

COMMON CORE

An Introductory Guide
to Implementing the
**COMMON CORE
STATE STANDARDS**

101

Sadlier School eBook Series

Common Core Quiz	1
What are the Common Core State Standards?	2
How do the Standards invite educators to make shifts in instruction?	4
How can we begin to implement or refine our CCSS implementation?	5
How will these Standards affect the state end-of-year tests?	6
What general resources can I access to support my implementation?	7

Common Core 101 is part of a free series of eBooks from Sadlier School that aims to support educators as they prepare their students for college and careers using the Common Core State Standards.

Dig deeper into Common Core for Mathematics and English Language Arts with our **Common Core 201** eBooks.

COMMON CORE 101 QUIZ

Do you know all the Common Core basics? Take this quiz and find out.
Get eight or more correct and you're ready for our **Common Core 201** eBooks.

1. Common Core State Standards provide direction on how to attain grade-level goals. **True / False**
2. Common Core State Standards establish _____
so students are ready for college and their careers.
3. When will Common Core State Standards be officially assessed?
 - A. hasn't been determined yet
 - B. 2013-14 school year
 - C. 2014-15 school year
 - D. 2015-16 school year
4. Who developed the Standards?
 - A. National Governors Association
 - B. Council of Chief State School Officers
 - C. U.S. Department of Education
 - D. Parents, Educators, Experts, and others
 - E. all of the above
 - F. A, B, D
5. Content Standards...
 - A. define what should be happening in the classroom
 - B. are organized by ELA and Mathematics Standards
 - C. define what students should be able to do at the end of each grade level
 - D. A & B
 - E. B & C
 - F. all of the above
6. How many Shifts are there for each content area? _____
7. Name the Shifts for your content area. _____

8. Implementation of the Standards will take several years and should be used as the foundations for instruction. **True / False**
9. States can create their own high-quality assessments to evaluate Common Core State Standards. **True / False**
10. Consortium Assessments will be administered and completed via paper and pencil. **True / False**

Answers on page 8.

COMMON CORE 101

WHAT ARE THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS?

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) provide globally competitive benchmarks for:

Mathematics

English Language Arts (ELA) & Literacy

- Reading
- Writing
- Speaking and Listening
- Language



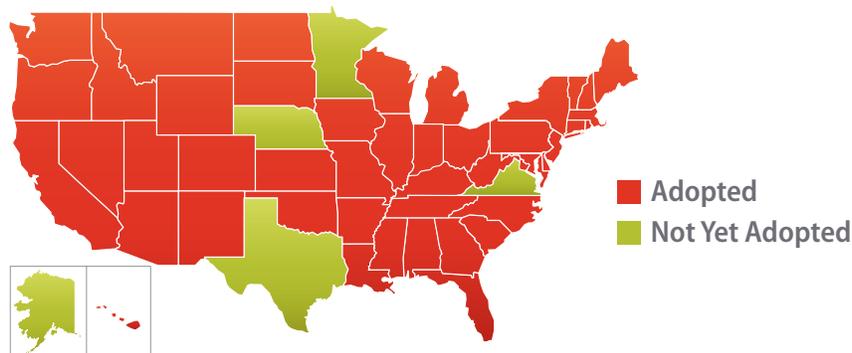
Common Core State Standards:

- Replace education goals that varied widely from state to state
- Establish consensus around a national baseline for college and career readiness
- Focus on rigorous core academic content mastery along with competencies like critical thinking, reasoning, communication and collaboration
- Provide grade-level goals, not explicit direction or “the how” to attain them



Who does this affect?

The 45 states, Minnesota (ELA only), the District of Columbia, the four U.S. territories, and the Department of Defense Education Activity, which adopted them.



What's the timeline?

CCSS were released in June 2010.

Common Core Assessments will officially begin in the 2014–15 school year.



COMMON CORE 101



Who created the Standards?

The Standards development was a voluntary, state-led initiative. The National Governors Association and Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) were joined by parents, educators, content experts, researchers, national organizations like National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), and community groups from forty-eight states, two territories, and the District of Columbia in the development of the Standards.

What were the guiding principles for the development of the Standards?

