Getting from Here to Core

How to launch the program that launches students.

A Common Core

eGuide

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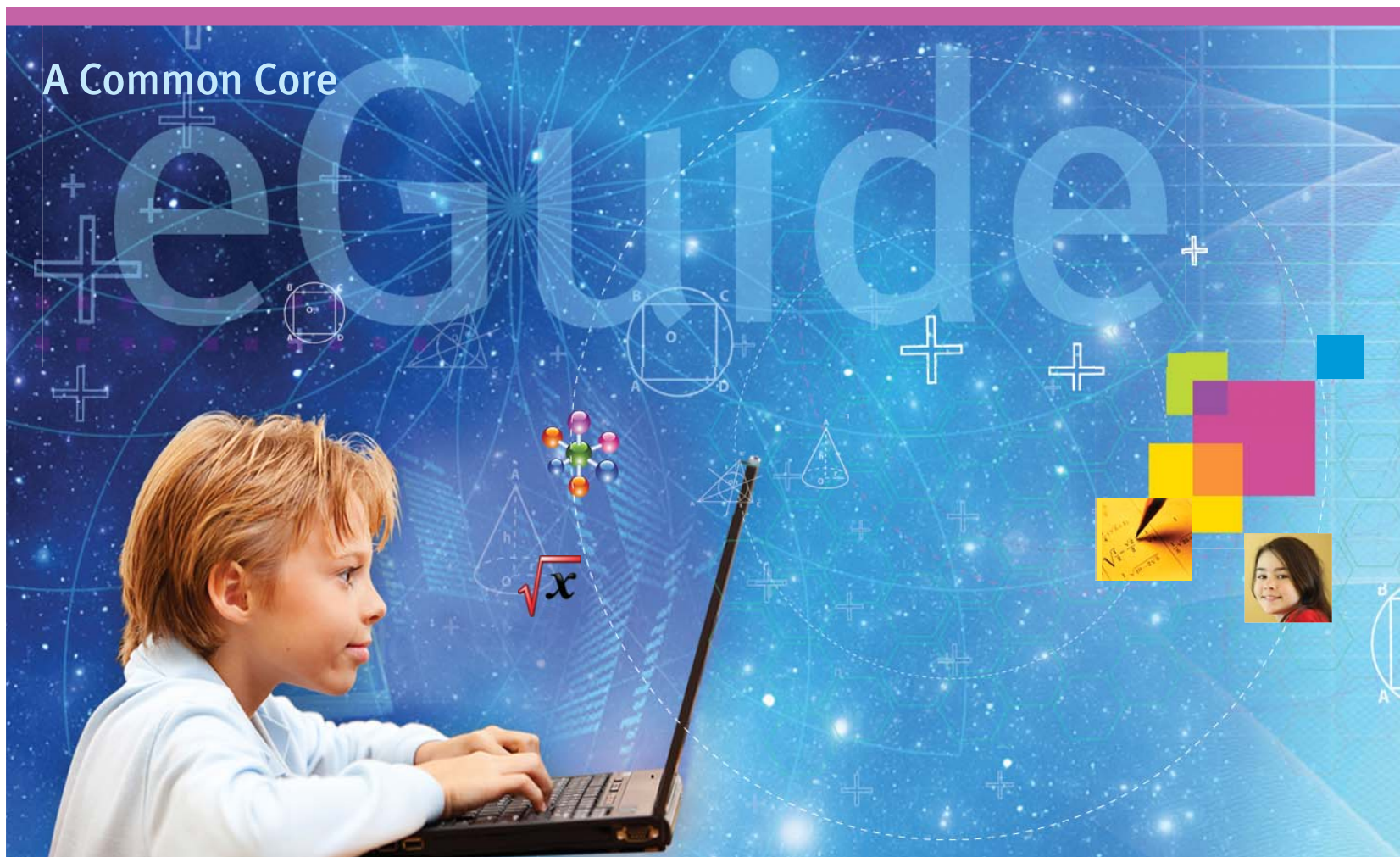
This e-guide was written

to help you transition to Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and prepare students to compete and succeed in college and the workplace. Every major change—in education or any other endeavor—begins with a level of uncertainty and right now, in the planning stages, getting ready for the 2014-15 deadline may seem like a daunting task.

This document will give you a more concrete grasp on the changes ahead and help you take the necessary steps to move forward with confidence. It also provides links to some of the best resources available to help you get started.

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HELP THE TEACHER HELP THE CHILD

Common Core State Standards
Raising the bar on education.

In 2010, two Common Core consortia were formed. These consortia were sponsored by the National Governor's Association and funded by Race to the Top funds. These consortia support all participating states in the measurement progress made towards Common Core State Standards. They are funded only through 2014 to help states write core-aligned test items and create standardized tests to measure performance. States have the option to use consortia-published tests, contract with an educational partner who develops core-ready assessments, or craft their own tests from scratch.

In addition to the information available on the consortia's websites, individual states are openly sharing their resources, educational partners like CTB-McGraw/Hill have developed online resources (CTB.com/CommonCore), and many others are being added daily.

Here are some links to help you get started:

www.k12.wa.us/smarter/

www.corestandards.org/voices-of-support

Learn more about the Common Core Standards Initiative:
Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PAARC):

www.parcconline.org/

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC)
www.smarterbalanced.org

Myths v. Facts About the Common Core Standards:

www.corestandards.org/assets/CoreFacts.pdf

www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/siteASCD/policy/CommonCoreStds.pdf

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Common Core State Standards update

As of August 30, 2012, all but four states have elected to adopt Common Core State Standards (CCSS). In the process, they have adopted the assessment system and curriculum of one of two consortia (or both): the Smarter Balanced Consortium (SBAC) and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARRC).
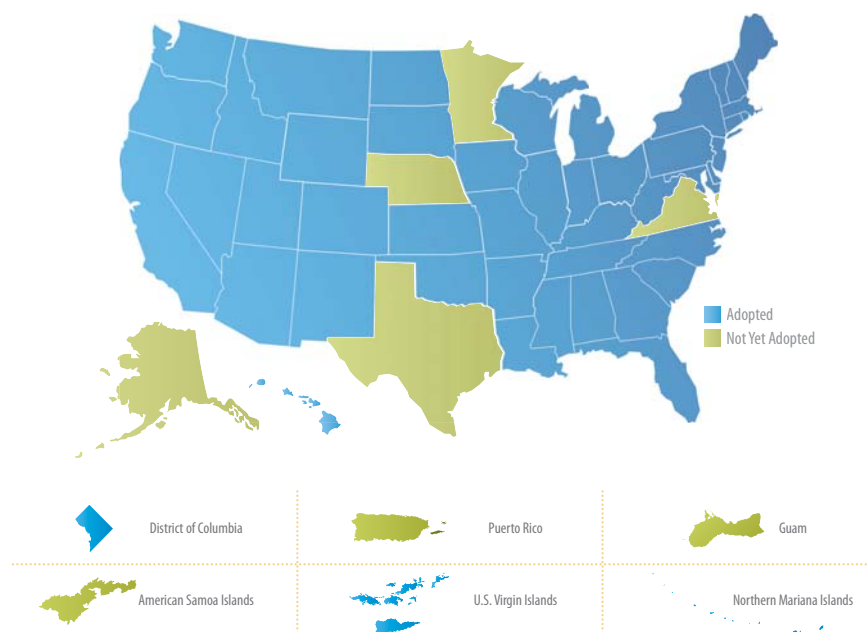
Now, the states are tasked with developing their transitional plans—three-part plans they can present to their school districts that will make it possible to "trickle down" their commitment to the individual schools, teachers, and students.

The Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI) is a joint project of the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) to develop common K–12 reading and math standards designed to prepare students for college and their careers.

Where does your state stand in terms of readiness?

As of early 2012, all but one of the 47 states that have adopted Common Core State Standards reported that they had developed transition plans. Most had also begun to align their systems to the new standards, provided some professional development to teachers (45 states), begun to develop instructional materials (35 states) and revised their teacher evaluation processes (38 states).

Seven states have fully-developed implementation plans in place for each of the three major transitional planning areas: professional development, curriculum materials, and teacher evaluations.

