Helping English Language Learners Meet the Common Core State Standards in Language Arts

Supplementary Materials to Accompany PowerPoint

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Overview

In 2010, the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers released the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for mathematics and English language arts, which by now have been adopted by 48 states and territories, and the District of Columbia. The CCSS sets high standards for all students, including English language learners (ELLs), to be college and career ready and globally competitive. Short and Fitzsimmons (2007) aptly captured the challenge ELLs face meeting high standards in English with the phrase "double the work." ELLs must perform double the work to acquire content knowledge in English and, at the same time, learn English as an additional language—all the while being held to the same graduation requirements and accountability standards as their English-proficient peers.

Effective methods to help ELLs meet the CCSS build on methods that are effective for all students but provide ELLs with additional support because they are acquiring academic content in a second language. To support ELLs, teachers will need to align instruction with the new standards, scaffold instruction so it is comprehensible for ELLs, and assist ELLs in developing the academic language they need to meet the new standards.

This training provides information and instructional practices for helping ELLs meet the CCSS. Its primary objective is to assist mainstream teachers and English as a second language (ESL) teachers in developing lessons and implementing instructional practices that align with the CCSS in language arts and meet the needs of both ELLs and mainstream students. Expected outcomes for this training include the following:

1. **Knowledge:** Develop understanding of the CCSS as they apply to both ELLs and mainstream students.

2. **Application:** For teachers, use the knowledge they have acquired and guiding principles to implement lessons aligned with the CCSS as well as develop and implement their own lessons that aligned to the CCSS. This will increase student success accessing the core curriculum over the long term.

3. **Community Building:** Assist a core group of trained in developing methods and materials they can use to train and support additional district teachers.

This packet includes supplementary materials to the training manual. It includes activities that allow participants to practice what they are learning in the training. The training manual has resources to further explore what is learned in the training as well as the Engage NY (http://engageny.org/) CCSS-aligned draft mainstream lessons for the two middle grade texts used in the training: Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address and an excerpt from *Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain.

Agenda

Helping English Language Learners Meet High Standards

Day 1

9:00-9:15	Introductions and Overview of the Day
9:15-10:30	Implementing the Standards, Part I
10:30-10:40	Break
10:40-12:30	Implementing the Standards, Part II
12:30-1:30	Lunch
1:30-3:00	Implementing the Standards, Part III

Day 2

9:00-9:10	Overview of the Day
9:10-10:30	Review of Model Lesson, Part I
10:30-10:40	Break
10:40-12:30	Review of Model Lesson, Part II
12:30-1:30	Lunch
1:30-3:00	Adapting the Lesson to Your Context

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Considerations for Instruction of ELLs

1. *ELLs need to have access to cognitively challenging, grade-appropriate academic content so that they do not fall behind their English-speaking peers academically.*
2. *ELLs also need to acquire the foundational skills and knowledge that form the basis for grade-level content knowledge and skills.*
3. *ELLs need additional support, because they are learning language and content concurrently.*
4. *Within the ELL subgroup, individual students require differentiated instruction because of differences in their native and target language knowledge and skills*
5. *ELLs bring tremendous resources to learning in a second language, namely their first language knowledge and skills.*

Directions: Select one of the considerations for instruction of ELLs and write it in the leftmost column. In the other three columns, write some of the benefits of addressing this consideration in your educational context, challenges to implementing it, and methods you could use to overcome these challenges.

CONSIDERATION	BENEFITS	CHALLENGE(S)	SOLUTION(S)

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Attributes that Make Text Complex[i]

For All Students

Multiple Levels of Meaning: Some texts can be taken at face value, whereas others are more like onions, with layer upon layer of meaning. For example, a literal reading of *Animal Farm* by George Orwell (1946), in which animals take over the farm and begin to rule themselves is very different from a reading in which the reader understands the metaphors being used to describe Russia. The same range of levels of meaning can be found in picture books, chapter books, and trade books.

Distortions in organization of text: Texts organized in chronological order are less complex than those that use some other organizational pattern. In narrative texts, the use of flashbacks and foreshadowing make the text harder because of the shifts in time. The same is true for informational texts. Texts in which the passages have a different voice or the point of view are also harder to understand. When more than one tense exists in a sentence, the text may be more difficult to understand.

