Rigor, Relevance & Best Practice Newsletter

SECONDARY EDUCATOR EDITION

SEPTEMBER 2013

Preparing Today's Students for Tomorrow's Challenges

Northeast Regional Center
Collaboration among the Education Service Agencies of
Apache, Coconino and Navajo County

CCESA

Top 10 Questions to Ask Common Core Vendors

Link to complete article:
http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/on_innovation/2012/11/top_10_questions_to_ask_common_core_vendors.html?cmp=SOC-SHRFB *Adapted from: Capture the Core*

Their Answers Will Help Separate the Genuine from the Disingenuous

I appreciate the opportunity to welcome everyone back for the 2013-2014 school year! This will be an exciting year for all of us. We know that you have been working hard to incorporate the new standards in your classrooms and the CCESA Office of Innovation and Development wants to continue to be a resource for schools and districts.

The CCESA is committed to collaborating with all schools to provide quality professional learning, resources, technical assistance, standards and assessment support. Please do not hesitate to contact the CCESA to assist you in the development and Implementation of research-based reforms and best practices.

As we enter the new year and look for instructional resources to support our efforts, we thought it was important to address the concerns behind the flood of common core vendors. The CCESA has vetted many resources and assessment packages with some of our schools. The results of the vetting have been mixed. As you vet resources, please be cognizant of marketing. Like all of us… the vendors are still learning.

All the Best,
CMP

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?

Sept. Issue, Vol. V

Top 10 Questions to Ask Common Core Vendors 1

Writing & the ELA, Social Studies, History & Technical Subjects Standards 2

Taking a Stand in High School 2

Middle School: Writing on Demand 3

Informational Text: Are They Really Reading? 3

Mathematics 4

Attachment from page 3 5

Contact Us:
Cmango-paget@coconino.az.gov

Newsletter Contributors:
Cheryl Mango-Paget,
Jane Gaun, Hesper Petersen

Resources

Here are a few links containing additional information, including details on what each child will be expected to know and do in each grade and tips for parents:

http://ccesa.az.gov/

http://www.azed.gov/standards-development-assessment/parcc-assessment/

http://www.azed.gov/standards-development-assessment/parcc-assessment/

http://parcconline.org/

www.corestandards.org

www.pta.org/parentsguide

http://ww.azed.gov/standards-practices/files2012/05/rttt-implementation-plan-2-6-12.pdf

http://www.parcconline.org/samples/item-task-prototypes

www.theteachingchannel.org/

Writing & the ELA, Social Studies, History, Science & Technical Subject Standards

The Common Core Standards ask students to master three writing types:

❶ WRITING ARGUMENTS ❷ WRITING TO INFORM/EXPLAIN ❸ 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

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

Taking a Stand in High School

" Transforming our classrooms to align with the new standards may appear daunting, but the paybacks are tremendous. Give yourself the gift of time to make the switch..."

Lyn Cannaday
Social Studies Teacher

One way to begin teaching argumentative writing is to provide the students with an introduction to taking a stand. Divide the class into three groups and present each group with a different question to ponder. Each of the following statements is a sample of the types of questions one could use:

- Would you rather be able to pause the world around you or silence it? (1997, pg. 38)
- Would you rather be able to fast forward life or rewind it? (1997, pg. 45)
- Would you rather spend a five hour car ride with ____ or with ____? (1997, pg.196) (Students fill in the blanks with persons of their choice.)

Students respond in writing to these questions, presenting opposing views. Following this activity, students present opposing views from an argument they have had with family members or friends as well as the counterarguments from each party. (Gallagher, 2011).

SOURCES:
K. Gallagher (2011) *Write Like This.* Portland: Stenhouse.

Gomberg,D. & Heimberg, J. (1997). *Would You Rather…?* New York, NY: Penguin Putnam

MIDDLE SCHOOL…
Writing on Demand Strategy

"Writing On Demand" is a strategy that can be used in all content areas with texts that allow students to find multiple pieces of evidence to answer a question posed by the teacher.

1. Assign students to selection /text to read.

2. Ask students to state the main ideas of the passage on the graphic organizer as well as the question they hope to answer in a writing assignment.

