did the	point of view	as you read
7	the length of	one of the	part of the	what is the	to find the
8	explain your reasoning	part of the	as a result	and details a	shown in figure
9	to the nearest	what are the	the Soviet Union	the end of	part of the
10	the sum of	do you think	World War II	the United States	what are the

Source:

Shanahan, T., University of Illinois at Chicago, & Elmore, J., MetaMetrics. (2023). High Frequency Phrases for Reading Assessment, Instruction, and Research.

