

Capture the Core



Third Grade

Top 10 Questions to Ask Common Core Vendors

By: Ann Henson

Their Answers Will Help Separate the Genuine from the Disingenuous

To help distinguish the partners from the pretenders, Compass Learning compiled a list of 10 questions you should be asking prospective Common Core vendors.

1. The new English/language arts (ELA) standards focus on building knowledge through content-rich, cross-curricular nonfiction texts and on text evidence and complexity. How is your product changing to support these shifts?

2. The new math standards focus on key knowledge and skills; coherence across grade levels; and conceptual understanding. How is your product changing to support these shifts?

3. How does your product's assessment system compare to the Common Core assessment systems currently in development?



4. How will using your technology enhance my instruction and improve my students' learning experience?

5. How are you preparing teachers to implement Common Core in their classrooms?

6. Who is developing your Common Core products and what are their credentials?

7. How does your product address 21st century skills?

8. Explain how all students, regardless of skill and ability level, can be successful using your product?

9. How much are you investing in the Common Core initiative?

10. How does your product help students make the transition to the Common Core State Standards?

Link to complete article:
http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/on_innovation/2012/11/top_10_questions_to_ask_common_core_vendors.html?cmp=SOC-SHR-FB

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PARCC Updates

Governing Board Approved Math Assessments for College and Career Readiness, Retest Policy and Tech Specs

<http://www.parcconline.org>

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Writing Types in the Common Core Standards

The Common Core Standards ask students to master three writing types: writing arguments, writing to inform/explain, and writing narratives. Narrative writing is prominent in the earliest grades then adds analytic writing as students progress through the grade levels.

The Standards are designed for students to gradually learn to master the use of evidence in their analytic writing. Evidence has a strong place in narrative writing as well, in the details of a story and evidence of a situation.

Beginning in early grades, the Standards emphasize the idea of short, focused research projects.

Students should use research to gradually comprehend an area more deeply or to learn about several areas. Through consistent research beginning in the early years, students learn the command of evidence.

Writing in the Standards is closely tied to reading. Students at every grade level must gather information from text and fully understand it. This becomes the source of excellent writing that makes clear arguments and presents information clearly.

Narrative writing is an important part of the Standards. The concepts of creativity and precision are emphasized for narrative writing

within the Standards, as are the ideas of presenting a clear argument and conveying complex information clearly. Focus on the gathering and use of evidence will help students with narrative writing as well as analytic writing.

Writing to inform and make arguments. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jt_2jl010WU



Narrative Strategies for Writing

Fairy Tale Tell. Read aloud a popular fairy tale that has two points of view, one from the heroine's side and one from the villain's point of view. Students then write a paragraph choosing which character they believe and support their choice with evidence from the text they read.

In My View. Students read one of the many alternate stories, such as *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs*, and then rewrite the story from their point of view. Students are evaluated on their

ability to distinguish their point of view from that of the original story teller.

Building Blocks: The teacher reads aloud from a grade appropriate novel to the class or a small group. Students create a doodle (pictures and words) of the chapter as they listen. They do this for each part or chapter, referring to the key ideas and how they build on information from earlier chapters. At the conclusion of the book, students will write to describe how each part (chapter)

built on the previous ones to tell the story.

“To me, the greatest pleasure of writing is not what it’s about, but the inner music that the words make.”

-Truman Capote

Coming Soon...

**ISBE Winter/Spring Series:
ELA Common Core Shift
Training!**



The ELA Content Area Specialists will be hosting another professional development opportunity with several one day stops around the state. The cost will be minimal and registration information will be found on the ISBE website shortly.

Content will be geared towards the CCSS shifts and updates that PARCC has made regarding assessments.

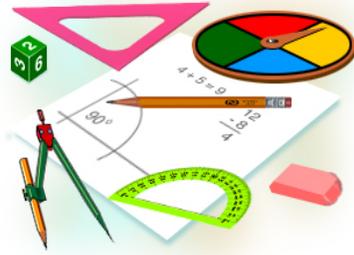
Breakout sessions will be offered along with lunch. Dates and locations are:

Feb 26th: Carbondale
Feb 27th: Fairview Heights
Mar 21st: Rockford
Mar 22nd: Moline
Apr 9th: Gurnee
May 1st: Peoria
May 2nd: Urbana
May 3rd: Chicago/Midway

Focus on Standard for Mathematical Practice 5

The fifth Math Practice Standard, **Use Appropriate Tools Strategically**, means mathematically proficient students consider available tools when solving a mathematical problem. They are familiar with grade or course appropriate tools and make decisions about when each of these tools might be helpful, recognizing both the insight to be gained and the limitations of each tool. Students detect possible errors by strategically using estimation and other math knowledge.

They identify relevant external mathematical resources and use them to pose or solve a problem. They are able to use technological tools to explore and deepen their understanding of concepts.