Adopted
Not Yet Adopted

District of Columbia   Puerto Rico   Guam

American Samoa Islands   U.S. Virgin Islands   Northern Mariana Islands

* Education First and the EPE Research Center, "Preparing for Change: A National Perspective on Common Core State Standards Implementation Planning" (Seattle, WA: Education First; Bethesda, MD: EPE Research Center, January 2012

Common Core launches in 2014-2015

As of the 2014-2015 school year, current state tests will be replaced by one of two exams that will be taken by students in states that have voluntarily chosen to participate. These exams will evaluate students against a new set of standards that will be higher and more rigorous than previous standards.

The standards will:

(1) foster higher achievement of U.S. students;

(2) allow U.S. students to compete better with students around the world;

(3) make educational opportunity more equal.

The standards have a style and organizational structure that require different teaching methods than the past. Rather than teaching a little about a lot of subjects, the Common Core encourages deeper learning about fewer subjects, giving students more complete understanding of the principles behind concepts and a solid foundation for future learning.

Testing against these standards requires students to demonstrate greater depths of knowledge, use technology in their answers, and justify their conclusions, not just pick a letter from a list of multiple choice questions. The Common Core State Standards are based on different theories (reading comprehension, writing, differentiated instruction) than past standards, so they are qualitatively different in many ways.

In the past, many students left high school unprepared to succeed at entry-level college courses and/or lacking the skills to successfully land and keep a job. Every state set their own quality standards for achievement, resulting in large variations in proficiency as measured by the National Assessment of Education Progress scores.

Common Core State Standards specify K–12 expectations for college and career readiness to assure all high school graduates are ready to succeed in their careers and lives. Educators in every participating state have agreed to adopt common guidelines for what students need to know and be able to do by the time they graduate.
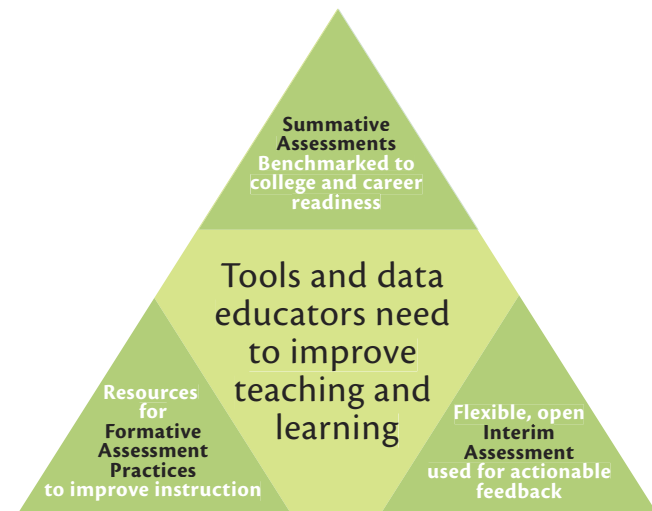
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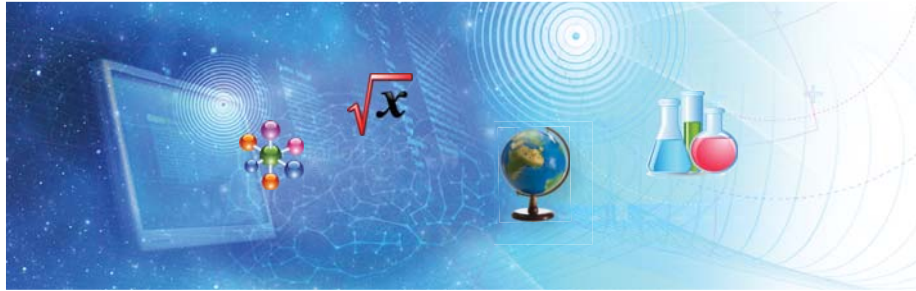
What's different in Common Core?

No more teaching to the test.

The Common Core State Standards prepare students for college and/or the workplace. There is no mandated curriculum, and it is up to the individual states, districts, schools, and teachers to develop the curricula to elevate student knowledge to match the standards they have adopted. This provides a great degree of freedom at the local level to teach in ways that meet the needs of students and educators alike.

Existing curricula will need to be replaced with new plans, aligned to the new standards. All standard tests will need to be replaced, as well. Teacher preparation and textbook design will follow suit, as they are currently, in large part, inconsistent with those supporting the Common Core.

Summative Assessments
Benchmarked to college and career readiness

Tools and data educators need to improve teaching and learning

Resources for Formative Assessment Practices to improve instruction

Flexible, open Interim Assessment used for actionable feedback

To help teachers and students adjust to new ways of teaching and learning, educational partners like CTB-McGraw/Hill have developed sample test items and a selection of benchmark, formative, and summative assessments ready to use in the classroom right now.

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Backmapping instead of hopscotching

In the past, standards have started with the simplest bits of information about a given subject at the Kindergarten level and built upon those skills and concepts as appropriate for each grade. The result was disconnected shallow learning, punctuated by numerous knowledge gaps, which left students without a true understanding of the subject area.

Common Core State Standards begin with what a student needs to know for college or career readiness and backmaps from there, taking care that all the fundamentals necessary for in-depth comprehension are covered in sequence. Backmapping holds teachers accountable, making sure that every student demonstrates progressively deeper learning on a given subject, and can back up this knowledge with in-depth valid explanations.

In essence, backmapping, as used in the Common Core, pulls students steadily forward towards success in college and career (instead of loading their brains with random facts). In the process, students become immersed in subject matter and explore real-life scenarios around the subject, which awakens curiosity and gives them new, relevant reasons to love school.

How do Common Core items show a progression of learning?

Backmapping *(English Language Arts Example)*

College & Career Ready

Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

Grades 11–12

Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist.)
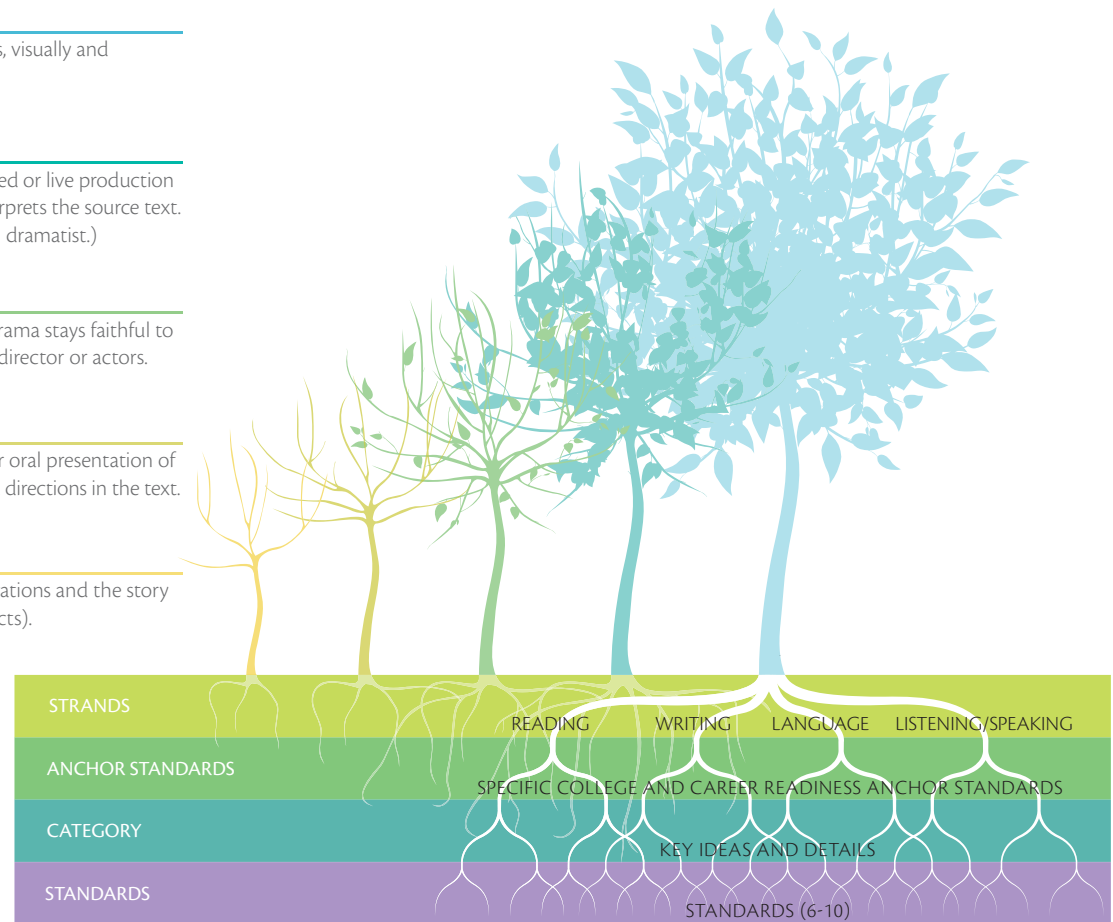
Grades 7–8

Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.