3. Students are to record evidence from the text that helps them answer the question on the graphic organizer.

4. Assign students to write an essay that contains the answer to the question with well-supported evidence.

Creators of this strategy (North Greene Middle School, Roodhouse, IL) noted that students answered the question. Once students practiced this strategy, they became increasingly proficient in looking for and writing about evidence in a text.

Check out http://www.writingfix.com for additional strategies and tips. ***See page 5 of this newsletter for the template.***

Informational Text: Are They Really Reading?

The Common Core State Standards bring instructional shifts to many classrooms. One of these shifts includes a greater and wider use of non-fiction and authentic texts. While the middle school years exposes students to a plethora of informational text through content classrooms (social science, science, vocational, health, etc…), the question we need to ask ourselves is, "Are students actually reading the text?" The research is clear. **The only way to become a better reader, is to read**. Our students need to be reading more. As-signing text to be read, does not guarantee students will read closely. How can we help students closely read and engage with the text?

Two-Column Notes
This strategy can be used with text or when viewing media. This strategy helps students organize their thinking about specific content.

1. Students divide their paper into two columns with a 1 to 2 ratio.

2. Mark the columns with the appropriate headings.

3. Model for students the procedure

4. Record notes on the left side of the graphic organizer.

5. After recording notes, teachers can have students respond, clarify or summarize their notes by drawing, writing, or asking questions.

An example of this strategy and additional strategies can be found at the following website: http://teacherresourcecatalog.pwnet.org/docs/Reading%20Strategies%20for%20Content%20Teachers.pdf

FOCUS ON THE MATHEMATICAL PRACTICES

Mathematical Practice Standard 3
Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others

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.

This practice standard wil be assessed in the PARC performance assesement. Teaching for conceptual understanding must happen in order for students to be able to demonstrate this mathematical practice. For many teachers this will mean a change in how mathematics is taught in their classrooms. If students must construct viable arguments so must the teacher. The introduction of new concepts to students will need to follow a logical chain. No longer will it be acceptable to model procedural skills without reasoning. Current textbooks may not provide a valid justification either. The progression documents are an excellent resource for teachers. http://ime.math.arizona.edu/progressions/

How do I encourage MP3?

Provide problems that require students to do the following:

- Construct chains of logical steps to justify conjectures using precise language.
- Determine conditions under which an argument does or does not apply.
- Distinguish correct explanations from flawed.
- Use diagrams, words and/or equations to solve.
- State logical assumptions being used.

Ask these questions:

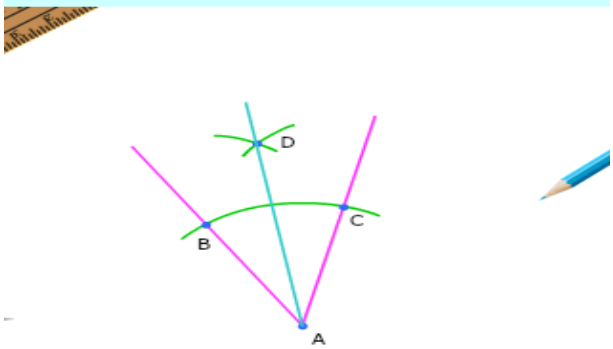
- How can you prove your answer?
- What examples could prove or disprove that argument?

FOCUS ON PARCC

PARCC recently released a set of sample problems for every grade level in mathematics.

The sample items represent the current state of PARCC item development and provide users a snapshot of what the 2014-2015 assessments will look like. The new sample items are first presented in PDF format to emphasize a focus on the content of the items. Later in 2013, the new sample items will be re-released as technology-based items that students, educators, and parents can use to better understand the content and the technologies PARCC will be using. The example on the right is the first geometry question to be released. For more samples items go to: http://www.parcconline.org/samples/math

The animation shows the geometric construction of an angle bisector.



Use the steps in the construction to prove that $\overrightarrow{AD}$ bisects $\angle BAC$.

ATTACHMENT FROM PG. 2

W.O.D. Response Template
(Writing on Demand)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Title of the text: _____

Main Idea of Selection:

Question:

Evidence from the text that supports the argument:

Essay: