PARCC Releases Additional Sample Items

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), has released additional sample items for both English language arts/literacy and mathematics. The sample items show how PARCC is developing tasks to measure the critical content and skills found in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The sample items have undergone PARCC's rigorous review process to ensure quality and demonstrate the content that will be on the assessments in 2014-2015.

The release of paper-based items is the first of two that PARCC will be providing throughout the remainder of the calendar year. PARCC will provide a complementary set of paper-based items in October, so that there will be sample items in each grade level. In November, all sample items will be re-released on the technology platform that students will use for the spring field test, providing an early opportunity for students and educators to engage with the tools and functionalities on the assessment.

The primary purpose of sharing sample items is to provide information and to support educators as they continue the transition to the CCSS and the PARCC assessments. The sample items presented on the PARCC website demonstrate that core shifts at the heart of the CCSS are also integrated into the design of PARCC's assessments.

Excerpted from a publication on PARCC http://parcconline.org

Assessment List Serve

If you would like to have access to the most up-to-date Illinois Assessment information, subscribe to the Student Assessment listserv.

Send a blank email to assessment@isbe.net with the word “SUBSCRIBE” in the subject line. The listserv will provide members with the most up-to-date information regarding Illinois state testing. For more information visit http://www.isbe.state.il.us/assessment/htmls/listserv.htm

Field Testing

Illinois will be a major participant in PARCC Field Testing next spring. As many as 800 schools in the state will participate. Most will take only a portion of the test, either the Performance-Based or the End-of-Year items, in English/Language Arts or Mathematics. Districts were initially contacted in September with follow up expected later in the year. The tests will be administered between March and May of 2014.

http://www.parcconline.org/field-test
Student Achievement Partners

Student Achievement Partners (SAP) is a non-profit education reform organization which has developed resources to support and implement the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Teachers can find useful tools for various subject areas and grade levels on their website.

Their resources for the ELA shifts include a document which explains the shifts and a PowerPoint presentation of an Overview of the Common Core State Standards. One can access a collection of professional development modules including PowerPoints, videos and hands-on activities for workshops.

Videos from the America Achieves video library display examples of Core-aligned teaching in the classroom. Common Core Sample Lessons and Assessment Questions cover the topics of close reading and of text complexity. Exemplars of literacy in the sciences, technical subjects and history classes are also provided.

The accounts of teachers representing various grade levels and subject areas provide insight into transitioning into the Common Core. Instructional Practice Guides describe Core Actions for implementing the CCSS and can be used for teacher self-reflection, instructional coaching and peer-to-peer observations and feedback. These guides should not be used in teacher evaluations.

Source: www.achievethecore.org

Basal Alignment Project, Grade 5

The Basal Alignment Project is a free resource available on the Achieve website. To locate the information on the website, click on the ELA/Literacy tab, click on the tab for Aligning Materials and then click on the Basal Alignment Project for 3rd-5th grades. Follow the directions on how to access the resources on Edmodo.

The Basal Alignment Project contains over 300 Common Core State Standards aligned reading lessons. Lessons were written collaboratively by hundreds of teachers to accompany common basal reading series. The lessons include work with academic vocabulary, text-dependent questions, and improved tasks.

Source: http://www.achievethecore.org/ela-literacy-common-core/aligning-materials/basal-

Writing Samples, Grade 5

The Achieve website includes student K-12 samples of opinion/argument writing, informative/explanatory writing, and narrative writing. Additional documents offer information on the expectations for writing as per the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The writing samples are shown in grade bands and are displayed so teachers are able to use the information in their classrooms. Samples contain complete directions and supporting texts. For example, texts for students to read and understand are included with the expectation that students’ writing will reference the texts as required by the CCSS.

Source: http://www.achievethecore.org/ela-literacy-common-core/student-writing-samples/
Illinois Math Curriculum Models

On August 29, 2013 ISBE released the newest material for the Illinois Math Curriculum Models. Scope and sequence documents, Unit plans, and an example lesson for Unit one of all grades (Kindergarten- High School Math 3) is now available at http://isbe.net/common_core/htmls/math-models.htm.

Example lessons for all units will be made available, in sequential order, every few weeks. Each unit will also contain several assessments. The curriculum models committee revised the scope and sequence for Math 1 and Math 2 and several units, due to the recent release of the Blueprint and Evidence Tables from PARCC. All curriculum models are aligned to the common core and consider relevant information from PARCC Model Content Frameworks, the Progression documents, EQuIP rubric, Publishers’ Criteria, and the PARCC Evidence Tables.

Fifth Grade Illustrative Mathematics

There are many variations of a task that some teachers call “Number of the Day” or “Today’s Number.” Typically, teachers provide a target number, and students are challenged to write expressions equivalent to that number. By making strategic choices of both the target number and constraints for the expressions students are to write, teachers can focus on particular mathematics content. Teachers can also ask students to find patterns in their expressions, and to describe and account for the regularities they see in these patterns.

In this example, the teacher uses Today’s Number to give students an experience of MP8: Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning. The regularity the class is examining is how the dividend and divisor change to create expressions with the same quotient.

For the complete lesson go to http://www.illustrativemathematics.org/

Toolkit for Evaluating the Alignment of Material to CCSS

A c h i e v e ,  S t u d e n t Achievement Partners and the Council of Chief State School Officers have created and released a free resource to evaluate the alignment of materials to the Common Core. For mathematics, the toolkit offers an Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool (IMET), an Assessment Item Tool (AET). The complete toolkit also includes an introduction and overview, the EQuIP Rubric, additional resources for evaluating the alignment of materials, and the K-8 and HS Publishers’ Criteria. Links to specific sections of the toolkit can be found at http://www.achieve.org/toolkit.
By now, teachers are likely witnessing frustration as students tackle new strategies in regard to close reading, complex texts, and multiple revisions. Perhaps students are having trouble sticking with a new math concept. Common Core State Standards require perseverance more than ever before. Therefore, this skill can no longer be assumed.

Whether you call it tenacity, agency, resilience, or even motivation, perseverance is necessary not only for success in the classroom, but in students’ personal and professional lives. At the same time, students have little practice in persevering in their technology-driven, instantly-gratifying world. Fortunately, perseverance is a skill that can be explicitly taught, and research findings indicate that this trait can be learned.

Yet this requires the adoption of a GROWTH MINDSET that assumes each student can improve their skills with ongoing effort. What does this look and sound like in the classroom? A class-wide adoption of a growth mindset is constantly reinforced by classroom messages.

Danielson’s Framework (3e) highlights teacher “persistence” as a professional skill. Teachers can also help model persistence skills for students, such as:

- Setting appropriate goals and related tasks.
- Preplanning for potential obstacles with solution strategies.
- Shifting thought from “failures” to “challenges” that can be overcome.

Ensure match of student and content.  
Refrain from intervening prematurely with students’ struggle.  
Praise effort versus ability.

Related Conditions for Learning Indicators: CL10, CL7, CL4, CL8

Making Connections

Common Core State Standards:
- Math Practice Standard 1: Instructional shifts in English and Language Arts
- Danielson Framework: 3E Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

Conditions for Learning Indicators (Rising Star):
- CL10, CL7, CL4, CL8

“...committed teachers don’t give up easily… [they] seek alternate approaches to help their students be successful… [and thereby] display a keen sense of efficacy.” (Danielson Framework for Effective Teaching)

Visit www.isbe.net to download this newsletter.