

Capture the Core



Eighth Grade

Prototype Common Core Assessment Items Are Out and Ready for Review

A Publication of the
Illinois State Board of
Education Statewide
System of Support
Content Specialists

October 2012

Sneaking a Peak

Item and task prototypes have recently been released from PARCC, Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers. This is the multi state consortium which will be guiding the creation of the Common Core Assessments that will replace the current ISAT tests in 2014 - 2015. The online prototypes found on the PARCC website are designed to guide educators on the importance of content of the standards in the future technology-based assessments.

What follows is an excerpt from the PARCC website concerning the released items.

PARCC Item and Task Prototypes

The primary purpose of sharing item and task prototypes is to provide information and to support educators as they transition to the CCSS and the PARCC assessments. The dynamic, online prototypes presented on the PARCC website are

designed to shine a light on important elements of the CCSS and to show how critical content in the standards may be manifested on PARCC's next-generation, technology-based assessments.

The PARCC sample items and tasks can and should be viewed as one of the many types of materials educators can use during the transition to the CCSS and PARCC.



In addition to educators, students and parents may also find the sample items and tasks to be a useful resource for learning more about the CCSS and how state assessments may appear in the future.

The prototypes provided to date represent just a beginning to the complement of

items and tasks that will be shared over time to represent the full range of assessment tasks that will be included on actual PARCC assessments beginning in 2014-2015. Additional prototypes and rubrics will be added over the coming months to paint a more complete picture of the PARCC assessment design in each content area and grade level

The PARCC sample items and tasks can and should be viewed as one of the many types of materials educators can use during the transition to the CCSS and PARCC.

parcconline.org

To view the sample items, go to: <http://www.parcconline.org/> and click on **Item and Task Prototypes**. The sample links are about half way down the page.

Inside this issue:	
Data and Assessment	1
English Language Arts	2
Mathematics	3
Learning Supports	4
Web Resources	4

Informational Text: Are They Really Reading?

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

Two-Column Notes

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

1. Students divide their paper into two columns with a 1-2 ratio.
2. Mark the columns with the appropriate headings.
3. Model for students the procedure
4. Record notes on the left side of the graphic organizer.
5. After recording notes, teachers can have students respond, clarify or summarize their notes by drawing, writing, or asking questions.

An example of this strategy and additional strategies can be found at the following website:

<http://teacherresourcecatalog.pwnet.org/docs/Reading%20Strategies%20for%20Content%20Teachers.pdf>



Common Core ELA Standard #1 in 8th Grade

English Language Arts

RI.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

With... autobiographies, essays, opinion pieces, memoirs, songs, and more.

Science and Technical Subjects

T.8.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of **science and technical texts**.

With... tables, graphs, charts, health articles, lab reports, welding manuals, "how to" books, and more

History and Social Studies

HS.8.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of **primary and secondary sources**.

With... letters, photographs, maps, charts, tables, graphs, political cartoon, articles and more.

Digital Literacy in the Classroom

The Common Core State Standards addresses digital literacy in a variety of standards. Writing standard #6 expects 8th grade students to

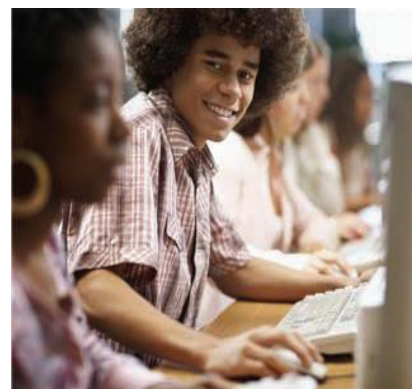
"Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as wells to interact and collaborate with others"

There are a number of websites with free digital tools. Check these out.:

<http://catlintucker.com/2012/05/10-tech-tools-to-effectively-teach-the-common-core-standards-english-math/>

http://commoncore.org/maps/resources/digital_resources

www.cooltoolsforschools.wikispaces.com

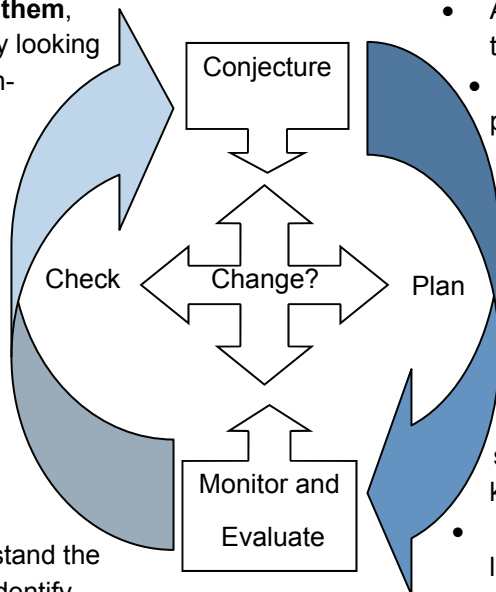


Focus on Standard for Mathematical Practice 1

The first Practice Standard, **Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them**, requires students to start a problem by looking for entry points and explaining to themselves the meaning of the problems. Students need to make conjectures, plan a pathway (rather than jumping in), monitor their progress and change course when necessary. When students finish a problem they need to check using a different method or representation (consider equations, verbal descriptions, tables, graphs or diagrams) and then ask themselves,

Does this answer make sense?

