

Transitioning to the California's New Common Core ELA Standards
Agenda for Study Session #5:
Sharing Analysis of the Step-Ladder Versions of the Standards
(60 Minutes)

- Review the 5 Study Sessions and the Plan for Session #5—2 minutes
See bottom of this agenda for the content of the 5 sessions.
Guiding Question: What's the big idea again? Where are we in the plan?

- Allow groups to review the charts they develop during Study Session #5—5 minutes
Guiding Questions: What did we do last time? Do I remember it well enough that I could explain it well to others?

- Divide staff among the two sets of charts—5 min.
Guiding Question: How should we organize ourselves so that we're able to study all cluster charts?

- Gallery walk round #1—20 minutes
Guiding Question: What is each of these clusters mostly about? How do the standards in each cluster progress from grade to grade? How do the clusters within each domain work together?

- Gallery walk round #2—20 minutes
Guiding Question: What is each of these clusters mostly about? How do the standards in each cluster progress from grade to grade? How do the clusters within each domain work together?

- Debrief the gallery walks—10 minutes
Guiding Question: What did you find notable or interesting as you gallery walked? What are your impressions based on the Step-Ladder study activity?

- Conclude the Common Core Study Sessions – 1 minute

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 the Step-Ladder Versions of the Standards~~

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

Transitioning to the California's New Common Core ELA Standards
Agenda for Study Session #5:
Sharing the Analysis of the Step-Ladder Versions of the Standards
(60 Minutes)

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

NOTE: Room selection and preparation is very important for this session. If possible, you'll want to use a larger room with good wall space for hanging charts.

For this session, you need the cluster charts they created in study session #4. The charts will be mounted on opposite sides of the room. On one side, mount the charts for the Reading domain (3 charts for the 3 clusters in the reading domain) and the Speaking and Listening domain (2 charts for the two clusters in the S&L domain). On the opposite side of the room, do the same for the Writing domain (3 cluster charts) and the Language domain (2 cluster charts). This way, there are 5 charts on each side of the room. Each side has 2 domains, one with three clusters and one with two clusters)

The charts should be mounted with a good amount of space between them. Groups of teachers will be expected to gather around each chart (closely) and be able to read and engage in conversation about each chart.

- Review the 5 Study Sessions and the Plan for Session #5—2 minutes
See bottom of this agenda for the content of the 5 sessions.
Guiding Question: What's the big idea again? Where are we in the plan?

Notes and/or Explanations

--Just quickly review the entire run of the Common Core Study Sessions with today's session being the last one by telling teachers something like: "We started our study sessions with an examination of the history and rationale for the Common Core, we then studied the Common Core ELA standards in comparison to our current ELA standards to understand what's the same, what similar, but more rigorous in the Common Core, and what's new in the Common Core. At our last session we studied the Step-Ladder versions of the standards in cross-grade level teams by cluster in order to understand what cluster and standards were mostly about and to gauge the learning progressions from grade to grade for each standard in each cluster. Today, we're going to be able to view and study the chart each cluster group developed during the Step-Ladder study so we get a full sense of these things across all domains, clusters and standards."

- Allow groups to review the charts they develop during Study Session #5—5 minutes
Guiding Questions: What did we do last time? Do I remember it well enough that I could explain it well to others?

Notes and/or Explanations

--Prior to gallery walking, it's important for cluster groups to review their own work. If it has been several days between session #4 and #5, they will need time to remind themselves of what they learned about the cluster they studied prior to sharing it with the other cluster groups.
--Point out to teachers that the charts they developed at the last study session are now mounted on the walls of the room. Explain that the charts for Reading (clusters 1, 2 and 3) and Speaking and Listening (clusters 4 and 5) are on one side of the room and that Writing (clusters 6, 7 and 8) and Language (clusters 9 and 10) are on the other side of the room.
--Ask teachers to remember which cluster they worked on (remember, their names should be on the charts they developed during session #4) and to locate themselves in front of their chart.
--Ask them to review the work they completed at the last study session so they feel comfortable explaining it to other groups. Since it's been a while, they'll have 5 minutes to complete their review of their own work.

- Divide staff among the two sets of charts—5 min.

Guiding Question: How should we organize ourselves so that we're able to study all cluster charts?