Grade 4

Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text.

Kindergarten

With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear (e.g., what moment in a story an illustration depicts).

STRANDS	READING WRITING LANGUAGE LISTENING/SPEAKING
ANCHOR STANDARDS	SPECIFIC COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS
CATEGORY	KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS
STANDARDS	STANDARDS (6-10)

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8

Integration instead of disconnection

Unlike the largely random organization of past standards, the Common Core standards are based on a coordinated structure that follows a logical, evidence-based progression towards mastery. This is a major difference that will be highlighted in professional development coursework. Instead of teaching a diverse list of facts and/or discrete skills, today's teachers will need to understand and teach in a way that integrates comprehension, oral language, and writing.

For example, the Common Core State Standards for ELA are grouped across four strands: **Reading, Writing, Listening & Speaking, and Language.** The standards within a strand are intended to be coordinated and to support each other, not to be taught in isolation. The standards across the four strands are also intended to be heavily integrated in instruction and assessment.

Higher standards, harder to reach

The Common Core State Standards require higher levels of rigor in ELA and math learning than ever before. States, districts, and schools who do not start early to develop new core-aligned curricula, provide teacher instruction, pre-test students, and take advantage of the rich resources available to them, will likely be in for an unpleasant surprise when end-of-year testing rolls around.

COMMON CORE PERFORMANCE TASK ITEM SCHEMATIC

Evidence-Based Response

ANSWER

5-6 Additional Items

2-3 Items

Anchor Text / Story

Discussion
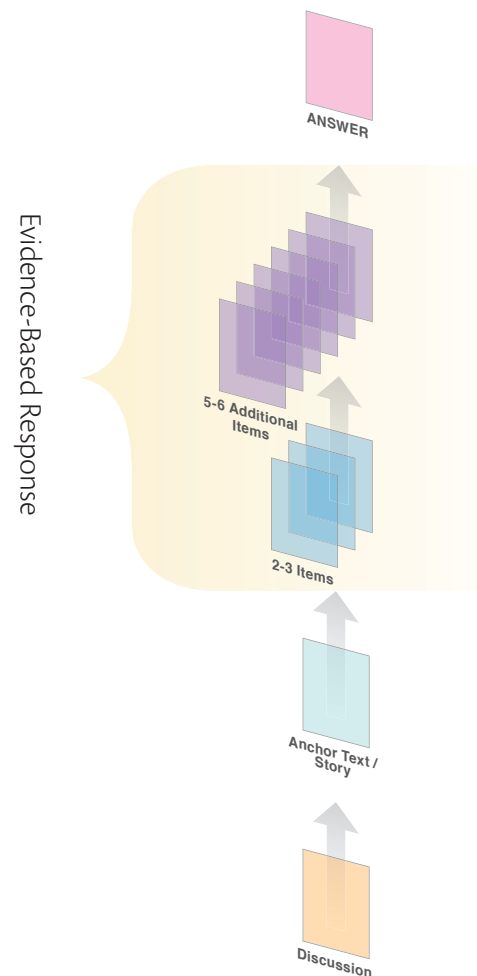
Getting ready for Common Core assessments

We've seen how the new standards will be more stringent, that new skills will need to be learned (by teachers and students alike), that in-depth subject mastery will be required, and all of this will be tested at the end of the year.

Common Core State Standards put every administrator, every teacher, every student, and every parent on the same page. Although there is plenty of flexibility to allow the teaching and testing of other subject matter in the classroom, from school to school, and state to state, testing will compare apples to apples and oranges to oranges.

The Common Core provides a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so that teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them as they progress in their preparation for college and careers. How will they know how well they are doing? Through the use of Common Core-aligned assessments.

Your consortium is in the process of developing a library of assessments that includes interim/benchmark, formative, performance, summative, and through-course.

Interim/benchmark assessments give school- and district-level administrators rapid access to student data that can be aggregated or disaggregated at any level. This reveals trends and patterns in student performance, identifies best practices, or signals the need for additional resources to specific content areas, grade levels, or student groups.

Formative assessments are as much for the teachers as for the students. Given during instruction, or immediately following the presentation of a key concept, they give educators critical information about student and classroom progress and uncover opportunities for further review, suggest adjustments to the teacher's approach, and make sure a subject has been mastered before moving on.

Performance assessments are innovative new assessments based on tasks students are asked to perform to demonstrate their understanding and procedural skills relative to the content. More constructed response than multiple choice items, they are scored using rubrics relevant to the skills being assessed.

Summative assessments summarize learning over time, measuring student achievement, and providing detailed reports educators can use to show academic progress. They also compare growth across various groups and jurisdictions and provide proof that progress towards Common Core Standards is being made.

Through-course assessments provide continuous feedback to teachers throughout the year.

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Domains and concepts for mathematics by grade

In K–8 (Kindergarten, Elementary, and Middle School), each grade contains work on several domains, as described in the table below. For example: In Grade 1, the content includes Operations and Algebraic Thinking, Number and Operations in Base Ten, Measurement and Data, and Geometry.

GRADE	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	HS Conceptual Categories
DOMAINS	Counting & Cardinality						Ratios & Proportional Relationships	Functions		Functions
	Operations and Algebraic Thinking						Expression and Equations			Algebra
	Number and Operations in Base Ten						The Number System			Number & Quantity
					Fractions					
	Measurement and Data						Statistics & Probability			Statistics & Probability
	Geometry						Geometry			Geometry

In High School, the standards are arranged in conceptual categories, such as Algebra or Functions. In each conceptual category there are domains, such as Creating Equations and Interpreting Functions.

Conceptual Category	Number & Quantity	Algebra	Functions	Geometry	Statistic & Probability
DOMAINS	The Real Number System	Seeing Structure in Expressions	Interpreting Functions	Congruence	Interpreting Categorical & Quantitative Data
	Quantities	Arithmetic with Polynomials & Rational Expressions	Building Functions	Similarity, Right Triangles & Trigonometry	Making Inferences & Justifying Conclusions
	The Complex Number System	Creating Equations	Linear, Quadratic & Exponential Models	Expressing Geometric Properties with Equations	Conditional Probability & the Rules of Probability
	Vector & Matrix Quantities	Reasoning with Equations & Inequalities	Trigonometric Functions	Geometric Measurement & Dimension	Using Probability to Make Decisions

How Common Core aligned assessments will be different

Assessments that measure student achievement and progress on the Common Core will require new thinking, new technologies, new approaches to content, and new ways to analyze data and report assessment results. One big change you'll notice is the shift from basic factual knowledge to an increased emphasis on performance. These next generation assessments, as envisioned by the two assessment consortia, must address a new set of design considerations and criteria.

Innovative Item Types:
Common Core assessments will include performance tasks, technology-enhanced items, and constructed-response items in addition to the traditional multiple-choice items to measure the depth, rigor, and complexity of comprehension required by the Common Core.

✓ **Performance tasks** help uncover deeper levels of student understanding by measuring a student's ability to think through a complex problem that may have more than one correct answer.

They call for students to apply their knowledge within an authentic learning experience, which may take anywhere from minutes to days to complete. These items will be scored using rubrics based on the cognitive skills being assessed.

✓ **Technology-enhanced items** and assessments provide instant feedback to students and teachers, making it possible to quickly fill learning gaps and support students in moving steadily towards achievement. They reduce the turnaround time for student reports, save instruction time, and ultimately preserve resources.

✓ **Extended constructed-response items** allow educators to measure skills that are difficult to assess with traditional multiple-choice items. This could include writing an essay or answering an open-ended question in English language arts or mathematics.

✓ **Writing items** require students to write logical arguments based on substantive claims, sound reasoning, and relevant evidence. Emphasis on writing skills helps students improve their essay-writing skills and prepare for state and national writing assessments.

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Informative Reports:

Common Core assessment reports must provide teachers and administrators with useful, actionable interim/benchmark or summative information that links student performance to college- and career-readiness benchmarks.

Challenging Cognitive Tasks:

Common Core assessments must include items that provide evidence of robust student thinking about important content.

