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

Illinois Testing Information

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 Power Points, 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 grades 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.

Resources for Kindergarten within SAP

ReadWorks can be accessed through Student Achievement Partners and is a repository that houses hundreds of nonfiction reading passages with text dependent question activities which accompany the texts. The passages are Lexile leveled and allow for teachers to comment on the activities. To access ReadWorks, click on the ELA/Literacy tab, then scroll to the Aligning Materials link on the left. Scroll down to the Nonfiction passages and questions from ReadWorks.

For assisting struggling readers and ELL learners, visit the Supporting All Students link on the left side. Research articles that support students who will need a different path of instruction are located there.

Kindergarten Writing Resources within SAP

Writing within all subject areas is a focus of the CCSS. To assist with that endeavor, SAP has created a resource called In Common that houses student writing samples. Teachers are encouraged to view the Getting Started User Guide to find the many useful ideas such as the coding of the file names and the different versions for classroom modeling.

Two types of writing are expected of kindergarteners: on demand and range of writing. Kindergartners should be able to understand three types of writing: opinion, narrative and informational/explanatory. SAP provides writing samples from kindergarteners from across the country on their website for modeling. Ideas for use can be found by clicking on Student Writing Samples on the left side links.

Curriculum has a year long guide for assisting teachers with appropriate texts and units of instruction. Daily lesson plans will need to be created in order to fulfill all of the foundational goals that kindergarten teachers need to meet the CCSS. Visit the Aligning Materials link on the left.
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

Kindergarten Illustrative Mathematics

Dice Addition

Student A rolls the two dice, finds the sum, and traces the number on the worksheet which corresponds to the answer with his/her marker. Student A then passes the dice to Student B who rolls both the dice, finds the sum and traces the correct number on the worksheet with his/her marker. Play continues this way until one of the numbers “wins” (i.e. all of the numbers of that quantity have been traced). This Task addresses content standards K.CC.3 and K.OA.2. Illustrated Mathematics provides suggestions on ways to differentiate this game.

The widespread adoption of the common Core State Standards for Mathematics (CCSSM) presents an unprecedented opportunity for systemic improvement in mathematics education in the US.

August 2013, NCTM

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.

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.

### Classroom Messages That Promote A Growth Mindset

- **We believe** in our potential and are committed to taking responsibility for our own learning.
- **We value** (and encourage) taking on challenges, exerting effort, and surmounting obstacles. No matter the outcome, learning is also in the journey.
- **We model** that working hard grows new brain connections, making one's capacities and skills malleable with effort.
- **We create and sustain** a safe learning environment, which is not a place of judgment, but a safe place to practice self-management and self-responsibility skills. *(Dweck, 2010)*

“Teachable moments” that cultivate student perseverance skills:

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

### Classroom Management

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.

### 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, CL14, CL18

---

Visit **www.isbe.net** to download this newsletter.