



RAISE THE BAR

Expect More. Achieve More.

Common Core – How is it Different?

The Common Core standards are designed for deeper learning in fewer topics. The standards aim for mastery, not memorization, and create ‘learning that sticks’.

Common Core Mathematics

*Students learn to think creatively, solve problems, and understand the **how and why** of math.*

- Concentrate on skills that are grade level appropriate.
- Use skills learned from each grade to build knowledge.
- Learn and use techniques to help develop a deep understanding of concepts along with quick and accurate skills.

Common Core English Language Arts and Literacy

*Students develop the ability to learn **independently** from complex texts.*

- Read complex texts containing concepts and vocabulary that allow for deep thinking.
- Share knowledge (in writing and conversations) that is based on information and evidence found in the text
- Build knowledge by balancing nonfiction and fiction reading, especially content rich non-fiction.

While the Standards focus on what is most essential, they do NOT describe all that can or should be taught. A great deal is left to the discretion of teachers and local curriculum writers so they can best meet the needs of their students.



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Math

- Common Core allows time for students to master the standards at each grade level so that as they move on to higher grades, what they have already learned supports the acquisition of new skills, and also helps to increase the relevance of the new concepts learned.
- Fluency in number skills remains important in Common Core math. Students master key skills and become quick and accurate in the use and recollection of them, especially in elementary grades.
- The expectation in Common Core math is for students to deeply understand HOW and WHY math works; to be able to apply it and problem solve, and to move well beyond just memorizing 'math rules'.

English Learning Arts and Literacy

- The majority of the reading done as an adult in the workplace and at college is nonfiction, and students are now being exposed to more content-rich non-fiction reading. This does not mean that ALL reading is non-fiction. Stories and poetry and other works of fiction remain a key element of the standards, especially in elementary school.
- Prior to Common Core, students would often be asked questions that were based on opinions or personal experiences alone. Students are now expected to draw conclusions and communicate 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.