Rigorous Validity and Reliability:

Common Core assessments must be engineered and developed to support appropriate and instructionally-meaningful uses of data.

Further, the assessments must be research-based and incorporate learning progressions and clearly defined cognitive tasks. Online delivery in a computer adaptive environment is also a priority.

ELA assessments under Common Core

The new standards for ELA specify that all students engage with increasingly complex texts, appropriate for their grade level.

• Literacy standards are more stringent, requiring a rich mix of literacy texts, informational texts, history/social studies texts, and science and technical texts.

• Close reading of texts is required, challenging students to uncover the meaning behind the text and finding evidence to support their analysis.

• Talking and writing about texts is required to boost comprehension and develop writing skills. Three writing types are emphasized: opinion/argument, explanatory/informational, and narrative writing. The CCSS place greater emphasis on argument and informational writing than past frameworks have, especially at the upper grades.

• A heavier emphasis on technology requires students to interact with digital text and international resources.

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New item types— performance tasks have multiple parts

A performance task will have multiple parts; for example, an ELA item may include some or all of these parts::

• Discussion questions

• Anchor text

• 2-3 additional, related texts, which may include multimedia

• 5-6 additional items based on anchor and related texts, which may be technology enhanced

• Culminating product, which may be an essay, presentation, or argument

Directions: In this task, you will consider the impact of technology on students' lives. First you will participate in a classroom discussion. Then you will analyze and respond to a poem and an image. Finally you will conclude the task by writing an informative essay.

1. Here are the main points that will be covered during the classroom discussion part of this task:

A. What are the most common information technology devices used regularly in most students' lives?

B. How are these devices used?

C. How does the use of these devices affect individuals and society?

2. Now read the poem. Then answer the questions that follow.

Lorem ips...
isicing eli...

Ut enim ad...
sit amet, ...
elusmod t...
dolore mag...
veniam. Ut...
ipsum dolo...
dipisicing ...
incididunt ...
enim ad mi...

How does the poet's use of the words humming, buzzing, texting, thumping, drumming, and flashing contribute to the structure of the poem? What effect does the poet achieve by using these words? Use details from the poem to support your response.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

3. Read the last three lines from the poem.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam.

Analyze the difference between what is stated explicitly in these lines and what the poet is implying. Use details from the poem to support your response.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

4. Now look at the image. Then answer the question that follows.

Photograph of college students and teacher on campus (image # B3454960), copyright © by Yellow Dog Productions/Getty Images. Used by permission.

Compare the scene described in the poem to the scene captured in the photograph. Which elements of student life are emphasized and/or absent in each representation?

_____

5. Write a well-developed, informative essay in which you explain what you consider to be potential negative effects of information technology on students' lives.

As you plan, write, and edit your essay, be sure that you
• **include a clear introduction that precisely states the topic you will discuss**
• **develop your topic thoroughly by including the information, facts, details, examples, and definitions your readers will need to understand your explanation**
• **organize your explanation so that the information is clear to your readers**
• **use precise language**
• **maintain a formal style and objective tone**
• **provide a conclusion that follows from the explanation presented**
• **check for and correct errors in spelling, punctuation, and language conventions**

Write your essay on the following pages.

The two texts, one an informational text and the other a literary short story, share a common theme: the rewards of volunteering. While the texts are of moderate complexity, students will be challenged to make connections between the two.

Directions
Read the article and the story about volunteering. Then do Numbers 1–4.

Get Involved, Be a Volunteer
by Laura K. Meissner

The American Red Cross helps people of all countries, backgrounds, and ages— including yours! I started volunteering at the American Red Cross in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1999, when I was 17 years old. I was in charge of a program that teaches less fortunate people how to find jobs, save money, and find a place to live. Now I'm in college in Washington, D.C., but I still help out whenever I come home.

What can you do to help? Your local chapter will know. Most give classes to kids your age and older. First-aid and basic-aid classes teach you how to respond to small emergencies, lead a healthy life, and keep bigger emergencies from happening. Whale Tales is a class that teaches water safety. When you are 11, you can also take baby-sitting or beginning lifeguard classes. One day, you might save someone's life.

Most kids don't actually volunteer with the Red Cross until they are 12. Zerrine Sethna at the Cleveland Red Cross chapter tells kids to find or even create the perfect activity for themselves. You could wrap presents for less fortunate kids during the holidays. Perhaps you would want to plant flowers around your city or Red Cross building. Maybe you could help to mail letters. You could even wash the "disaster vans." These vans help people who have been through a fire, tornado, or other emergency. When you're 15, you can teach classes to other kids.

If you like these ideas or have one of your own, like I did, have a parent or teacher help you to get in touch with your local chapter. "What's important is having kids do things that relate to what we do at the Red Cross," Sethna says. You have lots of ways you can help people. Find what's right for you!

Tim's Vacation

by Heather Klassen

"We're flying to Hawaii for our summer vacation," Peter said. "I'm going to go scuba diving there."

"We're staying at a ranch in Montana," Mateo told everyone. "I'm going to ride horses all day long."

"My family is visiting Disney World," Stefan said. "And I plan to go on every ride twice." Stefan turned to Tim. "Where is your family going on vacation this year, Tim?"

"We're driving to a town about 100 miles from here," Tim answered. "Then we're going to build a house for a family who lives there."

"What?" Peter asked.

"That doesn't sound like a fun vacation," Mateo said.

"It sounds like work to me," Stefan added. Tim shrugged. He didn't kno[w]
explain this trip to his friends. It had sounded okay when his parents had tol[d]
the plan. But he had to admit that it seemed kind of strange when he told his
about it. "We're going with a group that builds houses for families who don't
Tim tried to explain. "Like maybe they had a fire, flood, or something that d[...]
their old house. So this group goes and builds a new house for them."

"Well, try to have fun," Peter said.

"If you can," Stefan told Tim.

"Yeah, see you guys in August," Mateo said.

Tim waved to his friends as they all left the park, each riding his
bike home in a different direction.

The day his family finished packing the RV, Tim still didn't quite kno[w]
about the trip. Maybe his friends were right, and this vacation wouldn't be fu[n]
He wished his parents would take him to Hawaii or Disney World instead.

But as soon as the RV pulled up to the building site and Tim's family tumbled out
joining the group already there, Tim forgot about his doubts. He ended up being too
busy to think about them.

The days went by in a blur of building. Along with his father, mother, and older sister, Tim helped put up the walls, floors, and even the roof of the new house.
He had lots of fun working with everyone, including the family who would be living in the house. It was fun talking and singing all day long and playing with the other kids in the evening. By the end of the day, he fell exhausted onto his bunk.

Suddenly the last day of the project arrived. Tim's father called him over so he could press his handprints into the still wet cement of the new patio. As he wiped the cement from his hands, Tim gazed at the completed house.

I'll have to tell my friends that this turned out to be a great vacation after all, Tim decided. I did have a lot of fun, even though I worked hard too. But the best
part is that a whole family will live in a house that I helped to build!

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Foundational to the Reading Standards of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) is the requirement that students be able to identify explicit and implicit details that support key ideas in a text (RI.4.1). For this item, students identify a text detail that supports a stated key idea of an informational text. From this item an inference can be made about a student's ability to connect one of a text's main points with a supporting detail.

1. Which detail from the article **best** supports the idea that the Red Cross offers many different ways for people to help others?

A Red Cross volunteers are usually 12 years of age or more.

B Red Cross volunteers serve in emergencies, mail letters, and more.

C The Red Cross provides training to people who apply to be volunteers.

D The Red Cross has chapters with volunteers in many different countries.

This item illustrates how students must make direct connections between two related texts in order to demonstrate their proficiency at integrating knowledge and ideas (RL.4.9). Given a short excerpt from the story, students must refer back to the informational text to find an idea related to the excerpt. While all four answer choices are details from the text, only one clearly relates to the idea present in the story's excerpt. This item moves beyond identification and drawing simple conclusions to analysis and evaluation.

2. Read these sentences from the story "Tim's Vacation."

> **"We're going with a group that builds houses for families who don't have any," Tim tried to explain. "Like maybe they had a fire, flood, or something that destroyed their old house. So this group goes and builds a new house for them. "**

According to the information in "Get Involved, Be a Volunteer," how do Red Cross volunteers help people in the same situation that Tim describes?

A They send disaster vans to the area.

B They help people find jobs in a new place.

C They teach babysitting classes to young people.