Sophisticated figurative language: Figurative language can make a text more complex. When authors use irony, idioms, metaphor, symbolism, or other literary devices, the reader has to think a little more. When these are not used, the text is easier to understand.

Significant use of variations of standard English: When a reader reads a text that is consistent with his or her language usage, the text is easier. When the reader reads a text that contains variations from the language that the reader uses, the text is harder. Many of the books that students are expected to read are written in standard English. Speakers of standard English will not likely find these kinds of books difficult to understand. English learners and students for whom standard English is less familiar might have more difficulty, and thus need more instruction, to make sense·of the text. Other books are written in different vernaculars or variations. These books are authentic in that they respect the time in which they are set or the language that is in use by the people profiled in the book. For example, reading a conversation between Jim and Huck in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* requires an understanding of the language used at the time and place where the book is set.

Specialized or technical knowledge assumed or required: A factor that makes a text difficult is when the material presumes specialized or technical background knowledge students do not have and the text provides little review or explanation of these concepts.

Limited use of text features and graphics to cue the reader: Text features include headings and subheadings that can guide readers through information; signal words that convey text structure (e.g., *first, second,* and *third* for description; signal words for cause and effect that help student process information (e.g *because,* since, or *as a result*). Similarly, margin notes and graphic organizers, such as Venn diagrams, structured overviews, semantic feature analyses, and maps, can provide readers with an alternative way to understand the information being presented. If these text features and graphics are missing, text becomes for challenging for students.

Extensive and unfamiliar general and domain specific vocabulary: If students don't know words and phrases they have trouble understanding text because these words and

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phrases serve as labels for ideas and concepts.

Use of language that is archaic: Words and phrases that are once used but are now less common can make text more difficult. Examples include ambodexter meaning to be able to play with both hands or untrustworthy.

For English Language Learners

Words with multiple meanings: Some multiple meaning words are polysemes like bank and bank (where the second word means to rely on) and other are homonyms (if bank were to mean river bank)

Nominalization: is the use of a verb, an adjective, or an adverb as the head of a noun phrase, with or without morphological transformation. The term can also refer specifically to the process of producing a noun from another part of speech via the addition of derivational affixes (e.g., *legalize* versus *legalization*)[ii]

Complex syntax: This may occur with sentences with two more independent clauses or complex sentences that include one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses

Linking ideas: ideas linked by connectives including coordinating conjunctions (e.g. for, and, nor, but, or, yet) or conjunctive adverbs (e.g. also, anyhow, besides, consequently, furthermore, however, instead, meanwhile)

Referential chains: This can create confusion when anaphora is used (e.g. use of he, she, it instead of names) as well as when concepts are connected with each other but are named differently.

Organizational structure (e.g., dialogue)

Academic stance (authoritative, detached language)

Selecting Grade Appropriate Text

"Whitewashing the Fence" from *Tom Sawyer*
Excerpt from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain (1876)

He took up his brush and went tranquilly to work. Ben Rogers hove in sight presently—the very boy, of all boys, whose ridicule he had been dreading. Ben's gait was the hop-skip-and-jump—proof enough that his heart was light and his anticipations high. He was eating an apple, and giving a long, melodious whoop, at intervals, followed by a deep-toned ding-dong-dong, ding-dong-dong, for he was personating a steamboat. As he drew near, he slackened speed, took the middle of the street, leaned far over to starboard and rounded to ponderously and with laborious pomp and circumstance—for he was personating the Big Missouri, and considered himself to be drawing nine feet of water. He was boat and captain and engine-bells combined, so he had to imagine himself standing on his own hurricane-deck giving the orders and executing them.

For all students

1. Text with multiple levels of meaning

2. Distortions in organization of text (e.g. time sequences)

3. Sophisticated figurative language

4. Significant use of variations to standard English

5. Specialized or technical content knowledge assumed/required

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6. Limited use of text features and graphics to cue the reader

7. Extensive and unfamiliar general and domain-specific vocabulary

8. Use of language that is archaic

For ELLs
9. Words with multiple meanings

10. Nominalization

11. Complex syntax

12. Connectives

13. Referential chains (anaphora, ongoing themes)

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A Guide to Creating Text Dependent Questions for Close Analytic Reading[1]

Text Dependent Questions: What Are They?

