



## Rigor, Relevance, & Best Practices

# NEWSLETTER

## NOVEMBER 2016

### BUSY, BUSY, BUSY

The CCESA has been very busy, working hard to provide educators and students in Coconino County and surrounding areas with needed supports, ranging from professional development to special education services to a substance abuse program. Currently there are 79 teachers participating in the 100+ hour course *The Physics of Force and Motion: Integrating STEM into the K-8 Classroom* being offered in Flagstaff and Yuma and another 75 teachers participating in the 100+ hour *Intel Math* course which is being offered in Flagstaff and Prescott. The CCESA also spent time in Fredonia and Sanders this past summer hosting LETRS trainings for 30 teachers. Please see the [course schedule](#) for information about our upcoming courses.



*EiE participants Meg Poore, Chandler Blean, and Greg Mallie stand proudly displaying their windmill design.*

### PURPOSEFUL ANNOTATION:

#### A “Close Reading” Strategy that Makes Sense to My Students

Written by Dave Stuart Jr. and modified by the CCESA

If you look at most close reading, you will see that the phrase really refers to the idea of annotating while reading. We still need to teach kids across the disciplines how to wrestle with assigned texts, practice citing evidence, and working with text dependent questions, etc. To help my students with this process of CLOSE reading, I have simply created a “strategy” that I call purposeful annotation.

#### Steps for “Purposeful Annotation”:

The big idea: What we do *we do when reading?*

1. *Why* are we doing the reading in the first place?
2. *What* are we going to do with the reading *after* we are done?

As an example, I am supporting my students to think through the task of

purposefully annotating a Kelly Gallagher Article of the Week. In that case, the purpose I set for my students’ is to become smarter about the world, and the post-reading task is that they need to write a thoughtful 1+ page response. As a student, I need to make annotations that begin to respond to the text. Of course, I cannot respond to something I do not understand, and so sometimes, especially when faced with a particularly complex sentence, paragraph, or section in the article, I ought to slow down, reread, and then annotate a brief summary or paraphrase of the challenging section in the margin. The idea here is that I am writing these things in the margins — these purposeful annotations — *not* simply for a grade or because the teacher said, “Do a CLOSE reading.”

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#### Newsletter

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#### 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/>

[www.azed.gov/AzMERIT](http://www.azed.gov/AzMERIT)

<http://achievethecore.org/>

<https://www.engageny.org/>

[www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org)

[www.pta.org/parentsguide](http://www.pta.org/parentsguide)

[www.theteachingchannel.org/](http://www.theteachingchannel.org/)



**SOCIAL STUDIES & SCIENCE STANDARDS  
ARE UNDER REVIEW**

**This is your opportunity to give feedback on Arizona's Science Standards and Social Studies Standards.** The review process for the Science Standards (2004) and Social Studies Standards (2005) officially began on October 4, 2016 as the 60-day window for public comment was opened. Educators, administrators, parents, and community members are encouraged to visit the [Science and Social Studies Standards - Public Feedback](#) page to provide feedback. In addition, educators are also encouraged to apply to serve on the revision committees for each of the content areas. To apply, simply click on the buttons at the



bottom of the public feedback page. **The public comment period ends on December 3, 2016 which is also when review committee applications are due.**

*Are students still required to take the AIMS Science test?*

Although students no longer take the AIMS test for ELA and Math they are still required to take the AIMS Science test in



grades 4 and 8 and high school biology/life sciences. The AIMS Science test will continue to be administered until the State Board of Education adopts new science standards and a new assessment aligned to those standards is developed. ADE anticipates AIMS Science to continue at least through Spring 2019 or 2020 but it could be longer depending on the timeline for standards adoption.

**BACK OFF PARENTS: IT'S NOT YOUR JOB TO TEACH COMMON CORE MATH WHEN HELPING WITH HOMEWORK**

**What should parents do when they don't understand their kids' Common Core homework?**

Written by Kathleen Lucadamo and modified by the CCESA

As schools around the U.S. implement national Common Core learning standards, parents that are trying to help their kids with math homework say that adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing has become as complicated as calculus.

For months, I had been baffled by “number bonds,” a way of expressing math in circles that my daughter had to complete for homework. I never bothered to ask the teacher how they work. Instead, I soldiered on, demoralized but thinking, ‘Surely, I can do first-grade math.’ I’m not alone in my confusion.

Parents across the country are trying to make sense of Common Core standards, a set of academic expectations that call for less focus on memorization and more focus on explaining how solutions were found and, in English, a deep probe of text.