The primary guiding principles ensured the Standards would:

1. Be informed by extensive research and evidence
2. Incorporate the best of previous state standards while having fewer, clearer, and higher ones
3. Reflect the experience and expertise of teachers, knowledge of content experts, and reasoning of leading thinkers and incorporate public feedback
4. Be internationally benchmarked to the top performing nations, rigorous, and relevant to the real world
5. Contain rigorous content with applications of knowledge through higher-order skills
6. Make instruction more effective so all students can achieve the goal of college and career readiness and are prepared for success upon high school graduation

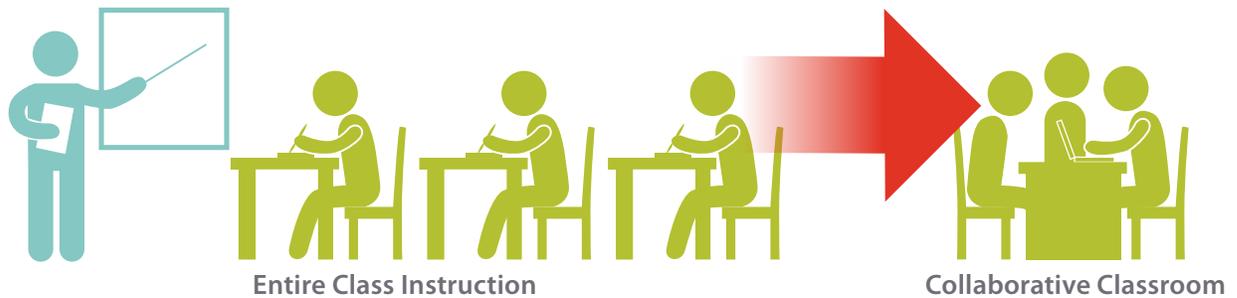
How are the Standards organized?

There are Standards for English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics. Each have Content Standards that define what students should be able to do at the end of each grade level.

Mathematics also includes the **Standards for Mathematical Practice**, which identify the process standards that should become habits of mind for students when applying mathematics in the real world. You can learn more about these in our *Common Core 201: Math eBook*.

In order to implement these Standards, there must be shifts in instruction. Three Shifts each for ELA and math define what should be happening in the classroom (learn more on page 4).

HOW DO THE STANDARDS INVITE EDUCATORS TO MAKE SHIFTS IN INSTRUCTION?



The CCSS are fewer, clearer, as rigorous—and in many cases, more rigorous—than previous standards. As we move away from what has been essentially a teacher-centric classroom instructional approach to a more collaborative classroom where teachers work as facilitators and students are more active participants in the learning process, we are faced with a shift that will be pedagogically monumental.

With support from administrators, professional development, and appropriate resources, educators are charged with:

- Bringing the new Standards into the classroom
- Aligning the way students learn with the new Standards
- Translating the shifts into effective classroom instruction

There are fundamental differences between what was done in the past and what is required by the Common Core. These differences are evident in the **three primary shifts** you are required to make.

Mathematics

1. **Focus** strongly where the Standards focus
2. **Coherence: Think** across grades and **link** to major topics within grades
3. **Rigor:** In major topics, pursue **conceptual understanding**, procedural skill and **fluency**, and **application** with equal intensity

English Language Arts

1. **Building knowledge** through **content-rich nonfiction and informational texts**
2. Reading, writing and speaking grounded in **evidence from text**, both literary and informational
3. Regular practice with **complex text** and its **academic vocabulary**

COMMON CORE 101

HOW CAN WE BEGIN TO IMPLEMENT OR REFINE OUR CCSS IMPLEMENTATION?

As educators, we know that making real changes in the classroom is serious work. The CCSS are not self-implementing. Careful consideration of the Standards and how they will impact what is done in the classroom is a process that takes time. Full implementation of CCSS will take several years and will occur in the context of a continuous learning process.

As you begin your classroom implementation or focus on continuous improvement, review the Standards, and consider how to best drive achievement. The following steps may help you attain success through your focused efforts:

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

1. Use the Standards as foundations for instruction.
2. Identify 3–5 difficult texts for close reading and careful attention.
3. Work on developing text-dependent questions for reading and writing tasks.
4. Identify non-fiction texts in your classroom to achieve the appropriate balance (e.g. 50/50 split of literary and informational texts).
5. Access resources and collaborate with peers in your school, district, state, and across states.

MATHEMATICS

1. Use the Standards as foundations for instruction.
2. Have students take on a more active role in the learning process.
3. Require students to always explain and justify their solutions.
4. Use multiple representations to help students visualize and conceptualize math.
5. Access resources and collaborate with peers in your school, district, state, and across states.

HOW WILL THESE STANDARDS AFFECT THE STATE END-OF-YEAR TESTS?