The Common Core State Standards for reading strongly focus on students gathering evidence, knowledge, and insight from what they read. Indeed, eighty to ninety percent of the Reading Standards in each grade *require* text dependent analysis; accordingly, aligned curriculum materials should have a similar percentage of text dependent questions.

As the name suggests, a text dependent question specifically asks a question that can only be answered by referring explicitly back to the text being read. It does not rely on any particular background information extraneous to the text nor depend on students having other experiences or knowledge; instead it privileges the text itself and what students can extract from what is before them.

For example, in a close analytic reading of Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address," the following would not be text dependent questions:

- *Why did the North fight the civil war?*
- *Have you ever been to a funeral or gravesite?*
- *Lincoln says that the nation is dedicated to the proposition that "all men are created equal." Why is equality an important value to promote?*

The overarching problem with these questions is that they require no familiarity at all with Lincoln's speech in order to answer them. Responding to these sorts of questions instead requires students to go outside the text. Such questions can be tempting to ask because they are likely to get students talking, but they take students away from considering the actual point Lincoln is making. They seek to elicit a personal or general response that relies on individual experience and opinion, and answering them will not move students closer to understanding the text of the "Gettysburg Address."

Good text dependent questions will often linger over specific phrases and sentences to ensure careful comprehension of the text—they help students see something worthwhile that they would not have seen on a more cursory reading. Typical text dependent questions ask students to perform one or more of the following tasks:

- Analyze paragraphs on a sentence by sentence basis and sentences on a word by word basis to determine the role played by individual paragraphs, sentences, phrases, or words
- Investigate how meaning can be altered by changing key words and why an author may have chosen one word over another
- Probe each argument in persuasive text, each idea in informational text, each key detail in literary text, and observe how these build to a whole
- Examine how shifts in the direction of an argument or explanation are achieved and the impact of those shifts
- Question why authors choose to begin and end when they do
- Note and assess patterns of writing and what they achieve
- Consider what the text leaves uncertain or unstated

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[1] http://www.achievethecore.org/steal-these-tools/text-dependent-questions

Creating Text-Dependent Questions for Close Analytic Reading of Texts[2]

An effective set of text dependent questions delves systematically into a text to guide students in extracting the key meanings or ideas found there. They typically begin by exploring specific words, details, and arguments and then moves on to examine the impact of those specifics on the text as a whole. Along the way they target academic vocabulary and specific sentence structures as critical focus points for gaining comprehension. While there is no set process for generating a complete and coherent body of text dependent questions for a text, the following process is a good guide that can serve to generate a core series of questions for close reading of any given text.

Step One: Identify the Core Understandings and Key Ideas of the Text. As in any good reverse engineering or "backwards design" process, teachers should start by identifying the key insights they want students to understand from the text—keeping one eye on the major points being made is crucial for fashioning an overarching set of successful questions and critical for creating an appropriate culminating assignment.

Step Two: Start Small to Build Confidence. The opening questions should be ones that help orientate students to the text and be sufficiently specific enough for them to answer so that they gain confidence to tackle more difficult questions later on.

Step Three: Target Vocabulary and Text Structure. Locate key text structures and the most powerful academic words in the text that are connected to the key ideas and understandings, and craft questions that illuminate these connections.

Step Four: Tackle Tough Sections Head-on. Find the sections of the text that will present the greatest difficulty and craft questions that support students in mastering these sections (these could be sections with difficult syntax, particularly dense information, and tricky transitions or places that offer a variety of possible inferences).

Step Five: Create Coherent Sequences of Text Dependent Questions. The sequence of questions should not be random but should build toward more coherent understanding and analysis to ensure that students learn to stay focused on the text to bring them to a gradual understanding of its meaning.

Step Six: Identify the Standards That Are Being Addressed. Take stock of what standards are being addressed in the series of questions and decide if any other standards are suited to being a focus for this text (forming additional questions that exercise those standards).

Step Seven: Create the Culminating Assessment. Develop a culminating activity around the key ideas or understandings identified earlier that reflects (a) mastery of one or more of the standards, (b) involves writing, and (c) is structured to be completed by students independently.

