Scaffolding 8th Grade ELA Instruction to Facilitate Comprehension of Complex Text

Miriam M. Gregorio
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Concerns

- Middle School students have not had the benefit since Kindergarten of instruction based on Common Core standards
- Currently struggling with comprehension of complex fiction/informational text required for mastery of Common Core standards
- Responsible for mastering the benchmarks in Florida’s NGSSS and responding to assessment based on NGSSS up to 2013-2014
## Florida's Common Core State Standards Implementation Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year/Grade Level</th>
<th>K</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3-8</th>
<th>9-12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>FL</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>F L</td>
<td>F L</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>F L</td>
<td>F L</td>
<td>F L</td>
<td>B L</td>
<td>B L</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCSS fully implemented</td>
<td>F L</td>
<td>F L</td>
<td>F L</td>
<td>F L</td>
<td>F L</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**F** - full implementation of CCSS for all content areas  
**L** - full implementation of content area literacy standards including: (1) text complexity, quality and range in all grades (K-12), and (2) CCSS Literacy Standards in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (6-12)  
**B** - blended instruction of CCSS with Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS); last year of NGSSS assessed on FCAT 2.0
CCSS Implementation

- Gradual change to full CCSS implementation in K-2
  - Phased over a four year period since 2011-2012
- Increased text complexity in all content areas K-12
  - Blended instruction in 3-12 to comply with NGSSS
- Full CCSS implementation for all grades in 2014-2015

- Advantage for students in elementary grades
  - Strong educational foundation based on CCSS
- Challenges for students at the secondary level
  - Blended instruction not fully aligned to CCSS
  - Rapid transition to CCSS aligned PARCC assessment
## COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS & ASSESSMENTS TIMELINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Procurement of contractors to build formative K-8 assessment systems for reading K-8 and Mathematics K-3</td>
<td>High school grades content-level CCSS tutorials available for student use</td>
<td>Middle grades content-level CCSS tutorials available for student use</td>
<td>Elem. grades content-level CCSS tutorials available for student use</td>
<td>Teacher Quality Bill requires all districts to fully implement revised salary schedules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Coaches hired</td>
<td>Districts provide PD on CCSS</td>
<td>K-5 ELA and Mathematics instructional materials aligned to CCSS adopted</td>
<td>Florida students take CCSS-aligned PARCC Summative Assessments in math and literacy, grades 3-11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTTT Districts implement lesson study in low performing schools</td>
<td>Virtual Curriculum Marketplace live with CCSS materials</td>
<td>Professional development program for pre-service and practicing teachers implemented</td>
<td>New Teacher Cert. exams used for PreK-12 English and Math</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procurement of contractors for interim assessments</td>
<td>Student tutorial and teacher standards database implemented</td>
<td>Districts support lesson study to provide PD on CCSS</td>
<td>Formative and interim assessments available</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procurement of contractors to build student tutorial and teacher standards database tool</td>
<td>Study on quality, density and complexity of instructional materials completed</td>
<td></td>
<td>Florida students take CCSS-aligned PARCC Summative Assessments in math and literacy, grades 3-11</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Florida’s Teacher Quality Bill passes</td>
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</table>

**Timeline Highlights**

- **2011-12**: High school grades content-level CCSS tutorials available for student use. Districts provide PD on CCSS.
- **2012-13**: Middle grades content-level CCSS tutorials available for student use. K-5 ELA and Mathematics instructional materials aligned to CCSS adopted. Professional development program for pre-service and practicing teachers implemented. Districts support lesson study to provide PD on CCSS.
- **2013-14**: Elem. grades content-level CCSS tutorials available for student use. Teacher standards tool includes all RTTT developed resources. 6-12 ELA and Mathematics instructional materials aligned to CCSS adopted. District PD systems align to lesson study and CCSS. Formative and interim assessments available.
- **2014-15**: Teacher Quality Bill requires all districts to fully implement revised salary schedules. 3,000 model lessons and lesson study toolkits on using data available. Florida students take CCSS-aligned PARCC Summative Assessments in math and literacy, grades 3-11.
Path to Success

- Successful transition to mastery of CCSS and PARCC in 2014-2015 requires instructional differentiation directed to goals of CCSS
- Scaffolding instruction will enable students to successfully bridge the gap between two disparate sets of standards
- Scaffolding strategies, developed and put into practice over the past two and a half years, facilitate comprehension of complex texts for struggling 8th grade students
College and Career Readiness in Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening, and Language

- Demonstrate independence
- Build strong content knowledge
- Respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose and discipline
- Comprehend as well as critique
- Value evidence
- Use technology and digital media strategically and capably
- Seek to understand other perspectives and cultures
Uniform Literacy Standards

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS FOR

English Language Arts
&
Literacy in History/Social Studies,
Science, and Technical Subjects
Common Core

Benefits
- Consistent standards from state to state (45 to date)
- Clearly defined rigorous standards for each grade
- Learning outcomes relevant to real world goals
- Aligned to promote success in college and careers

Focus
- Close reading of fiction and informational text
- Develop critical thinking skills in all content areas
- Integration of knowledge and ideas in multiple texts
- Emphasis on textual support for arguments

Challenge
- Success dependent on comprehension of complex texts
## Paradigm Shifts

Distribution of Literary and Informational Passages by Grade in the 2009 NAEP Reading Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Literary</th>
<th>Informational</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Distribution of Communicative Purposes by Grade in the 2011 NAEP Writing Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>To Persuade</th>
<th>To Explain</th>
<th>To Convey Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CCSS Anchor Standards

- Reading - Close reading of complex text
  - Literature
  - Informational Text
  - Analysis supported by textual evidence
- Writing – Compose arguments to support claims
  - Persuasive/Expository/Narrative
  - Research
  - Use valid reasoning
  - Cite relevant textual evidence
  - Develop arguments through revision
- Speaking and Listening
  - Prepare for and participate in collaborative conversations
  - Present information suited to task, purpose and audience
- Language – Grammar and Usage
  - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English
Constraints

- **Reading**
  - Reading comprehension of many 8th grade students is 2-3 levels below grade level limiting vocabulary
  - Previously learned strategy of skimming text for key words and phrases not effective with complex text

- **Writing**
  - Writing skills conform to FCAT models with less emphasis on revision due to time limit for response
  - Previous assessment of rough drafts deemphasized the importance of grammar and spelling conventions
Instructional Sequence Part I

- Reading
  - Initial reading of 1st text noting key phrases, unfamiliar vocabulary, and writing marginal notes for clarification
  - Create vocabulary rating scale to indicate familiarity with selected words and to define unfamiliar words
  - Second reading of 1st text, locating target vocabulary words, noting contextual usage, writing example from text
  - Third reading of 1st text identifying major claims/elements, clarifying meaning, and analyzing validity

- Reading sequence is repeated with additional texts
Instructional Sequence Part II

- Pre-Writing
  - Sequence, compare and contrast texts using column charts
  - Generate text-dependent questions about major claims/elements
- Speaking & Listening
  - Collaborative discussion of text-dependent questions generated by students/instructor synthesizing texts
- Writing
  - Short/extended responses citing textual support from texts
- Language
  - Revision of writing tasks focusing on further development of argument and emphasizing correct use of conventions