D They wrap presents for people during the holidays.

Being able to understand characteristics of genres and how authors use those characteristics to create meaning is a hallmark of a critical reader. This item tests students' understanding of the characteristics of poems and stories (RL.4.5). Students must complete a chart that lists genre characteristics as they relate to the story about Tim's vacation. The chart is partially complete in order to direct and scaffold students' responses; to complete the chart, students will need to "refer to the structural elements of poems" as required by the standard. Being able to do so is the foundation for analysis of more complex texts and of genres at the upper grades.

3. If the story "Tim's Vacation" were written as a poem, how would it be different? Use the information in the chart below to help you list one characteristic of a fictional story and two characteristics of a poem.

Characteristics of a fictional story	Characteristics of a poem
Has a plot	Uses rhythm
Organized into paragraphs	

Sample ELA Item— Performance Task *Parts 4A and B*   English Language Arts, Grade 4

The next set of items presents one approach to a performance task (PT) in which students are guided through a series of smaller tasks, or components, that provide a scaffolded, cognitive journey through two related texts. The targeted constructs for this PT cross Reading Literature, Reading Informational Text, Writing, and Language strands of the CCSS.

This PT uses the same texts as those of the previous items but most likely would not appear in the same test as the previous items.

The PT begins with two orienting selected-response items that require students to focus on the informational text and examine how the author structures the text (RI.4.5) and develops the text's main points (RI.4.8). To do so, students must read and evaluate the full text carefully. These introductory components of the PT also push students to re-read and re-examine the text, better preparing them for the components that follow.

4. PART A

Which of these **best** describes the structure of the article, "Get Involved, Be a Volunteer"?

A It describes a problem and explains how Red Cross volunteers can help solve it.

B It describes the activities available to people who become Red Cross volunteers.

C It uses real-life examples to compare what is good and what is bad about volunteering for the Red Cross.

D It tells the step-by-step story of how a teenager stopped volunteering at the Red Cross so she could go to college.

PART B

How does the author show the importance of volunteering in the article "Get Involved, Be a Volunteer"?

A by describing her own experience

B by listing the different available classes

C by describing the best way to get involved

D by listing activities for different age groups

In this component students now focus on the literary text, a short fictional story. Students must purposefully select details about how the main character's feelings change in the course of the story (RL.4.1) and write those details in the appropriate boxes. This type of con-structed–response item often requires greater cognitive demand for young readers and writers. Like Parts A and B, this component requires that students re-read and re-examine the literary text, which will help them make connections between the two texts in the components that follow.

PART C

In the story, Tim learns a lesson about volunteering. Each of the three boxes below has a question about Tim's experience. For each box, find a detail from the story that answers the question and write it in that box.

How does Tim feel about his family's vacation plans at the beginning of the story?

How do Tim's feelings change after he starts helping to build the house?

How does Tim feel about his vacation at the end of the story?

In this component of the PT, students must now make a connection between the two texts by identifying details from the informational text that may apply to the character in the story. Thus, while this component is directly aligned to Reading standard 1 (RI.4.1: Refer to details and examples in a text…), it is also aligned to the reading standard which states that students will "integrate information from two texts" (RI.4.9). Moving beyond identification of details and a focus on one text, this component of the PT calls upon students to re-examine two texts and evaluate a story's character.

PART D

On the lines below, list two Red Cross volunteer activities described in the article that you think Tim would enjoy.

1._____

_____

_____

2._____

_____

_____

Now write a sentence explaining why you think Tim would enjoy these activities.

_____

_____

For the culminating component of the PT, students will write essays that explicitly connect the information in the two texts that they have read and examined. In their essays, students will also explain a personal viewpoint on the topic. Completing the essay will require students to integrate many of the concepts and skills of the CCSS, most notably the integration of information from two texts (RI.4.9 and RL.4.9), drawing evidence from literary and informational texts to support analysis and reflection while applying grade-appropriate reading standards (W.4.9), and writing an opinion piece on topics or texts (W.4.1). General writing guidelines and scoring criteria are presented to the student in the prompt; these criteria are directly linked to the CCSS, including Language standards 1–3. A robust response from a student will provide evidence that the student can read, write, and think critically and purposefully.

PART E

Both "Tim's Vacation" and "Get Involved, Be a Volunteer" give information about volunteering. On the lines below, explain why volunteering is a good thing to do. Describe the kinds of volunteering activities you would be interested in and why. Be sure to use information from **both** passages to support your explanation.

In your response, be sure to
• explain why volunteering is a good thing to do
• describe the kinds of volunteering activities you would enjoy and why
• include a beginning, a middle, and an end in your writing

Check your writing for spelling, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation.

_____

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Mathematics assessments under the Common Core

An equivalent set of higher standards are built into the math standards for Common Core. These standards emphasize a balanced assessment of understanding and procedural skills. To demonstrate understanding, the student must justify why a particular mathematical statement is true or where a mathematical rule comes from. These standards are readiness-focused, rather than curriculum-focused, and are standardized across all participating states, unlike the current frameworks.

Currently, according to a 2012 report from the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, about 14% of 12th graders who are interested in Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math (STEM) fields do not have the math proficiency to qualify for the programs and nearly 60% of students who enter college lack the math skills to major in STEM. The new Common Core standards are designed to bring more students up to STEM-ready math proficiency with math practice woven throughout all grades and a strong emphasis on modeling.

The new standards for Mathematics require that students can:

- Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them
- Reason abstractly and quantitatively
- Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
- Model with mathematics
- Use appropriate tools strategically
- Attend to precision
- Look for and make use of structure
- Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

McGraw Hill CTB

At the elementary grade levels, number sense and computation skills comprise a large and important portion of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). This item provides students with a rectangular array that models a contextual division problem. Students are then asked to model the remainder that accompanies the quotient of that problem. This not only allows an inference to be made about students' mastery of the content standard (4.NBT.6) but also provides evidence regarding students' mastery of modeling with mathematics, one of the Standards for Mathematical Practice.

1. A seafood market sells clams in bags of 8. A local fisherman delivers 92 clams to the market. The model below shows the number of full bags of clams the market can sell.
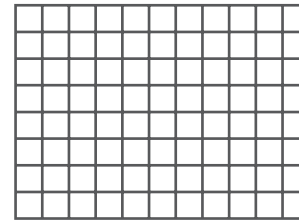
Which of these shows the remainder that should be included with the model above?

A ▢

B ▢▢

C ▢▢▢

D ▢▢▢▢

6 *Mathematics*

A key concept in number sense and computation is demonstrating equivalency by representing numbers or operations in multiple ways. This item requires students to write several equations comprised of fractions that sum to a given number (4.NF.3b). This item helps to place students on the learning trajectory for computation by providing multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery of the construct by differentiating among students who can determine 1, 2, 3 (or 0) different ways to model a sum for the given fraction.

2. Use the boxes below to write 3 different equations whose sum is equal to $\frac{5}{6}$.

$$\frac{\square}{\square} + \frac{\square}{\square} = \frac{5}{6}$$

$$\frac{\square}{\square} + \frac{\square}{\square} = \frac{5}{6}$$

$$\frac{\square}{\square} + \frac{\square}{\square} + \frac{\square}{\square} = \frac{5}{6}$$

7 *Mathematics*

This represents a typical mathematics performance task found in CoreLink. It is comprised of several related constructed-response sections, each of which aligns to a single Common Core standard and comes with an associated rubric. Some sections may align to the same Common Core standard. Rubrics are each scored separately; students are not penalized for applying incorrect answers from one section to subsequent sections of the performance task. In addition, the sections of the performance task are scaffolded in order to provide all students an equitable starting point for demonstrating their mathematical knowledge. This page shows the stimulus of the performance task, which provides the context upon which all sections are based and around which all questions are asked.

3. Gilbert planted many different seeds in his garden. As he planted them, he noticed how the seeds for different plants were many different shapes and sizes. He decided to keep one of each kind of seed for further study.

Gilbert recorded the length of ten seeds in the table below.