Some examples of tools:

- Pencil and paper
- Concrete model
- Calculator
- Compass
- Protractor
- Ruler
- Spreadsheet
- Statistical package
- Dynamic geometric software
- Digital content on website
- Abacus

Publishers' Criteria

K-8 Publishers' Criteria for the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics was created by the three lead authors of CCSSM and published in July 2012. It was written to encourage faithful implementation of the spirit of CCSSM. Part 1 focuses on the key shifts in the CCSSM. These shifts are focus, coherence, and rigor. Part II explains in detail each of the criteria found in the provided rubric. These criteria are focus on

major work, focus in early grades, focus and coherence through supporting work, rigor and balance, consistent progressions, coherent connections, practice-content connections, focus and coherence via practice standards, careful attention to each practice standard, emphasis on mathematical reasoning, as well as an additional criteria suggesting that other subject areas show consistency with the

CCSSM.

The criteria states that the point is not to do crosswalks, but to look for the spirit of the standards. Using this and the CCSSM, decide what needs to be taken out of the curriculum to allow more time for the focus topics. Work with the common core and the standards and don't spend time rewording the standards.

<http://www.corestandards.org/resources>

Resources on [isbe.net](http://www.isbe.net)

The Illinois School Board of Education has provided access to a variety of resources on its website,

http://www.isbe.net/common_core/htmls/resources.htm

A roadmap for the 2013 ISAT is available on the Common Core section of ISBE to help address questions regarding test items.

http://www.isbe.net/common_core/default.htm

Content Area Specialists continue to develop and post resources for educators on the Common Core Professional Learning Series page of ISBE.net. Links to professional development, Power Points, primary resources, tasks, and more can be found. Educators are encouraged to use [isbe.net](http://www.isbe.net) to navigate Common Core State Standards tools and resources.

http://www.isbe.net/common_core/pls/default.htm

Standards by themselves cannot raise achievement. Standards don't stay up late at night working on lesson plans, or stay after school making sure every student learns.

-Publishers' Criteria

Comprehensive System of Learning Supports

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



Parent-School Partnerships

Consider for a moment the amount of *trust* required for parents to send their children to school each day. They do so believing that their children will benefit from the expert instruction and care they will receive. In return, educators pledge to do all they can to fulfill this promise, ideally creating a learning environment that nurtures the full development of each child. These efforts by educators occur every day, in both ordinary and extraordinary ways.

Truly, the education of a child requires a *partnership* between educators and parents, as a child's educational identity begins and is supported within the family. While family involvement has proven effective in facilitating children's cognitive, social, and emotional growth, including improved self-esteem, behavior, and attitudes toward school, the *quality* of involvement matters.

Educators can build trust and develop relationships along a continuum toward meaningful parent and family **engagement** by showing respect, listening and valuing input, being transparent, providing opportunities for joint decision-making, and following through on commitments. Not surprisingly, the most successful school-family relationships are built upon the same foundations as successful instructional relationships with students: high expectations for all and attention to individual needs.

All families can contribute to more individualized learning by providing valuable insight into their child's learning styles, culture, and personal history. Educators with an open mind and open door invite this partnership.

Consider these school-family partnerships and how they can be utilized to reinforce behavioral and learning goals, including Common Core State Standards:

- **Two-way school-home communication**, which informs families and empowers them to be involved.
- **Family involvement at home**, which helps families to establish a home environment that extends and reinforces school-based learning.
- **Family involvement at school**, which encourages families to participate in school-based activities that center on various aspects of students' growth.

Tips for Effectively Involving Parents

Begin with teacher-parent communication that is:

Collaborative. Two-way exchanges respect and acknowledge parent input and experiences.

Child-centered. Personalized information-sharing for each child can powerfully impact a child's growth.

Constructive. Useful information should support specific areas of improvement and growth.

Clear and Concrete. Suggestions to support learning should be understandable and applicable.

Continuous. Ongoing, regular communication updates parents on classroom practices and student growth.

Ways to encourage meaningful parent engagement:

Learn about students, families, and community.

Respect diversity based on culture, language, economics, schedules, and family composition.

Be positive. Focus on support and appreciation.

Share information about practices and policies.

Do not assume they are common knowledge.

Invite parents into the classroom.

Facilitate an opportunity to observe and participate.

Share specific tips and strategies for involvement.

Let parents know specific ways to support their child's academic, social, emotional, and behavioral goals.

Think "beyond the bake sale" to involve parents in the central focus of your classroom...learning.

Continuous School Improvement Connection:

[Conditions for Learning Indicators](#) discussed here ([CL6](#), [CL15](#)) and others are included in the Rising Star on IIRC online school improvement system and

Helpful Resources

<http://pta.org/parents/?navItemNumber=506> - National PTA's Common Core Parents' Guides to Student Success

www.illinoisparents.org - Parent/family and school resources for strengthening school communities

<http://newsonrelevantscience.blogspot.com/2012/06/50-important-links-for-common-core.html> - 50 Important Links for Common Core Educators: a listing of several useful CCSS websites

<http://commoncoretools.me/> - One of the CCSSM writers, Bill McCallum's blog with up to date math common core information.

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

