



A Union of Professionals

Module Descriptions *for the* Common Core Resource Kit





A Union of Professionals

Randi Weingarten
PRESIDENT

Lorretta Johnson
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Mary Cathryn Ricker
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

OUR MISSION

The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

Copyright © American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO (AFT 2014). Permission is hereby granted to AFT state and local affiliates to reproduce and distribute copies of the work for nonprofit educational purposes, provided that copies are distributed at or below cost, and that the author, source, and copyright notice are included on each copy. Any distribution of such materials to third parties who are outside of the AFT or its affiliates is prohibited without first receiving the express written permission of the AFT.



Across the nation, teachers in most states are implementing a new set of academic standards that require different instructional approaches and strategies for reaching all learners. It is believed that these standards, which spell out a new and more rigorous understanding of what students should know and be able to do, will lead to fundamental changes in instructional practice at all grade levels.

The AFT believes that if implemented carefully and with the needed supports and resources, these new standards will help improve education for all students.

In order to address this need, the Common Core Resource Kit was developed; it is designed to provide teachers with a deeper understanding to meet this change.

Each module in the Resource Kit training is designed to last three hours and is suitable for diverse audiences. Each participant should have access to a hard copy of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts/Literacy or Mathematics and of Appendix A and B.





ELA Modules

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY OVERVIEW

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for ELA/Literacy were developed to provide clear and rigorous expectations, which progress across the grades, of what all students should know and be able to do to graduate with the literacy skills necessary to be college and career ready. Implementing the CCSS for ELA/Literacy will require major changes in teaching and learning: The text will be at the center of student learning, and students will be expected to delve deeply into complex texts and to demonstrate facility in reading, writing about and discussing that text. Teachers will need to understand well what the standards are, what instructional shifts are aligned to the standards, how to support students' progress toward mastery of the standards, and how to determine and use CCSS-aligned resources.

Participants will:

- Learn about the AFT's support of and participation in the development and implementation of the CCSS.
- Learn about the standards and the major instructional shifts inherent in instruction designed to help students meet the standards.
- Discuss CCSS-aligned resources that can help build knowledge and support implementation of the ELA standards.

UNPACKING THE COMMON CORE FOR ELA/LITERACY

The Common Core instructional shifts require that teachers have an extensive understanding of the standards and the ability to create instruction that balances student learning and application. Therefore, teachers must understand

exactly what the standards say and the components of knowledge and skill explicitly stated and/or implied in each.

Participants will:

- Understand the organization of the CCSS.
- Acquire a deeper level of knowledge of the standards.
- Learn and use a step-by-step process for “unpacking” the standards to improve student learning.
- Understand the instructional shifts inherent in the standards and implications for classroom practice.
- Turn the standards into teachable learning targets.
- Connect the Assess, Plan, Teach, Revise Model and formative assessment.

CCSS FOR ELA/LITERACY: INSTRUCTIONAL IMPLICATIONS

● **Close Reading and Questions Worth Asking**

This session is most closely aligned to support the second instructional shift: reading, writing, speaking and listening grounded in evidence from the text. Close reading is an instructional strategy through which students—regardless of their reading level—repeatedly and deeply read a short text, grapple with advanced concepts, and participate in engaging discussion. Developing and asking students a set of well-crafted, coherent, text-dependent questions is critical to building students’ knowledge from content-rich text; answering text-dependent questions requires students to examine and use evidence from the text.

Participants will:

- Understand the process and role of close reading.
- Understand what text-dependent questions are and how they support the key instructional shifts called for by the Common Core State Standards for ELA/Literacy.
- Recognize characteristics of text-dependent questions and what should be considered in order to create high-quality questions.

- Craft and evaluate text-dependent questions for a section of a complex text.

● **Text Complexity**

Complex texts are privileged in the CCSS because they are important sources of diverse vocabulary, rich language, varied syntax and world knowledge. However, while the CCSS require all students to read complex texts, this does not mean students do so without support. This module will focus on the role and implications of complex texts in teaching and learning.

Participants will:

- Develop an understanding of text complexity for both literary and informational texts.
- Understand why text complexity matters.
- Evaluate text complexity by using measures to determine the three dimensions of complexity.
- Explore instructional strategies that facilitate students' access to complex texts.

DESIGNING UNITS OF STUDY ALIGNED TO THE CCSS FOR ELA/LITERACY

While the Common Core State Standards delineate specific expectations in reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language, each standard need not be a separate focus for instruction and assessment. Rather, several standards can be addressed through a single, rich task. This session will enable participants to identify such student outcomes and to understand the essential components of developing a coherent unit of study aligned to the CCSS and to the designated student outcome.

Participants will:

- Understand the components of an instructional unit of study.
- Recognize the value of teaching the CCSS in an integrated unit.
- Evaluate the quality of the unit of study.
- Begin to develop a unit of study.





Mathematics Modules

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS FOR MATHEMATICS

It is important to get the implementation of the Common Core State Standards right. Therefore, educators must understand the shifts in teaching and emphasis for mathematics, the implications of student standards for mathematical practice on instruction, and the significance of the progressions documents, which explain and connect concepts and skill development within and across grades.

Participants will:

- Learn about the background and importance of the standards.
- Understand how the shifts in mathematics instruction will impact both teachers and students.
- Focus on what the standards for mathematical practice mean for students and teachers and see them being used in a classroom.
- Explore the progressions as pathways to college and career readiness by looking at standards and student work from one progression.

UNPACKING THE COMMON CORE FOR MATHEMATICS

The Common Core instructional shifts of focus, coherence and rigor require an extensive understanding of the standards. Working collaboratively, teachers will deepen their understanding of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics in this three-hour module.