SEED MEASUREMENTS

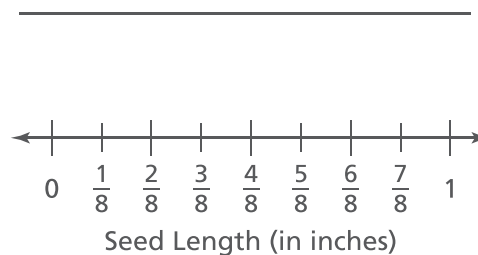| Seed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Size in Inches	$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{7}{8}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{3}{8}$	$\frac{1}{2}$

As noted previously, the performance task is scaffolded, so Part A is a relatively simple task; students are asked to place the provided data points on a line plot (4.MD.4). However, they are first required to convert some of the given fractions from simplest form to a common denominator (a Grade 3 Common Core standard) in order to correctly place them on the line plot. This requires more quantitative reasoning than if the data points were identical to the scale of the graph.

Part B continues the learning trajectory for 4.MD.4 by asking students to use the information from Part A to answer a comparison question. Students may solve the item by the "traditional" method of subtracting fractions, or they may use the graph they created in Part A, or they may use any mathematically viable method that results in a correct answer. This open-endedness in the solution method allows students to demonstrate their understanding of the construct in the way that makes the most sense to them.

PART A

Complete the line plot below to represent the data in the table.

SEED MEASUREMENTS

$$0 \quad \frac{1}{8} \quad \frac{2}{8} \quad \frac{3}{8} \quad \frac{4}{8} \quad \frac{5}{8} \quad \frac{6}{8} \quad \frac{7}{8} \quad 1$$

Seed Length (in inches)

PART B

What is the difference in size, in inches, between Gilbert's largest seed and his smallest seed? Show your work in the space below. Write your answer on the line.

Show your work.

*Answer*_____inches

9 *Mathematics*

Evaluating your assessment options

At the time of writing, the consortia have not yet developed their assessment offerings, and even after they have published their assessments, states and districts can choose other vendors to develop their Core curriculum-compliant tests.

Norm-referenced tests will play a significant role in the Common Core environment. At this time, only one assessment development company—CTB/McGraw-Hill—is ready with its norm-referenced assessment, *TerraNova* Common Core, as well as with several Core-ready products.

How CTB/McGraw-Hill can jumpstart your Common Core program

Gone are the days of cramming, memorizing, and teaching to the test, when test items mapped to a single standard and multiple-choice items were expected to be a true measure of mastery.

The new Common Core assessment requirements measure critical thinking, problem solving, and 21st century skills. They are aligned not just to factual knowledge, but to the requirements of college and a successful career. Naturally these new standards will require new types of assessments. Here are some examples of Common Core-ready assessments you can purchase today.
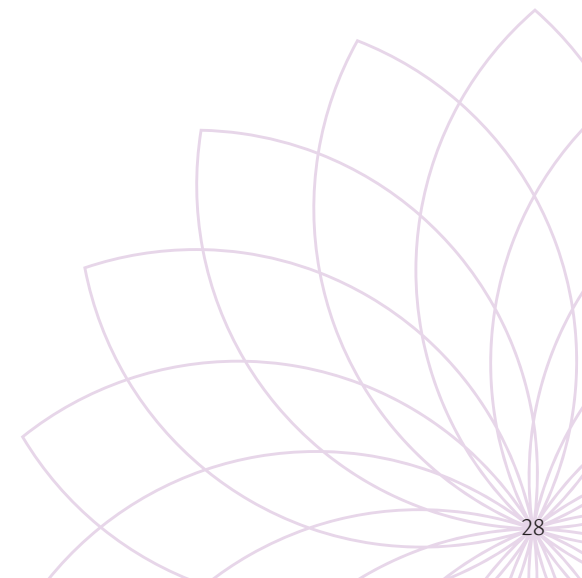
TERRA**NOVA**³
Common Core

The most respected, valid, and innovative national achievement test on the market just raised the bar. *TerraNova* Common Core is an authentic measure of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). These new standards are rigorous, benchmarked, and require students to show, demonstrate, and produce their work. Students must receive partial credit for partial understanding of knowledge and skills identified in a standard, which is beyond the ability of a multiple-choice test. As districts transition to the Common Core they are realizing more and more that to allow students to produce their work, and receive partial credit, their assessment must offer new, innovative items such as constructed-response, extended constructed-response, technology enhanced, and performance tasks. *TerraNova* Common Core stands alone — it offers all of these item types in the same test, on the same scale. Gain early insight, ease your transition to Common Core , partner with CTB.

TerraNova Common Core offers constructed-response, extended constructed-response, and performance task items in the same test, on the same scale. No other national achievement test developed to date offers this combination, all in a single test book.

Results are available within seven days or less, and reports are designed to show administrators, students, and teachers where they stand on both national and the Common Core standards today and over time. *TerraNova* Common Core is the only field-tested, valid, and authentic measure of the CCSS currently available to districts today.

Use *TerraNova* Common Core to familiarize your teachers and students with the new, more challenging test item types, to conduct early benchmarks, and to get an early start on your transition plan.

McGraw Hill CTB

⊚ ACUITY® | COMMON CORE

Acuity InFormative Assessment™ System supports interim/benchmark assessment and a process of formative assessment. Acuity informs teaching and improves student learning with new diagnostic assessments and components aligned to the CCSS. By tracking student progress, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and targeting instruction, Acuity is the total package for accelerating learning and achievement throughout the school year.

The system includes:

- Assessments
- Reports
- Instructional resources
- Professional development
- Community
- Substantial resources

Use Acuity to build your own custom and performance assessments for deeper insights into student understanding of important classroom content. Reports provide detailed performance data at the student, class, school, and district levels and enable targeted instruction to individual students to who need additional practice.

Now Acuity delivers innovative resources for Grades K–12 that support your gradual and effective transition to teaching and learning relative to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

The new editions of Acuity acquaint both students and educators with the increased rigor of Common Core item types and assessments, and include a critical instructional component that provides instructional resources aligned to the Common Core . Acuity for the Common Core incorporates a "through-course" assessment model with assessments in Grades 3–8 that measure curriculum after specific intervals of instruction are delivered: 25 percent, 50 percent, 75 percent, and 90 percent. This solution also supports the creation of custom assessments using a Common Core -aligned item bank and item authoring tools. By using Acuity for the Common Core across the 3–12 grade span, educators can gain rapid insight into curriculum continuity and efficacy within the context of Common Core standards. Acuity for the Common Core integrates assessment items that measure students' performance in light of college- and career-readiness. Assessments also promote better understanding and application of important skills related to communication, teamwork, and technology.

CoreLink™
SERVICES

CoreLink Services provides a set of custom solutions developed specifically from the Common Core. They can be used to supplement the current state summative assessment with an anchor-audit set of items to test progress and validate readiness for the new assessments. The CoreLink Services item bank offers technology-enhanced items that educators can leverage in their online and adaptive testing solutions.

CoreLink items are:

- Psychometrically sound
- Include speaking, listening, writing, reading, language, and mathematics content for Grades 3–8
- Provide defensible, reliable, cost-effective reporting of student progress toward the Common Core

In addition to the new item bank, CoreLink Services also offers research and professional development services to complement the program. This includes professional development services to help students utilize test information to inform instruction, item development workshops, training on how to score performance tasks, and more.

Use CoreLink as a standalone item bank and set of services, or pair it with an existing state test to provide a reliable, valid, and comprehensive overview of student progress. For those states not quite ready to implement these item types, CoreLink Services also offers multiple-choice items that can complement existing tests.

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LAS Links Language Assessments

As classroom populations grow more culturally and ethnically diverse, so do your educational and assessment needs—especially the need to measure language as it relates to classroom learning for K–adults. The all-new Las Links is the world's most advanced suite of English and Spanish English Language Proficiency tools available—an integrated system of assessment, instructional placement, instructional guidance, and support for all English language learners.

This complete system includes a year's worth of diagnostic assessment and teaching tools designed to help promote language literacy so every child can succeed in further education, and in his or her chosen career. These materials can be used separately or in combination to create a solution that meets your needs.

No other language proficiency products are as comprehensive and powerful for placement, progress tracking, and curriculum planning for ELL students. LAS Links helps educators:

- Quickly and accurately place incoming students with the LAS Links Placement Test
- Measure Spanish language proficiency with LAS Links Español
- Monitor student progress with LAS Links Benchmark Assessments
- Build teacher skills using LAS Links Staff Development DVDs and Training Audio CDs
- Augment curriculum with LAS Links Instruction Guidance that is grade- and proficiency-level appropriate

CTB has taken the extra steps to align LAS Links test items to Common Core State Standards. While students are improving their language proficiency, they are also getting practice in answering the unique types of test questions required by Common Core including:

- **Performance tasks** help uncover deeper levels of student understanding
- **Technology-enhanced items** and assessments to provide instant feedback to support students in moving steadily towards achievement
- **Extended constructed-response items** to measure skills that are difficult to assess with traditional multiple-choice items
- **Writing items** that improve students' essay writing skills

Writing ROADMAP™

Inspire writing excellence

Written response items are now mandated by Common Core guidelines, but in many schools writing instruction has been slashed from the curricula. Writing Roadmap helps teachers fill this knowledge gap efficiently with a set of essay-writing exercises designed to challenge and inspire students to learn to write better essays.