Notes and/or Explanations

--With each group now positioned in front of the chart they developed, ask them to number off within their groups. Groups should have 2-3 teachers each, so if there is two teachers in a group, they simply need to number off 1, 2. If there are 3 teachers in a group, they need to number off 1, 2, 3. Each teacher should know their number as we'll use them to divide the staff into to groups with each group containing at least one member from each of the cluster groups.

--Once cluster groups have number themselves, ask teachers with even numbers to stand in front of cluster chart #1 (Reading domain, standards 1, 2 and 3). Ask the odd numbered teachers to stand in a group in front of cluster chart #6 (Writing domain, standards 1, 2 and 3).

--Check the size of the two groups. They should be roughly equal. If they aren't (for instance, if all your groups contained 3 teachers, the odd group will be double in size), just ask some of the 3's to go to the other group to even out the numbers. The two groups don't need to be exactly the same size, just close in size.

- Gallery walk round #1—20 minutes

Guiding Question: What is each of these clusters mostly about? How do the standards in each cluster progress from grade to grade? How do the clusters within each domain work together?

Notes and/or Explanations

--Once the two groups are organized, they can begin the gallery walk. Provide them with directions by telling something like: "Each of the two groups contains at least one person who developed each chart. As you move through the charts, the group member(s) who developed that chart should provide an overview of what the group learned about the cluster they studied by explaining what is on the chart they developed. Be sure to have a conversation about what they learned – this should not be a presentation, but rather a brief explanation followed by questions and discussion."

--As groups complete the review of the 2 or 3 clusters that constitute the domains they're reviewing (e.g. all three cluster charts for the reading domain), ask them to stop and look at the cluster charts for the domain and engage in a short discussion of how the three clusters work together to constitute the domain.

--Allow groups 20 minutes to share the first 5 cluster charts (clusters 1-5 for the "even" group and 6-10 for the "odd" group).

--Monitor and call out time ("15 minutes left", "10 minutes left", etc) so the two groups can pace themselves similarly.

- Gallery walk round #2—20 minutes

Guiding Question: What is each of these clusters mostly about? How do the standards in each cluster progress from grade to grade? How do the clusters within each domain work together?

Notes and/or Explanations

--As teachers finish the study of their first 5 cluster charts, the "even" group will be gathered around cluster chart 5 and the "odd" group will be gathered around cluster chart 10. Ask the "even" group (at cluster chart 5) to move to cluster chart 6. Ask the "odd" group (at cluster chart 10) to go to cluster chart 1. Once the groups have moved to those charts, they're positioned to complete their study of the 5 remaining charts that they have not yet studied.

--Ask them to complete their study of the remaining charts in the same way they did the first 5.

--Remind them that they have at least one person in their groups that worked on each chart and they will provide the explanation of the development of that chart.

--Allow teachers 20 minutes to complete gallery walk #2.

--Rove and assist as in gallery walk #1 and remind teachers to pause as they complete the study of all clusters in a domain, examine all cluster charts for that domain and engage in a short discussion of how the clusters work together to form the domain.

--Once all charts have been studied, ask teachers to once again take their seats.

- Debrief the gallery walks—15 minutes

Guiding Question: What did you find notable or interesting as you gallery walked? What are your impressions based on the Step-Ladder study activity?

--Recommendation: The Step-Ladder study does not produce expertise. It is another way to study the standards that emphasizes the coherence of the Common Core and the ability to work in a vertical alignment. It should also provide teachers with a new reason for studying the standards in this way: it helps me better understand the standards at my grade level and it helps me understand the learning progression from before, through and after my grade level. Their observations during the closing discussion may be more or less detailed and accurate and you may have to help them state things clearly or be prepared to clarify points they're making.

--As you wrap up the study of clusters and domains, engage the staff in a discussion of their thoughts and observations of the Step-Ladder study. Just ask them, "What did you find notable or interesting as you gallery walked? What are your impressions based on the Step-Ladder study?"

- Conclude the Common Core Study Sessions -

Note and/or explanations

--Just thank teachers. Perhaps tell them something like: "Thanks so much for all of your hard work and effort in this structured study of the Common Core ELA standards. I know we're all busy and any time we take to do one thing means there's something else that not getting done, but I feel certain that the Common Core merits this kind of time and that allowing teachers to study the standards themselves is really important. We've all had time to review the standards in a number of ways that allows us as professionals to come to our own conclusions about the Common Core ELA standards and what it means for our schools. It should also position us well for beginning to think about the instructional adjustments we'll have to make to help our students transition from our current standards to the common core."