Proficient students should also understand the approaches of others and be able to identify correspondences between different approaches.



How do I encourage MP1?

- Ask what information they need and how to start.
- Provide ample wait time through out a problem allowing students to go down a variety of paths.
- Have students reflect on how a problem relates to previous work.
- Ask students to construct their own solution pathway rather than following a provided one.
- Employ problems involving ideas that are currently at the forefront of the student's developing mathematical knowledge.
- Provide students the answer to a problem and ask them to create a strategy that would lead to that answer.

Focus on Standard for Mathematical Practice 2

The second Practice Standard, **Reason abstractly and quantitatively**, requires students to make sense of quantities and relationships in problem situations. Mathematically proficient students should decontextualize and contextualize.



tion, consider units, and attend to the meaning of quantities.

Decontextualizing is taking necessary information from a given situation, representing it symbolically and treating these symbols as if they have a life of their own.

Contextualizing is pausing during the manipulation process to probe into the meaning of the symbols. Students should be able to create a coherent representa-

How do I encourage MP2?

- Have students justify their answer using a different representation.
- Have students label their answers.
- Have students write a real-life example.
- Have students explain their thinking.

- Provide students with contextual problems in which they can gain insight by relating the mathematical expressions to a given context.

It is time to recognize that standards are not just promises to our children, but promises we intend to keep.

- CCSSM, p. 5

Key Content Changes for 8th Grade

Students take their deep understanding of equivalent expressions from 7th grade to develop some of the key ideas of algebra in 8th grade. They solve linear equations fluently and solve systems of linear equations in two variables algebraically, graphically and by inspection. They understand

that systems can result in intersecting, parallel or identical lines. They construct the concept of a function as a rule that assigns exactly one output to an input.

Before Common Core, similarity, congruence and geometric transformations could be found at a variety of

grade levels. These concepts are now introduced in 8th grade.

New ideas for eighth grade:

- Pythagorean theorem
- Irrational numbers and radicals
- Integer exponents
- Cones, spheres and cylinders
- Bivariate data (arm span v height)



Comprehensive System of Learning Supports

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



WELCOME, to your second full month of the school year. And thank you, for making time to read Capture the Core despite the many demands of teaching class in full swing!

In last month's issue, you were introduced to the state-wide effort to assist each district and school in building a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports that reduces barriers to teaching and learning and continuously engages and re-engages students in the learning process. Sounds ideal, doesn't it? But, how does it happen?

A comprehensive approach works within a framework of district, school, and classroom *systems* designed to create optimal Conditions for Learning, and YOU are a part of this.

Research (and teachers' good sense) point to Conditions for Learning as fundamental to student achievement. Conditions for Learning are included among the best practice indicators representing Eight Essential Elements of Effective Education within the Illinois Continuous School Improvement Model. These indicators are listed in the *Rising Star on the Illinois Interactive Report Card* system.

Regardless of what improvement model is used in your school and district, you can help ensure that Conditions for Learning (CL) indicators remain an important part of the school improvement dialogue. How do you do this?

1. Become familiar with Conditions for Learning indicators and the research that backs them. Find a list and links at www.isbe.net/learningsupports/html/conditions.htm.
2. Create awareness in your school, among colleagues and in relation to your school improvement efforts.
3. Stay tuned to the Learning Supports Web page at www.isbe.net/learningsupports for resources and training opportunities related to Conditions for Learning.

Thank YOU for striving for optimal Conditions for Learning!

Classroom Connections

This month, let's take a closer look at just one, but a very significant, Conditions for Learning indicator:

"The environment of the school (physical, social emotional, and behavioral) is safe, welcoming, and conducive to learning." *

Note that the learning environment, or school climate, includes so much more than physical surroundings! Research proves that the nature of *interactions* among people hugely impacts student and family engagement and therefore, student achievement.

As a classroom teacher, ***you are the most important professional impacting your students' school experience.*** Teachers often create positive environments intuitively, but we know that making our efforts ***intentional*** significantly improves outcomes.

How do you foster support, respect, and high expectations in your classroom? Now is the time to set and model behavioral norms, by applying the "three Cs":

Collaboratively develop. Invite your students to add thoughtful input when determining their class norms.

Clearly communicate. Norms require learning, as do academics. *Teach* and *model* with dignity and clarity.

Consistently reinforce. Acknowledge appropriate actions, correct inappropriate responses with dignity.

Learn more about school climate by clicking "CL7" at www.isbe.net/learningsupports/html/conditions.htm.

*** Continuous School Improvement Connection:**
This best practice indicator is listed as a "Smart Start" Indicator, CL7, in the Rising Star on IIRC system.

Helpful Resources

<http://resourcesforhistoryteachers.wikispaces.com/> - features primary source, multicultural, and multimedia resources for teaching history in K-12 schools

<http://www.parconline.org/> - features the most up to date information on the progress of the assessments and the prototype items for CCSS.

<http://illustrativemathematics.org/> - provides K-12 illustrations of the range and type of work students experience in Common Core and publishes tools to support implementation

www.isbe.net/learningsupports- includes Conditions for Learning indicators and an A-Z list of topics related to specific issues that create barriers to student learning.