Writing Roadmap is a state-of-the-art online assessment solution that helps your students improve their essay-writing skills, while allowing teachers to spend less time grading and more time teaching. Writing Roadmap provides students and teachers with instant feedback on writing assignments, including automatic scoring, instructional guidance, and robust reporting.

Innovative instructional tools in Writing Roadmap provide students with continuous support throughout the writing process, so they can immediately improve their writing.

Use Writing Roadmap to bolster your students' essay-writing skills. Give them the best possible chance to excel at the new written test items. In addition, Writing Roadmap's tools will help prepare students for the GED® Test, SAT, and ACT and complement CTB's other assessment solutions, including *TerraNova*, Third Edition, TABE, LAS Links, and Acuity.

Major score increases on state tests with Writing Roadmap

A 2007 study, "Online Writing Assessment in West Virginia," found consistent and statistically significant positive mean score differences on the state summative writing tests for students who practiced using Writing Roadmap software.

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How will you get from here to Core?

Even if you're off to a relatively slow start.
Even if your funds are extremely limited.
Even if you encounter resistance, unexpected roadblocks or setbacks, more resources are being added every day, including grants you may qualify for, online guidance, teacher development resources, workshops, and more.

One good place to start is with a free consultation with CTB-McGraw- Hill. Call us to discuss how you can make the most direct progress towards your Core Curriculum goals.

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Planning your journey

1. *Assuming that your state has completed its transitional planning (see page 1), all districts and schools should have three plans to reference:*

- A professional development plan for teachers
- A plan for changing or originating curriculum guides and other instructional materials
- A plan for revising teacher evaluation systems

Familiarize yourself with these plans and lead the initiative to implement these plans.

If your state does not currently have these plans in place, there are still things you can do to move your district or school's progress to the next steps.

2. *Become the expert*

- Read about what other districts are doing (see links at the end of this chapter).
- Introduce yourself to your state's Common Core Team and volunteer to help.
- Download the Common Core Implementation Workbook, read it, and share it with other educators.

Once your state plans are in place, your path ahead will become clearer, and, because you prepared yourself for the coming changes, you will be many steps ahead of other educators, ready to lead the necessary change.

3. *Become familiar with the new types of test items required by Common Core, including performance tasks, technology-enhanced items, extended constructed-response items, and writing-based items.*

CTB/McGraw-Hill has already developed Core-ready test items you can try out with teachers and targeted groups of students.

These new test types will become more familiar as you work with them, and will suggest new classroom strategies to better prepare students for the tasks ahead. The sooner you become fluent in Common Core best practices, the easier your transition will be.
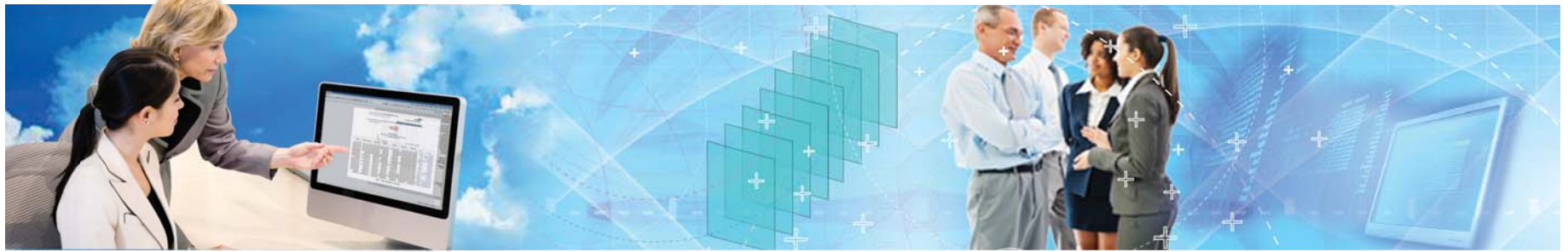
After planning, what comes next?

Here are some of the top-line tasks to add to your plan between now and the implementation of Common Core assessments in 2014-15. Having the big-picture view of the tasks ahead will help you allocate resources, create teams that share a common vision, and make strides towards full implementation.

- **Budget development** to determine how much money is needed for essentials such as training, communications, technology, assessments, consulting, reporting, etc.

- **Gap analysis** to determine how close, or far, your students are from the knowledge they need under the new standards

- **Team building** to assemble a guiding coalition of outside experts and an internal leadership team

- **Communications planning** to enlist the support of all the stakeholders and keep them in the loop

- **Writing of instructional materials,** including pilot items and tasks, to align with Common Core and comply with bias and sensitivity guidelines

- **Educator training** in the new, core curriculum, including methods of teaching that prepare students for the new types of assessment items to come

- **Transition technology** to reinforce current technology infrastructure and become familiar with technology-based assessment processes

- **Transition assessments** to familiarize teachers and students with the new types of test items beyond multiple-choice. To prepare your staff early, use CTB-McGraw-Hill Common Core-aligned assessments as examples of what's to come. See pages 29-33 for descriptions of Common Core-ready assessments you can purchase now

- **Transition accountability and data reporting system** to prepare teachers and administrators with after-test report submission procedures and understand how to read, interpret, and report results

- **Alignment of teacher preparation, evaluation, and licensing** to make sure all your teachers are ready to teach to the new curriculum, are familiar with the different assessment item types, and possess the necessary credentials

- **Higher education transitioning** to assure that all students know their options for higher education and understand that their school has prepared them for this track if they wish to pursue it

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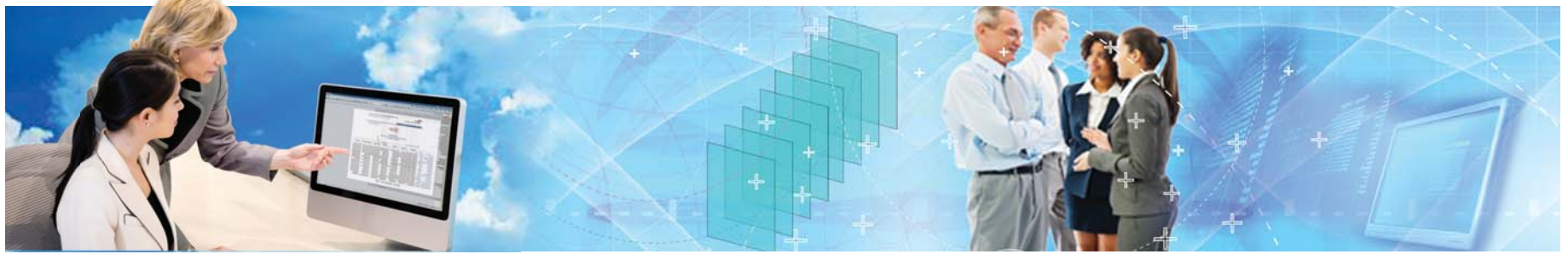
Services you may need as you move forward

Item Bank

CoreLink Services is a cost-effective, comprehensive solution to help you ease the transition to Common Core State Standards (CCSS). It includes a new item bank that aligns to the Common Core, and a wide array of professional development and psychometric services to help you build a bridge from your existing standards to the Common Core State Standards. Use the item bank to determine which students are on track to meet the new standards, where gaps may exist, and how they can be addressed.