Two consortia of states were awarded the U.S. Department of Education's Race to the Top funds to develop high-quality common assessments of the Common Core State Standards—the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC).

By adopting the Common Core State Standards, states had to agree to choose from three options for assessing these Standards:

1. Use assessments from PARCC
2. Use assessments developed by SBAC
3. Create their own high-quality assessment

The new assessments will differ from traditional state assessments in the following ways:

- Assessments will be administered and completed online.*
- Student assessment results will be delivered more quickly so educators can monitor progress and differentiate instruction.
- There's not just one assessment option to assess student mastery of the Standards. SBAC provides educators with three optional interim assessments and PARCC provides two optional benchmark assessments to be administered throughout the year.
- The Standards AND the Shifts are guiding the development of the assessments.

Smarter Balanced's assessments are to be computer adaptive with questions that change depending on how students respond, which is the main difference between the PARCC and SBAC assessments.

*A paper and pencil version of the PARCC assessment will be made available for students who require certain accommodations.

COMMON CORE 101

WHAT GENERAL RESOURCES CAN I ACCESS TO SUPPORT MY IMPLEMENTATION?

For the College and Career Readiness Standards and the Common Core State Standards in Mathematics and English Language Arts and Literacy, go to:

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

For information about the next generation of assessments from PARCC, go to:

Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)

<http://www.parcconline.org/>

For information about the next generation of assessments from SBAC, go to:

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/>

Achieve—Three new CCSS Implementation Action Briefs (Dec. 2012) targeted to provide role-specific guidance and support to elementary and secondary school leaders and school counselors. <http://www.achieve.org/publications>

Council of the Great City Schools—This consortium of the nation's largest, most diverse school districts offers a plethora of CCSS resources for educators, families, and communities. <http://www.cgcs.org/Page/239>

EngageNY/New York—Materials for teachers and teams, videos of classroom application <http://www.engageny.org/video-library>

Achieve The Core—Guidance and templates on how to begin implementing the shifts, assembled by the nonprofit Student Achievement Partners.

<http://www.achievethecore.org>

EduCore—ASCD is supporting a free digital tool to assist educators ushering in changes and strategies for implementation of the Common Core State Standards.

<http://educore.ascd.org/>

Understanding Language—This project aims to heighten educator awareness of the critical role that language plays in the new Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards. The long-term goal of the initiative is to increase recognition that learning the language of each academic discipline is essential to learning content. <http://ell.stanford.edu/>

The Mathematics Common Core Toolbox—Designed to support districts working to meet the challenge and the opportunity of the new Standards, this site provides tools and instructional materials that help educators better understand and implement the Math Standards. <http://www.ccsstoolbox.com>

ANSWERS COMMON CORE 101

1. Common Core State Standards provides direction on how to attain grade-level goals.
False, CCSS provide grade-level goals, not explicit direction or “the how” to attain them.
2. Common Core State Standards establish _____ so students are ready for college and their careers. **One or all of the below:**
Globally competitive benchmarks
Consensus around a national baseline
Grade-level goals for Math & ELA K-12
3. When will Common Core State Standards be officially assessed?
C. 2014-15 school year officially, though some states have started assessing the Standards.
4. Who developed the Standards?
F. A, B, D; The National Governors Association and Council of Chief State School Officers were joined by parents, educators, content experts, researchers, national organizations like NCTE and NCTM, and community groups from forty-eight states, two territories, and the District of Columbia in the development of the Standards.
5. Content Standards
E. B & C; Content Standards are organized by ELA and Mathematics Standards and define what students should be able to do at the end of each grade level. The Shifts define what should be happening in the classroom.
6. How many Shifts are there for each content area?
Three, though they have been broken into six Shifts. The important thing is you cover all the points mentioned in the next question.
7. Name the Shifts for your content area.

Math Focus strongly where the Standards focus Coherence: Think across grades and link to major topics within grades Rigor: In major topics, pursue conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and application with equal intensity	ELA Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction and informational texts Reading, writing and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational Regular practice with complex text and its academic vocabulary
---	---
8. Implementation of the Standards will take several years and should be used as the foundations for instruction.
True
9. States can create their own high-quality assessments to evaluate Common Core State Standards.
True, or they may use assessments from Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) or the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC).
10. Consortium Assessments will be administered and completed via paper and pencil.
False, Consortium Assessments will be administered and completed online. In fact, SBAC assessments are computer adaptive with questions that change depending on how students respond.