



RAISE THE BAR

Expect More. Achieve More.

Common Core READING – How is it different?

This link: ["Old vs. New"](#) will take you to the *Foundation for Excellence in Education* website, which has series of pre-Common Core and Common Core Reading comparison examples from K- 12.

In **Common Core English Language Arts and Literacy** students develop the ability to learn **independently** from complex texts.

Grade 2 example

Dawn

By Emily Dickinson

Not knowing when the dawn will come
I open every door;
Or has it feathers like a bird,
Or billows like a shore?

<http://www.public-domain-poetry.com/emily-elizabeth-dickinson/dawn-13871>

Poetry BEFORE Common Core:

In the pre-Common Core question samples below, the first question might lead students to look up a word in the dictionary and find out about the topic of dawn without ever reading the poem. The second question yields a yes or no response that does not gauge a student's level of comprehension about the topic or the poem.

1. What does the word dawn mean?
2. Have you ever seen the dawn?
3. What time of day does dawn occur?

Poetry in a Common Core Classroom:

Here students are asked to refer back to the poem to answer questions with evidence. These questions can also transfer into a conversation about the abstract nature of dawn.

1. Which word or phrase lets us know that the author doesn't know when dawn will come?
2. What does the author do to find the dawn?
3. What does the author wonder about the dawn?



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Grade 4-5 example

Bud, Not Buddy (an extract)

By Christopher Paul Curtis

Here we go again. We were all standing in line waiting for breakfast when one of the caseworkers came in and tap-tap-tapped down the line. Uh-oh, this meant bad news, either they'd found a foster home for somebody or somebody was about to get paddled. All the kids watched the woman as she moved along the line, her high-heeled shoes sounding like little fire-crackers going off on the wooden floor.

Shoot! She stopped at me and said, "Are you Buddy Caldwell?"

I said, "It's Bud, not Buddy, ma'am."

Novel BEFORE Common Core:

In the pre-Common Core classroom, students might be asked to write a book report that identified the main idea, named the characters, identified the setting, and recounted the events that occurred in the order they occurred. They might also be asked to find the conflict and resolution of the story. The tasks could be time consuming but could be mostly lower order thinking skills related to locating and connecting information.

Novel in a Common Core Classroom,

In a Common Core Classroom students would participate in close reading of sections of the novel where the section could be read aloud by the teacher and /or the students. The text is broken down into small chunks to analyze and understand the vocabulary, consider the content, tone and structure, and the author's intent. Students could be asked to compare and contrast *Bud, Not Buddy* by Christopher Paul Curtis and *The Birchbark House* by Louise Erdrich (which the students would have already read). They would complete higher order thinking and synthesis tasks, including identifying similar themes and examining the stories' approach to the topic of growing up. Students would also need to support their conclusions, opinions and inferences with evidence and quotes from the text.

Prior to Common Core, students would often be asked questions that were based on opinions or personal experiences alone. In Common Core Classrooms students are expected to draw conclusions and communicate their opinions **based on information found in what they read and view**, both fiction and nonfiction.

Common Core texts generally contain challenging vocabulary, and concepts that are more complex and deeper than previously used.