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[2] http://www.achievethecore.org/steal-these-tools/text-dependent-questions

Developing Text Dependent Questions

Directions: Read the following passage. Then write text dependent questions in the column on the right. Number the text dependent questions, and underline and number the text upon which they are based.

"Whitewashing the Fence" from *Tom Sawyer* Excerpt from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain (1876)	**Text Dependent Questions**
He took up his brush and went tranquilly to work. Ben Rogers hove in sight presently—the very boy, of all boys, whose ridicule he had been dreading. Ben's gait was the hop-skip-and-jump—proof enough that his heart was light and his anticipations high. He was eating an apple, and giving a long, melodious whoop, at intervals, followed by a deep-toned ding-dong-dong, ding-dong-dong, for he was personating a steamboat. As he drew near, he slackened speed, took the middle of the street, leaned far over to starboard and rounded to ponderously and with laborious pomp and circumstance—for he was personating the Big Missouri, and considered himself to be drawing nine feet of water. He was boat and captain and engine-bells combined, so he had to imagine himself standing on his own hurricane-deck giving the orders and executing them: "Stop her, sir! Ting-a-ling-ling!" The headway ran almost out, and he drew up slowly toward the sidewalk. "Ship up to back! Ting-a-ling-ling!" His arms straightened and stiffened down his sides. "Set her back on the stabboard! Ting-a-ling-ling! Chow! ch-chow-wow! Chow!" His right hand, meantime, describing stately circles—for it was representing a forty-foot wheel. "Let her go back on the labboard! Ting-a-lingling! Chow-ch-chow- chow!" The left hand began to describe circles. "Stop the stabboard! Ting-a-ling-ling! Stop the labboard! Come ahead on the stabboard! Stop her! Let your outside turn over slow! Ting-a-ling-ling! Chow-ow-ow! Get out that head-line! LIVELY now! Come—out with your spring-line—what're you about there! Take a turn round that stump with the bight of it! Stand by that stage, now—let her go! Done with the engines, sir! Ting-a-ling-ling! SH'T! S'H'T! SH'T!" (trying the gauge-cocks)."	

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Text Based Evidence

Text Dependent Question	Lower the Level Question	Require Evidence from Text

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Selecting Vocabulary for Direct Instruction

> **Directions:** Read the following passage. In the following table, write the words from this passage that you would teach directly in the first column. In the second column, write the words that you would gloss.

"Whitewashing the Fence" from *Tom Sawyer*
Excerpt from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain (1876)

He took up his brush and went tranquilly to work. Ben Rogers hove in sight presently—the very boy, of all boys, whose ridicule he had been dreading. Ben's gait was the hop-skip-and-jump—proof enough that his heart was light and his anticipations high. He was eating an apple, and giving a long, melodious whoop, at intervals, followed by a deep-toned ding-dong-dong, ding-dong-dong, for he was personating a steamboat. As he drew near, he slackened speed, took the middle of the street, leaned far over to starboard and rounded to ponderously and with laborious pomp and circumstance—for he was personating the Big Missouri, and considered himself to be drawing nine feet of water. He was boat and captain and engine-bells combined, so he had to imagine himself standing on his own hurricane-deck giving the orders and executing them.

Vocabulary for Direct Instruction	*Fast Mapping*

Helping Students Unpack Complex Syntax

> **Directions:** Create a functional analysis for the sentence below. First, decide which sentence elements to include (the first is provided) and fill in the appropriate text for each element. Next, use the second chart to unpack the sentence as a student might do.

At this dark and hopeless moment an inspiration burst upon him!

WHO : _____

_____: _____

_____: _____

_____: _____

_____: _____

_____: _____

Sentence Element	Tom Sawyer	Say It In Your Own Words
Who		
Descriptor		
Descriptor		

Building Background Knowledge

"Whitewashing the Fence" from *Tom Sawyer*
Excerpt from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain (1876)

But Tom's energy did not last. He began to think of the fun he had planned for this day, and his sorrows multiplied. Soon the free boys would come tripping along on all sorts of delicious expeditions, and they would make a world of fun of him for having to work—the very thought of it burnt him like fire. He got out his worldly wealth and examined it—bits of toys, marbles, and trash; enough to buy an exchange of WORK, maybe, but not half enough to buy so much as half an hour of pure freedom. So he returned his straitened means to his pocket, and gave up the idea of trying to buy the boys. At this dark and hopeless moment an inspiration burst upon him! Nothing less than a great, magnificent inspiration.

