No Cost Common Core Online Tools and Websites

One of the great things about the Common Core is that 45 states can now share resources. We at Capture the Core strongly suggest your first stop should be the ISBE website for Common Core Support (see right).

What follows are just a few online tools you might find helpful as you transition to the CCSS.

**Master Connect** This site may be used to find common formative assessments and Common Core grading tools. [http://www.masteryconnect.com/](http://www.masteryconnect.com/)

**K–5 Math Teaching Resources.** This comprehensive site lists free Common Core resources, games and activities for the elementary math classroom. [http://www.k5mathteachingresources.com/](http://www.k5mathteachingresources.com/)


Information to all the state sites is constantly being added and updated, so check back often.

**The Common Core iPhone and iPad apps.** These free downloads are a great quick and easy reference.

**Socrative** Formative Assessment is a key to student learning. This site provides a free student response system for doing formative assessing. Students also find it very engaging. [http://www.socrative.com/](http://www.socrative.com/)

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**November 2012**

Check the Illinois Common Core Website for all the most recent information: [http://www.isbe.net/common_core/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/common_core/default.htm)

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**Inside this issue:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data and Assessment</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Language Arts</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Supports</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web Resources</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Illinois State Board of Education/SSOS Content Specialists
Using Text-Dependent Questions with Literature

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) require students to answer questions that require them to read and attain a deep understanding of text. These text-dependent questions should be part of each day’s instruction and can be used across the content areas.

When reading literature, students can answer text-dependent questions at a variety of cognitive levels and can follow a certain progression of questioning. For example, students might be asked to answer some initial questions for general text understanding, followed by some questions about key details. Then, students can answer questions about vocabulary and text structure. Teachers can then guide students to answer questions aimed at the purpose of the text. Students will be challenged to understand the text deeply when they are asked to answer questions requiring them to make inferences about how parts of the text relate to the whole text.

Finally, students can answer questions that require them to state their opinions, make arguments, and make intertextual connections based on text evidence.

Text-dependent questions require students to think critically about their reading. Students should also get in the routine of asking text dependent questions of themselves and of their peers as text is discussed throughout the day.


For more information, click here.

Questioning Strategies for Fifth Grade

Window Paning with Critical Questioning. Window paning is a strategy for organizing steps to a process or helping students to remember important concepts. It basically operates with a few simple rules: (Click here for examples and instructions. 1. A window pane should have no more than nine cells. (If you need ten cells, then make two five-cell posters.) 2. Each cell should contain a simple picture/icon and only one word. 3. The pane should involve a lot of color. After students have drawn/written a pane for each chapter, scene or stanza, students can write about how the chapters, scenes or stanzas fit together. The teacher may need to provide questions for the students as a springboard for critical thinking. Such questions could be: 1. Why are chapters 1-3 important? How do these chapters contribute to the story? 2. Why is scene 2 important in the drama? How does it provide the connection between scenes 1 and 3? 3. How do the stanzas in _____ (text title) fit together so the poem flows from beginning to end?


“The fire of literacy is created by the emotional sparks between a child, a book, and the person reading.” Mem Fox, Reading Magic: Why Reading Aloud to Our Children Will Change Their Lives Forever

Digital Literacy in the News!

The above strategies can be found at www.isble.net along with informational strategies for each standard.

Digital Literacy is embedded throughout the Common Core State Standards. Look at the following link for a host of apps on how to incorporate technology in your lessons. https://chrome.google.com/webstore/category/app/95-academic-resources?hl=en
Focus on Mathematical Practice 3

The third Practice Standard, **Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others**, requires students to make conjectures, build a logical progression of statements and analyze situations by breaking them into cases. Students need to use counterexamples, justify conclusions, communicate them to others, and respond to the arguments of others. Students compare the effectiveness of two plausible arguments, distinguish correct logic or reasoning from that which is flawed, and explain any flaws. Students can listen or read the arguments of others, decide whether they make sense, and ask useful questions to clarify or improve the arguments.

**How do I encourage MP3?**

Provide problems that require students to:

- Engage in reasoning and critical thinking.
- Develop mathematical arguments that include diagrams, words and/or equations.
- Share mathematical thinking with another student.
- Reflect on a variety of solutions to one problem and defend a solution.
- Think about explanations and discuss misconceptions.
- Discuss logical steps using precise language.

