

Transitioning to the California's New Common Core ELA Standards
Agenda for Study Session #1:
The Overview and Rationale of the Common Core Standards
(60 Minutes)

- Review the Plan for the 5 Common Core (CC) Study Sessions – 3 minutes
See bottom of this agenda for the content of the 5 sessions.
Guiding Question: What will we be doing? Why are we doing it?

- Provide a Short Tour of the ELA Common Core Study Guide – 5 minutes
Guiding Question: What's in the Study Guide? How will we use it in our sessions?

- Review the Rationale for the New Common Core Standards (jigsaw chapter 2) —30 minutes
Guiding Questions: Why is this happening? What is the rationale behind CC?
 - a) Establish groups of 5 and ask the member of each group to number off 1 through 5 – 3 minutes
 - b) Assign one section of Chapter 2 to each member of the group – 2 minutes
 - 2.1 – The History
 - 2.2 – The Evidence
 - 2.3 – The Response
 - 2.4 – The Insight and Innovation
 - 2.5 – From College and Career Readiness Standards to K-12 ELA Common Core
 - c) Each group member reads and studies his/her assigned section – 5 minutes
 - d) Within groups, members teach what they read to the others (2.1-2.5) – 15 minutes
 - e) In whole group, review briefly each section and open up for discussion: What did you find interesting in this section? – 5 minutes

- Optional Extension: A Closer Study of the Evidence (see attached handout)— 10 minutes
Guiding Question: What are some examples of how the current national accountability system is problematic?

- Review the College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards as Architecture for K-12 ELA CC— 10 minutes
Guiding Question: How do the CCR Standards related to the K-12 CC ELA Standards?
 - a) Let participants review the College and Career Readiness Standards – 5 minutes
 - b) Let participants review the Architecture of the CCR and K-12 ELA CC – 2 minutes
 - c) Connect one CCR Standard to its K-12 CC ELA Step-Ladder version– 3 minutes

- Preview the Focus for CC Sessions 2 & 3 and 4 & 5 —2 minutes
Guiding Question: What will we be doing at our next CC PLC session?

Common Core ELA Study Sessions

Study Session 1: Overview— Why is this happening?

Study Session 2: Comparing 1997 and 2010 Standards—Reading and Speaking/Listening

Study Session 3: Comparing 1997 and 2010 Standards— Writing and Language

Study Session 4: Analyzing via Jigsaw of the Step-Ladder Versions of the Standards

Study Session 5: Sharing Our Analysis of the Step-Ladder Versions of the Standards

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The Overview and Rationale of the Common Core Standards
(60 Minutes)

*** * * Facilitator Notes * * ***

- Review the Plan for the 5 Common Core (CC) Study Sessions – 3 minutes

See bottom of this agenda for the content of the 5 sessions.

Guiding Question: What will we be doing? Why are we doing it?

Notes and/or Explanations

- Something like...“Our district has been working with two researchers who are studying how schools and districts transition productively to the new Common Core standards. As a first step in the process, they have collaborated with committees from their network of districts to develop tasks that allow teachers to study the new standards. These tasks are published in this Study Guide (refer to Study Guide), and that’s what we will use for our study sessions.”
- Direct participants to the bottom of the agenda and review the tasks for Study Sessions 1-5.
- Explain how study sessions are scheduled for your school, that is, when you will be doing Sessions 2 and 3 and also Sessions 4 and 5.
- Conclude with something like...”By the end of these sessions, we should all be familiar with the Common Core ELA standards, in general, and for our specific grade levels.”

- Provide a Short Tour of the ELA Common Core Study Guide – 5 minutes

Guiding Question: What’s in the Study Guide? How will we use it in our sessions?

Notes and/or Explanations

- Just review the Table of Content of the Study Guide and help participants connect specific chapters to the Study Sessions:
Chapter 2 = Study Session 1 Why is this happening?
Chapter 3 = Study Sessions 2 and 3 1997 and 2010 Comparisons
Chapter 4 = Study Sessions 4 and 5 Step-Ladder Versions
- Remind participants that if they’d like to know more about how this Study Guide was developed they can read Chapter 1, and if they’d like to know more about the researchers that published the Study Guide (and their organization) they can read the Preface.