- Ease the transition to Common Core assessments
- Gain early insight into student proficiency on the Common Core
- Quickly assess higher-order thinking skills
- Get accurate, reliable data to inform instruction

Developed for Grades 3–8, the CoreLink item bank features comprehensive, innovative, rigorous items that measure the skills students need to compete in college and the workplace, including:

- Speaking
- Listening
- Reading
- Language
- Mathematics

Professional Development Services

- An introduction to the Common Core and item exemplars
- Guidance on how to "unpack" the standards, and inform instruction and interim assessments
- Item development workshops for all item types, with associated rubrics
- Handscoring opportunities that illustrate how items and rubrics measure the Common Core State Standards
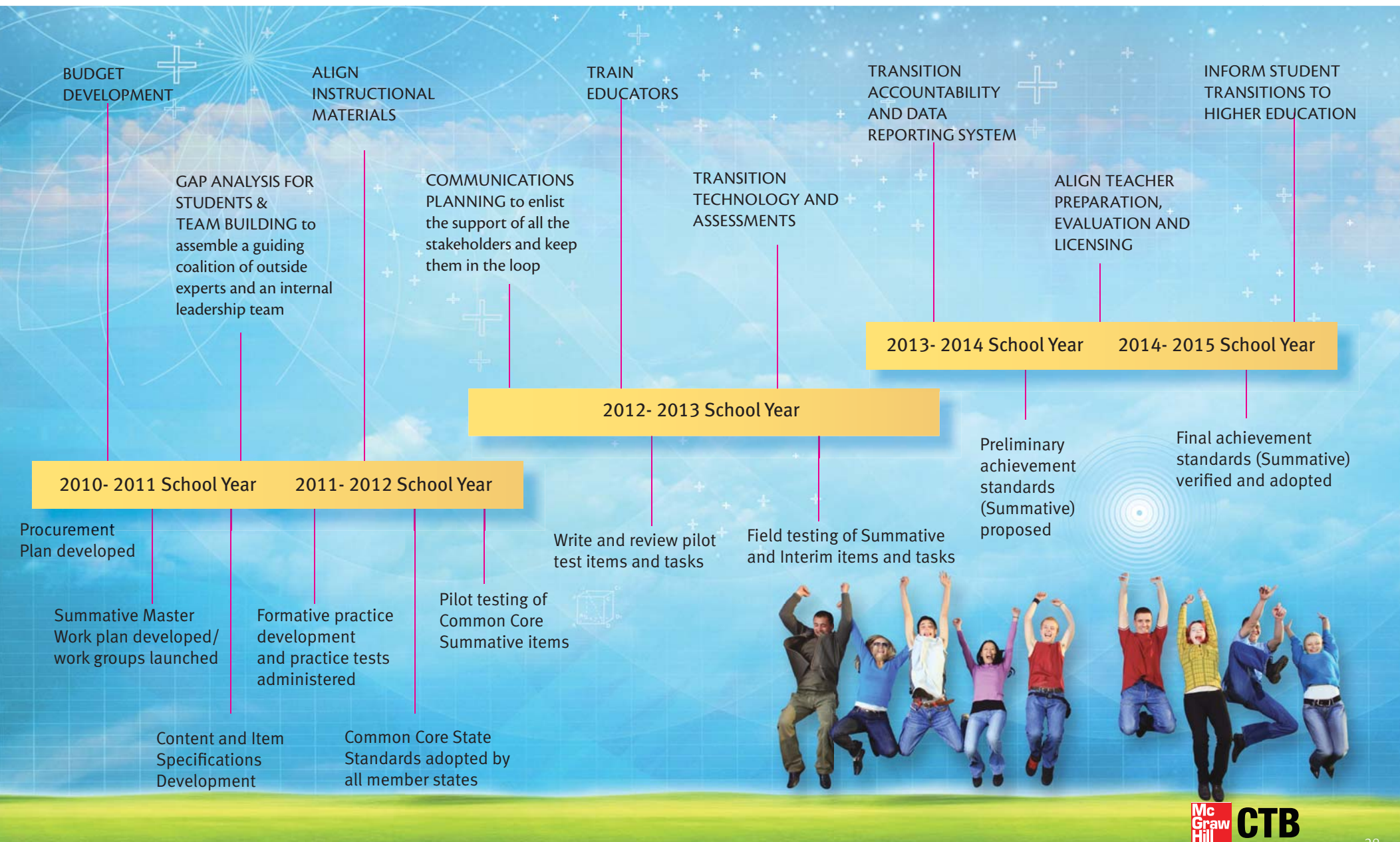
Psychometric Services

CoreLink Services adheres to the highest technical standards and leverages the most current innovations in measurement methodology. The result is a comprehensive, high quality item bank that meets rigorous psychometric standards. This ensures reliable and valid results that accurately measure student performance relative to the Common Core. These services include:

- A test blueprint/cognitive rigor evaluation
- Field testing of content reflecting the new standards
- Linking studies
- Customized reporting

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Place yourself on the timeline

BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

ALIGN INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

TRAIN EDUCATORS

TRANSITION ACCOUNTABILITY AND DATA REPORTING SYSTEM

INFORM STUDENT TRANSITIONS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

GAP ANALYSIS FOR STUDENTS & TEAM BUILDING to assemble a guiding coalition of outside experts and an internal leadership team

COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING to enlist the support of all the stakeholders and keep them in the loop

TRANSITION TECHNOLOGY AND ASSESSMENTS

ALIGN TEACHER PREPARATION, EVALUATION AND LICENSING

2013- 2014 School Year   2014- 2015 School Year

2012- 2013 School Year

2010- 2011 School Year   2011- 2012 School Year

Preliminary achievement standards (Summative) proposed

Final achievement standards (Summative) verified and adopted

Procurement Plan developed

Write and review pilot test items and tasks

Field testing of Summative and Interim items and tasks

Summative Master Work plan developed/ work groups launched

Formative practice development and practice tests administered

Pilot testing of Common Core Summative items

Content and Item Specifications Development

Common Core State Standards adopted by all member states

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In Summary

Common Core State Standards are a new set of rigorous academic standards developed by participating state educators to set the foundation for greater student growth and success. Grounded in research and evidence, they specify K–12 expectations for college and career readiness to assure all high school graduates are ready to succeed in their lives ahead.

By 2014, states enrolled in the SMARTER Balanced Consortia (SBAC) and the Partnership for Assessment Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) are expected to launch their new curriculum and assessment programs. The assessments being developed by the Common Core assessment consortia will include new types of item types that test deeper levels of mastery than simple multiple-choice items can test. These new item type requirements, in addition to innovative delivery systems, will provide firm evidence of student knowledge and skills to support valid inferences about their progress toward college and career readiness.

Use CTB/McGraw-Hill Common Core-ready assessments throughout your transition plan to accelerate your progress towards the 2014 deadline.

TERRANOVA³ Common Core

ACUITY COMMON CORE

CoreLink SERVICES

LAS Links Language Assessments

For questions about CTB solutions and services, please call 800.538.9547 or visit CTB.com.

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Resources

Glossary of Common Core State Standards terms

Consortia

High-order skills

Evidence-based

Benchmarks

Summative assessments

Interim assessments

Formative assessments

Performance tasks

Technology-enhanced items

Extended constructed-response items

Writing items

Link summary

This link has videos from different states commenting on Common Core:

www.corestandards.org/voices-of-support

Myths v. Facts About the Common Core State Standards:

www.corestandards.org/assets/CoreFacts.pdf

YouTube presentation on Common Core:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=jxefsLG2eps&list=UUF0pa3nE3aZAfBMT8pqM5PA&index=2&feature=plcp

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Resources

(Links Summary cont'd.)

American Association of School Librarians (AASL) Common Core Crosswalk

www.ala.org/aasl/guidelinesandstandards/commoncorecrosswalk/english-languagearts1

American Association of School Librarians (AASL) Lesson Plan Database

www.aasl.jesandco.org/

Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSS)

www.corestandards.org/

McGraw-Hill Education

www.commoncoresolutions.com/resources.php

STATE EXAMPLES:

New Jersey ASCD, for example, has created a Common Core Portal where educators can access Common Core resources and share best practices in instruction, curriculum, and assessment. Meanwhile, Utah has thought critically about the new standards' implications for course offerings and sequencing. After determining that the math standards require an in-depth, integrated way of teaching the subject, the state will combine concepts such as algebra, geometry, and statistics into three new courses (Math 1, 2, and 3) at the high school level.

"It truly is a revolutionary time in educational measurement and assessment. The changing infrastructure in schools, the widespread adoption of new technologies, and the drive for reform are paving the way for exciting and important new thinking. We welcome the introduction of the Common Core State Standards into schools. They really do clarify what students should know and do in order to demonstrate college- and career-readiness. Our role is to be true to those standards and to translate them into high quality next-generation assessments."

Ellen Haley, President, CTB/McGraw-Hill

McGraw Hill CTB

HELP THE TEACHER HELP THE CHILD