Participants will:

- Develop or review a common understanding of the shifts required by the Common Core including mathematical practices.

- Acquire a deeper understanding of what is required of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.
 - What is mathematical understanding?
 - What are the strands of mathematical proficiency?
 - Teachers will create a roadmap for grades K-5 instruction, based on a closer reading of the progressions and standards for their level, which will allow them to see the importance of their piece in the larger flow of learning.

CCSS FOR MATHEMATICS: INSTRUCTIONAL IMPLICATIONS

There are two 1.5-hour modules that support the introduction to the Common Core mathematics standards.

The first module guides teachers to determine how closely aligned the content addressed by their texts is with the Common Core standards, an initial step before checking for coherence and rigor.

Participants will:

- Acquire knowledge on the implications of mathematics teaching and materials aligned with the Common Core State Standards.

The second module focuses on the summative assessments being created for the Common Core by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC).

Participants will:

- Discuss how these assessments differ from past assessments.
- Discuss how the assessments are scored.
- Examine PARCC performance levels.
- Discuss what children have to know and do to succeed on these assessments.

- Discuss special computer skills that may be needed.
- Discuss the implications for your teaching.

MATHEMATICS LESSON PLANNING

Students can develop surface facility without understanding. We must help them connect mathematical formalisms with other forms of knowledge. These connections hold mathematical knowledge together and facilitate retrieval and application.

Participants will:

- Understand that connections are what students need to transfer knowledge to unfamiliar situations.
- Recognize the role and levels of cognitive demand in math tasks.
- Understand the importance of helping students make connections to what they already know during lessons.
- Understand the need to think in units of instruction and not just in isolated lessons.
- Begin to create a unit outline and review a sample lesson plan for the kinds of considerations that make lessons more powerful.
- Review together the elements of a sample lesson plan for the kinds of considerations that make lessons more powerful.
- Create a lesson for the unit. (May require extra time.)





Instructional Supports

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORTS FOR THE COMMON CORE AND BEYOND: FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

The role of data literacy and summative and formative assessments in the classroom is important. Even more important is understanding which assessment methods to use, and when to use them, to gather dependable information about student achievement. Formative assessment must be very deliberate in order to be of high quality.

Participants will:

- Understand the importance of data literacy.
- Understand the importance of summative and formative assessments and how they are used.
- Apply formative assessment strategies.
- Explore effective feedback.
- Discuss the role of classroom assessments in standards-based instruction.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORTS FOR THE COMMON CORE AND BEYOND: ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

English language learners (ELLs) are the fastest growing student demographic, and they must be taken into account when the Common Core is being implemented.

Participants will:

- Learn about the supports ELLs will need to meet the CCSS.
- Learn about new roles for teachers and educators of ELLs in the era of the CCSS.
- Learn about CCSS strategies and resources for helping ELLs succeed.

- Discuss the components of a lesson plan tailored for ELLs and get information on online resources for ELLs and the Common Core.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORTS FOR THE COMMON CORE AND BEYOND: COGNITIVE COACHING

Cognitive apprenticeship is a model of instruction that works to make thinking visible. Through the cognitive apprenticeship model, we let students in on our thinking and how we do things, so they become more adept at accomplishing less-structured tasks. In order to increase student learning, we must start by identifying and analyzing the strategies we use automatically and how we turn them into conscious thoughts and explainable approaches. We then teach these strategies in an overt, deliberate, organized way. Coaching is the thread that runs throughout the model. Teacher behaviors reflect the coaching process.

Participants will:

- Understand the five elements of cognitive apprenticeship.
- Apply the cognitive apprenticeship model to the Common Core State Standards and standards-based lessons.
- Know the five essential elements of cognitive apprenticeship coaching.
- Apply paraphrasing and questioning to enhance students' social-emotional and cognitive growth.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORTS FOR THE COMMON CORE AND BEYOND: STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities must be challenged to excel within the general curriculum and be prepared for success in their post-school lives, including college and/or careers. These common standards provide a historic opportunity to improve access to rigorous academic content standards for students with disabilities. The continued development of understanding about research-based instructional practices and a focus on their effective implementation will help

improve access to mathematics and English language arts standards for all students, including those with disabilities.

Participants will:

- Identify district wide supports needed to ensure equal access to Common Core instruction for students with disabilities (SWDs).
- Examine characteristics and appropriate scaffolds for students with disabilities taught in inclusive classrooms and how they might impact and support Common Core instruction.
- Recognize the difference between an accommodation and a modification when instructing SWDs.
- Use Universal Design for Learning (UDL) as a framework for implementing a range of evidence-based strategies, appropriate accommodations and assistive technologies to include students with disabilities in Common Core instruction.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORTS FOR THE COMMON CORE AND BEYOND: DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION

Most contemporary classrooms serve students who learn at different rates, come to school with different experiences, have different interests, demonstrate different levels of motivation toward their schoolwork, represent different language groups, and learn in different ways. Yet, instruction in many classrooms overlooks these differences and treats students as though they are essentially alike. This module is designed to raise awareness of research that supports differentiation and to teach the basic components of differentiation. The goal of the module is to help teachers reflect on strengths of their current instructional practices, as well as opportunities for further growth in teaching diverse students more effectively.

Participants will:

- Identify key components of Carolyn Tomlinson's model of differentiation.
- Demonstrate differentiation using tiered lessons and choice boards.



A Union of Professionals

American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO
555 New Jersey Ave. N.W.
Washington, DC 20001
202-879-4400
www.aft.org



aft.org



[AFTunion](https://www.facebook.com/AFTunion)



[@AFTunion](https://twitter.com/AFTunion)



[AFTunion](https://www.instagram.com/AFTunion)