He took up his brush and went tranquilly to work. Ben Rogers hove in sight presently— the very boy, of all boys, whose ridicule he had been dreading. Ben's gait was the hop-skip-and-jump—proof enough that his heart was light and his anticipations high. He was eating an apple, and giving a long, melodious whoop, at intervals, followed by a deep-toned ding-dong-dong, ding-dong-dong, for he was personating a steamboat. As he drew near, he slackened speed, took the middle of the street, leaned far over to starboard and rounded to ponderously and with laborious pomp and circumstance— for he was personating the Big Missouri, and considered himself to be drawing nine feet of water. He was boat and captain and engine-bells combined, so he had to imagine himself standing on his own hurricane-deck giving the orders and executing them:

"Stop her, sir! Ting-a-ling-ling!" The headway ran almost out, and he drew up slowly toward the sidewalk. "Ship up to back! Ting-a-ling-ling!" His arms straightened and stiffened down his sides.

"Set her back on the stabboard! Ting-a-ling-ling! Chow! ch-chow-wow! Chow!" His right hand, meantime, describing stately circles—for it was representing a forty-foot wheel.

"Let her go back on the labboard! Ting-a-lingling! Chow-ch-chow chow!" The left hand began to describe circles. "Stop the stabboard! Ting-a-ling-ling! Stop the labboard! Come ahead on the stabboard! Stop her! Let your outside turn over slow! Ting-a-ling-ling! Chow-ow-ow! Get out that head-line! LIVELY now! Come—out with your spring-line— what're you about there! Take a turn round that stump with the bight of it! Stand by that stage, now—let her go! Done with the engines, sir! Ting-a-ling-ling! SH'T! S'H'T! SH'T!" (trying the gauge-cocks)."

Tom went on whitewashing—paid no attention to the steamboat. Ben stared a moment and then said: "Hi-YI! YOU'RE up a stump, ain't you!"

No answer. Tom surveyed his last touch with the eye of an artist, then he gave his brush another gentle sweep and surveyed the result, as before. Ben ranged up alongside of him. Tom's mouth watered for the apple, but he stuck to his work.

Ben said: "Hello, old chap, you got to work, hey?"

Tom wheeled suddenly and said: "Why, it's you, Ben! I warn't noticing."

"Say—I'm going in a-swimming, I am. Don't you wish you could? But of course you'd druther WORK—wouldn't you? Course you would!"

Tom contemplated the boy a bit, and said: "What do you call work?"

"Why, ain't THAT work?"

Tom resumed his whitewashing, and answered carelessly: "Well, maybe it is, and maybe it ain't. All I know, is it suits Tom Sawyer."

"Oh come, now, you don't mean to let on that you LIKE it?"

The brush continued to move.

"Like it? Well, I don't see why I oughtn't to like it. Does a boy get a chance to whitewash a fence every day?" That put the thing in a new light. Ben stopped nibbling his apple. Tom swept his brush daintily back and forth—stepped back to note the effect—added a touch here and there—criticized the effect again—Ben watching every move and getting more and more interested, more and more absorbed.

Background information related to academic language:

Background information related to other disciplines :

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Assessing Students' Knowledge and Skills

Directions: The first column in the table below lists four of the Common Core State ELA Standards for Reading Literature. For each standard, write 1-2 open-ended questions for the *Tom Sawyer* excerpt on pp. 5-6. Note any additional language demands that your questions pose for ELLs.

Common Core State Standard Alignment	Open-Ended Assessment Question(s)	Additional Language Demands for ELLs
RL.8.2 *Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.*		
RL. 8.3 *Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.*		
RL 8.4 *Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.*		
RL 8.6 *Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.*		

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[i] *Taken from: Fisher, D., Frey, N., & Lapp, D. (2012)* Text complexity: Raising rigor in reading. *Newark, DE: International Reading Association*

[ii] Kolln, M. 1998, *Rhetorical Grammar: Grammatical Choices, Rhetorical Effects*, p.63