Advocates of the program argue that the skills are still the basic ones we learned as children but in the new curricula developed around the standards, the questions are often presented differently. That often means homework, an age-old source of angst for many families, has gotten even more complicated. Parents, like myself, are trying to guide children through questions that make little sense to adults who were taught math using other methods.

Before you throw up your hands and walk away from homework – a recent study in Psychological Science found that math-anxious parents who help children on homework breed math-anxious children – experts say there are several strategies you can try that do not require relearning arithmetic.

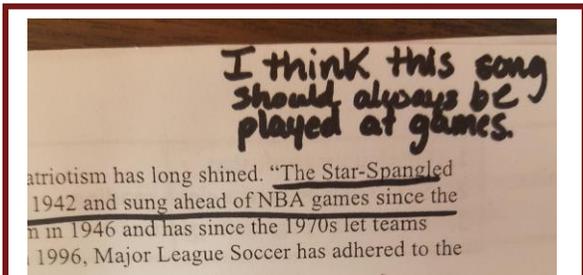
**PURPOSEFUL ANNOTATION – Continued from page 1**

I'm doing it to help me do the following:

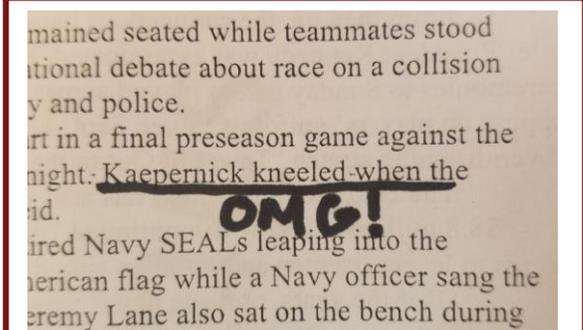
1. The task of understanding and learning from the text while reading is one of my ultimate goals for my students. I want them to read the texts I assign with self-kindled, habituated, cultivated curiosity, engaging with it for learning.
2. The task of doing a task with that text after reading is essential. This task is going to be a piece of writing or a piece of speaking that every student will do with the given text. This obviously is not as broad of a strategy as close reading, and honestly, that is why I like it — and my students do, too.

**How do we do practice purposeful annotation?**

First, start with the end in mind. I try to teach my students to let their purpose for reading the text dictate what they do while they are reading it. For my “what does this look like in a gradebook” readers, I do consistently assign a grade to whether my students, at minimum, write 1-2 thoughtful, purpose-driven annotations in the margins of each page of a shorter complex text. Here is an annotation that demonstrates thoughtful engagement with the text.



*Annotation that demonstrates thoughtful engagement with the text*



*Annotation that shows little evidence of thought*

Below is an annotation that shows little evidence of thought. I do not mark kids down for this, but I also do not give them credit for it. Responding with OMG, smiley faces, etc. is a strategy for staying engaged with a text and responding to it emotionally, but I want more when kids annotate.

When my students read something I have assigned, I normally set the purpose for the reading. For example, with the article of the week, I follow Gallagher's lead and tend to give 1-3 possible response options.

Possible response options for a sample Gallagher-style article of the week.

**If your purpose for reading is to learn the content:**

- Summarize a sentence or paragraph
- Paraphrase a sentence or paragraph
- Circle and define key words

**If your purpose for reading is to end by responding to a specific prompt:**

Annotate toward that prompt. If you're being asked to evaluate, make evaluative annotations. If you are being

asked to analyze, make analytical annotations. Keep in mind that I do not always have kids respond to a text in writing. Sometimes their response will be through discussion or debate.

I always have a few students per class who insist that they just cannot annotate while they read. Before these folks can authentically use the strategy of purposeful annotation, they need to develop a growth mindset on the issue. Rather than “I do not do that” or “I cannot do that,” I urge them to instead say, “I have not done that before” or “I have not been able to do that before.”

For my students who say they cannot, I watch them read and, more often than not, I see them zoning out in the middle of a page, or doing the “My eyes read it but my brain did not” thing that we all do. Annotation, I have found, can help my students focus on a text, especially when that annotation is purposeful rather than “fill in the margins as much as you can.”

The point of having kids do this is helping them efficiently internalize a purpose for reading, read toward that purpose, and then write or speak in line with that purpose.

**BACK OFF PARENTS – Continued from page 2**

**DON'T TRY TO BE A MATH GURU**

“The most important rule as a parent is to make sure it gets done. I may not have time to do an impromptu lesson on math, but I can make sure everything is completed,” said Jason Zimba, one of the three lead writers of Common Core’s math standards and founding partner of Student Achievement Partners, a group that helps teachers with the standards. “It’s about managing work load and learning accountability.” Although the father of two gives his children, ages 6 and 8, math tutorials on Saturday mornings, he says a parent doesn’t have to be a numbers whiz when it comes to homework. “The math instruction on the part of parents should be low. The teacher is there to explain the curriculum.”