Illustrative Math - Fifth Grade

The website, [illustrativemathematics.org](http://illustrativemathematics.org), provides illustrations of the range and types of work that students should experience in faithful implementation of the CCSSM. Tasks are separated by grade level, domain, cluster and standard.

Here’s an example for 5.NF.B.5:

Cai, Mark, and Jen raised money for a school trip.

Cai collected 212 times as much money as Mark. Mark collected 23 times as much money as Jen. Who collected the most? Who collected the least? Explain. A picture or diagram may help.

[http://illustrativemathematics.org/illustrations/150](http://illustrativemathematics.org/illustrations/150)

PARCC Model Content Frameworks

Model Content Frameworks [http://parccmodelcontentframeworks.org](http://parccmodelcontentframeworks.org) are offered by PARCC to help inform curriculum, instruction and assessment. The Frameworks can assist in evaluating resources and provide awareness of the necessary balance of tasks as defined in the standards.

Elements for each 3rd-8th grade level course are noted in the diagram.

**Considerations:**

- Use the major, supporting and additional clusters to inform instructional decisions on time and resources.
- Use the supporting clusters and the practice standards to highlight the focus on the major work.
- Evaluate instructional materials based on the major, supporting and additional clusters, but do not use the MCF to do crosswalks. A curricular analysis needs to consider more than topic-matching by thinking of the spirit of the CCSSM.
Comprehensive System of Learning Supports

Cultivating thriving learning environments that promote the dignity and foster the well-being of students, educators, and communities.

Meeting Student Needs: A Layered Approach

By now, you are undoubtedly discovering your students’ unique personalities and talents. That is a joy of teaching! Yet you are likely also learning students’ unique challenges, and for some, personal situations that pose real barriers to learning. This can feel extremely overwhelming.

As a teacher who develops meaningful learning relationships with students, you are in a position to witness not only their academic needs, but also their interrelated physical, social, emotional, and behavioral needs. Yet your role as teacher does not require you to be an expert on the many different scenarios, of varying intensity, that impact your students’ learning.

So, how can you use awareness to help kids? You can begin by adopting an organizational mindset for your thoughts and efforts that is aligned with a comprehensive system of learning supports in your school and district.

Research proves the effectiveness of a layered approach to learning supports that provides best practices that benefit all students, early targeted interventions for some, and more intensive interventions for few depending on need.

Classroom Connections

A layered approach emphasizes the importance of universal practices to benefit all children. These are within a teacher’s scope and include but are not limited to ensuring safety and security, validating feelings, and offering cultural sensitivity.

School programs that serve children in response to more specific, targeted needs may include mentoring or “check in” programs, for example. The goal is to reduce risk of intensified mental health and behavioral concerns.

A few students, however, may still require more intensive and individualized supports, often best provided through community partnerships.

Ask yourself, a school leader, and/or pupil support personnel what best practices are implemented for all students, to promote optimal conditions for, and prevent barriers to, learning? What resources and training are available to help teachers integrate universal learning supports?

When students face needs beyond the scope of the classroom, what procedures and resources are in place to address them early?

If you notice a gap in services in your school, you can inform your school leadership and improvement team so that it can be addressed through the continuous improvement process.

Continuous School Improvement Connection: The Conditions for Learning indicator discussed here, CL1, is listed among indicators of best practice in the Rising Star on IIRC system.

Individual (few)
Targeted (some)
Universal (all)

Helpful Resources

http://www.essaytagger.com/commoncore
Improve your formative assessment feedback as you build and share common core rubrics

http://www.isbe.net/learningsupports Learning Supports site including Conditions for Learning indicators and an A-Z index of resources for educators

http://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/k-12-instruction-strategies-amp-samples/613 This site provides instructional strategies such as Socratic questioning and critical thinking in reading and writing.

http://www.corestandards.org/resources This tool was written by the Authors of the Common Core Standards for Mathematics to guide the selection of Math Curriculum materials.

Visit http://www.isbe.state.il.us/common_core/htmls/news.htm to download this newsletter.