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.

**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/)

**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.

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Common Core and Text-Dependent Questions

The Common Core State Standards require students to answer questions that require them to read and attain a deep understanding of text.

Text-dependent questions require that the evidence comes from text, not information from outside sources.

These text-dependent questions should be part of each day’s instruction and can be used across the content areas. When constructing text-dependent questions, make sure your they have the following components:

1. Does the student have to read the text to answer each question?
2. Is it always clear to students that answering each question requires that they must use evidence from the text to support their claims?

Quiz Time

Which of the following questions is a text-based question?

#1. “If you were present at the signing of the Declaration of Independence, what would you do?”
#2. “What are the reasons listed in the preamble for supporting the authors’ argument to separate from Great Britain?”

(Fisher & Frey)

(Question #2 is a text-based question. Question #1 can be answered without reading the text.)

Retrieved from: www.fisherandfrey.com
Click on: resources, text-complexity-close-reading-blog

Text-Based Question Strategy

A Jot-Pair-Share is adapted from the Think-Pair-Share activity (Broxo & Simpson, 2007) in which students are provided time to think and then talk about a topic in pairs before speaking in front of the whole class. It is preferred that each student not just think, but record, or jot down, his or her thoughts before pairing with a partner. This can significantly change what takes place during the pairing.

By having both partners jot first, each one is more likely to have something to share. Through this conversation, the need for learners to articulate concepts in their own words and to learn from one another is emphasized. Keep students focused by providing a specific task to complete or question to answer.


“Whoever explains learns.”

David Sousa

New Teaching Channel Videos Feature Digital Literacy and Align Lessons To The Common Core

Common Sense Media has partnered with the Teaching Channel to co-produce a series of nine videos that feature lessons from our digital literacy and citizenship curriculum and show how they meet Common Core Standards.

The videos focus on issues faced by middle school students, from digital footprints to encouraging strong research skills to online privacy. They feature teachers demonstrating how to use curriculum lessons to meet Common Core requirements, serving as a quick “deep dive” into how digital citizenship can be used to meet these standards. Additional videos can be found at www.commonsensemedia.org.

Common Sense Media works with partners to provide digital literacy and citizenship resources for educators. Check out their website for additional teacher videos, articles, links, programs, and more.
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.

**I have hardly ever known a mathematician who was capable of reasoning.**

*Plato*

*427-347 BC*

**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 - Seventh 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 7.RP.A.2: Ms. Baca’s art students were mixing yellow and blue paint. She told them two mixtures would be the same shade of green if the blue and yellow paint are in the same ratio. The table shows different mixtures of paint students made. How many different shades of paint did the students make?

Some shades of paint are bluer than others. Which mixtures are the bluest? Show work or explain how you know.

From: [http://illustrativemathematics.org/illustrations/100](http://illustrativemathematics.org/illustrations/100)

**PARCC Model Content Frameworks**

Model Content Frameworks, [http://parcconline.org/parcc-model-content-frameworks](http://parcconline.org/parcc-model-content-frameworks), 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.

- 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.
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.

This model may sound and look familiar, as it incorporates learning supports by expanding upon the same tiered, public health model that provides the organizing structure for academic and behavioral data-based Response to Intervention.

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.

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.