- Review the Rationale for the New Common Core Standards (jigsaw chapter 2) —30 minutes

Guiding Questions: Why is this happening? What is the rationale behind CC?

- a) Establish groups of 5 and ask the member of each group to number off 1 through 5 – 3 minutes

Notes and/or Explanations

- Recommendation: Form cross-grade-level groups to provide an opportunity for teachers to work with other teachers they may not regularly get to work with (e.g., outside their own grade level).
- Consider: Forming groups ahead of time, so as to provide interesting and productive combinations of staff members.
- Form groups of 5 because Chapter 2 includes 5 sections. If your staff doesn’t divide perfect by 5, allow 1 or more groups to include six members and within the six member groups assign two individuals to a particular section (section 2.2; the longest section).
- Have groups count off 1-5 to make the assignment of sections more efficient.

- b) Assign one section of Chapter 2 to each member of the group – 2 minutes

2.1 – The History

2.2 – The Evidence

2.3 – The Response

2.4 – The Insight and Innovation

2.5 – From College and Career Readiness Standards to K-12 ELA Common Core

Notes and/or Explanations

- In each group, the person that is #1 takes section 2.1; 2s take section 2.2, 3s take section 2.3, 4s take section 2.4, and 5s take 2.5. If you have one or more groups of 6, the person that is #6 takes section 2.2 (in addition to #2) because section 2.2 is the longest and might warrant two people.
- Explain that each person will read and study his/her assigned section and prepare to teach the content of his/her section to the rest of the group (i.e., a jigsaw).

c) Each group member reads and studies his/her assigned section – 5 minutes

Notes and/or Explanations

- Suggestion: You may want to have highlighters on hand as members will want to highlight key points in preparation for teaching their section to others.
- Suggestion: Remind everyone that we'll need a quiet atmosphere while each person in the room is reading and studying.
- Groups should manage their own process and when each member has had sufficient time to read his/her assigned section the group can move on to the teaching of each section.
- Consider: You may want to explain that #2s have the most extensive section what with the data in Table 2.1. However, #2s can concentrate on the text in section 2.2 that explains the upshot of the data in Table 2.1; #2s do not have to feel responsible for teaching the actual content of Table 2.1.

d) Within groups, members teach what they read to the others (2.1-2.5) – 15 minutes

Notes and/or Explanations

- If necessary, remind groups to review the sections in their numbered order as the content is chronological and sequential: 2.1, then 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5.
- Facilitators should rove about as groups are sharing and watch for groups that get bogged down in a section and might not get to all sections. In such cases, give the group a time reminder (8 minutes left) and suggest they move on.
- Facilitators should announce when there's 10 minutes remaining, 5 minutes remaining, and 2 minutes remaining. However, if group discussions are rich and engaging throughout the room, you may want to let things proceed: The 10 minute Optional Extension is a cushion.

e) In whole group, review briefly each section and open up for discussion: What did you find interesting in this section? – 5 minutes

Notes and/or Explanations

- Just pose the question to the whole group: For those of you who read section 2.1 what did you find most interesting? Then subsequently, for those of you who read section 2.2, what did you find most interesting? And so on, and so forth. Facilitators should feel free to comment on the content of any one or all sections as well.
- If the whole group discussion is engaging, you may want to let it run more than 5 minutes: The 10 minute Optional Extension is a cushion.
- Caution: When you open it up to whole group, you may get questions about Common Core implementation: When will the district revamp the benchmarks? What's going to happen to report cards? Etc, etc. DO NOT try to answer these questions because it will just perpetuate more questions for which we do not yet have specific answers. Just say something like, "The planning for those things are underway, and I am sure we'll have details on those issues over the course of next year. Recall, we're not fully accountable for these new standards until 2014-15 when the new state tests are ready (Spring, 2015). So let's try our best to focus on our study of why this is happening."