Phoenix mom Kari Workman learned this recently when her fifth-grader was wrestling with a multi-step math problem and whining, “Oh, this is so hard.” As soon as Workman tried to look at the problem, her daughter snapped, “You won’t understand.” Mom called a time out. “She was so frustrated that listening to me was not going to happen, so I encouraged her to walk away from the assignment,” said Workman who is also a teacher. After a quick break, the 10-year-old returned in a calmer mood and solved the problem.

**TALK TO THE TEACHER**

“If they are struggling with homework, that warrants a deeper conversation,” said Denver teacher Lauren Fine. “Don’t wait for those parent-teacher conferences. Make sure you are in touch with the school.” Another strategy, she said, is asking the child to teach you the concept. “If you don’t know how to do it, ask your child to teach you, to show you how it’s done.” Often, she said, the kids get it, but parents don’t. “In the past, I might have sent home worksheets with 40 problems, now it’s a couple of problems and the student has to show multiple ways of how they solved the problem. That can be frustrating for parents because they just want them to get the answer.”

The struggle seems to bubble in third grade, said experts, when the math becomes more

Apple Hill is 568 feet high. Banana Hill is 293 feet high. How many feet higher is Apple Hill than Banana Hill?

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
$568 - 293 = ?$ Start with 568. Subtract the 2 hundreds in 293. $568 - 200 = 368$ So far, 200 has been subtracted.	Now, start with 368. Subtract the 9 tens in 293. There are not enough tens. So, subtract the 6 tens that are there. $368 - 60 = 308$ Then, subtract the tens that are left. $9 \text{ tens} - 6 \text{ tens} = 3 \text{ tens}$ $308 - 30 = 278$ So far, $200 + 60 + 30 = 290$ has been subtracted.	Start with 278. Subtract the 3 ones in 293. $278 - 3 = 275$ In all $200 + 60 + 30 + 3 = 293$ has been subtracted. Apple Hill is 275 feet higher than Banana Hill.

sophisticated. “It’s when it looks more different. It’s not just counting beans,” said Bibb Hubbard, founder of Learning Heroes. “The one thing we can reinforce as parents is that it’s ok for children to struggle. This is hard work. It takes time and patience,” said Hubbard. She likens it to learning how to tie your shoes. “It’s really painful to see them frustrated and angry. But I’m not going to tie their shoes anymore because they are 11.”

**TEACH WHAT YOU KNOW WITHOUT STEPPING ON TOES**

“It’s ok for parents to show students how to solve problems using the ways they were taught in school – such as carrying numbers – as long as they are stressing that there are other ways to solve them.” said Fine.

Cece Hallisey, senior director of raisethebarparents.org, a site that outlines the new standards and offers resources on how to navigate them, has overheard her husband doing this with their daughters. “There is nothing wrong with them learning in different ways, but I wouldn’t be stubborn about it.” She also says that parents need to tell their children that they shouldn’t be surprised if they learn it differently in school.

“It’s about saying ‘If I can’t do the homework with them, who can?’” said Fine. Her school district, like many, offers before-school tutoring and the library has after-school homework help. Friends, family, babysitters and neighbors are also good resources as are websites such as bealearninghero.org, which breaks down standards by grade and subject.

**BACK OFF PARENTS – Continued from page 4**

Some schools are holding workshops that teach parents about the math and writing standards that students are learning in class. Zimba says schools should be better at educating parents on the standards and how to best guide students through them. “I think more can be done on the parts of schools, state leaders and district leaders on communication,” he said.

In the meantime, he said, parents should take the lead. “When parents are frustrated, it’s important that educators listen to them, but they can’t listen unless the parents talk to them,” said Zimba, adding, “Venting is one thing but if you really want to solve the problem the way to do that is to start with the child’s teacher.”

**UPCOMING CCESA COURSES**

Register at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AY16-17>

Engineering is Elementary Jan 25 & Feb 1

LETRS Module 10 – Reading Big Words: Syllabication & Advanced Decoding Jan 27 & 28

Promoting Productive Struggle in K-12 Mathematics Classes Feb 4

Digital Presentations Feb 11 & March 29

Digital Writing Feb 11 & March 29

Improving Writing Across Contents Feb 25 & April 5

LETRS Early Childhood March 3 & 4

Structuring K-12 Math Classes to Align with the Mathematics Teaching Practices March 25

Engineering is Elementary April 8

Details about each course can be found at: <http://ccesa.az.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/AY-16-17-Course-Catalog-9.20.pdf>