• Optional Extension: A Closer Study of the Evidence (see attached handout)— 10 minutes

Guiding Question: What are some examples of how the current national accountability system is problematic?

Notes and/or Explanations

- The last page of this document includes three focused questions about the data in Table 2.1. Please review those questions ahead of time and try to answer them yourself, so you feel comfortable with them. And if the timing of Session #1 at your school allows, use them. We recommend that you have this Optional Extension ready to go for the Session #1 so that if things run faster than anticipated you have an additional activity to draw upon.

• Review the College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards as Architecture for K-12 ELA CC— 10 minutes

Guiding Question: How do the CCR Standards related to the K-12 CC ELA Standards?

a) Let participants review the College and Career Readiness Standards – 5 minutes

Notes and/or Explanations

- Ask participants to turn to pages 10-11 of the Study Guide and explain that these standards were developed to articulate what students should be able to know and do in Reading, Writing, Language and Speaking & Listening as they begin their College level studies and/or their Career studies.
- As necessary (depending on the whole group discussions of sections 2.4 and 2.5) remind participants that that these College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards “anchored” the development of the K-12 Common Core ELA Standards: Each of these 32 standards was translated into a K-12 progression with a standard for each grade level, that is, a K-12 Step Ladder.
- As necessary (depending on whole group discussions of sections 2.5) remind participants that the reading standards were translated into two versions: one for Reading Literature and one for Reading Informational Text. In addition, for K-5 Common Core, standards for Foundational Skills were developed, as well.
- Ask participants to peruse the College and Career Readiness Standards.

b) Let participants review the Architecture of the CCR and K-12 ELA CC – 2 minutes

Notes and/or Explanations

- Ask participants to review the depiction of the ELA Common Core Architecture on page 12 and examine that depiction in comparison to the College and Career Readiness Standards on pages 10-11. Help participants see that both have the same structure. Explain that the architecture represented on page 12 is the same organizational scheme for the ELA Common Core standards at every grade level: K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9-10, and 11-12.

c) Connect one CCR Standard to its K-12 CC ELA Step-Ladder version– 3 minutes

Notes and/or Explanations

- Ask participants to turn to page 10, and read aloud to participants Reading Standard 2. Ask participants to keep one finger marking page 10 and then to turn to page 117, the K-12 Common Core Step-Ladder version of Reading Standard 2, with a version for both Literature and Informational Text.
- Explain that every K-12 Common Core ELA standards was built this way, from College and Career Readiness Standard (at the top of page 117) to grades 11-12, to grades 9-10, all the way down to Kindergarten (from top to bottom of page 117).

• Preview the Focus for CC Sessions 2 & 3 and 4 & 5 —2 minutes

Guiding Question: What will we be doing at our next CC PLC session?

Notes and/or Explanations

- Just explain that the next session focus on two Study Tasks: Examining California’s 2010 Common Core ELA standards in comparison to California’s prior 1997 ELA standards, and analyzing the grade-by-grade progressions of the ELA standards via the Step-Ladder version of each standard.
- Reiterate how study sessions are scheduled for your school, that is, when you will be doing Sessions 2 and 3 and also Sessions 4 and 5.

Optional Extension: A Closer Study of the Evidence

Additional Small & Whole-Group Questions for Table 2.1 of the Common Core Study Guide (Chapter 2)

1. Compare the 4th and 8th grade state proficiency results (columns 3 and 7) for South Carolina (SC) and North Carolina (NC). Discuss the problem these results illustrate. Discuss the practical implications of this problem for schools and districts across the country.

2. Compare the 4th and 8th grade state proficiency results for Mississippi (MS). Discuss the problem these results illustrate. Discuss the practical implications of this problem for schools and districts within MS (and other states with the same kind of problem).

3. Examine the 4th and 8th grade results for California (CA) in comparison to other states. Discuss the possible conclusions that might be drawn from these results about CA standards, assessments, and proficiency criteria?