Focus and coherence in instruction and assessment

“While the Standards delineate specific expectations in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language, each standard need not be a separate focus for instruction and assessment. Often, several standards can be addressed by a single rich task.”

- CCSS p. 5 (no date)

More about the standards....

- “The Standards define what all students are expected to know and be able to do, not how teachers should teach.”
- “By emphasizing required achievements, the Standards leave room for teachers, curriculum developers, and states to determine how those goals should be reached and what additional topics should be addressed.”
Focus on Instruction - Effective early literacy instruction includes emphases on:

- Motivating children to want to read and write
- Engaging children in actively constructing meaning from and with text
- Providing extensive opportunities to build the general knowledge base upon which reading comprehension depends
- Developing vocabulary and oral language skills
- Developing phonemic awareness
- Teaching about the alphabetic code
- Encouraging children to develop a strategic approach to word identification—relying on both code-based and meaning-based strategies
- Teaching and providing practice with high frequency words
- Differentiating instruction based on students’ current capabilities
- Large amounts of academic engaged time

Focus on Instruction - Effective literacy instruction for maturing readers includes emphases on:

- Motivating children to want to read and write
- Engaging children in actively constructing meaning from and with text
- Providing extensive opportunities to build the general knowledge base upon which reading comprehension depends
- Developing vocabulary and oral language skills
- Developing phonemic awareness
- Teaching about the alphabetic code
- Encouraging the use of a strategic approach to word identification
- Development of high frequency sight vocabulary
- Differentiating instruction based on students’ current capabilities
- Large amounts of academic engaged time

Addressing the Common Core ELA Standards across the ELA Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Arts Components</th>
<th>Reading Literary Text</th>
<th>Reading Informational Text</th>
<th>Foundational Skills</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Speaking and Listening</th>
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<tr>
<td>Read Aloud</td>
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<td>Supported/Small Group Reading</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Factors Influencing Comprehension

In order to comprehend text, what must the reader know and be able to do?

General abilities and attitudes that influence comprehension:
- General language abilities.
- Accurate and automatic identification of most of the words in the text.
- Engagement in the reading process.
- General knowledge, schemas, and topic specific knowledge, familiarity with text structure.

The Development of Sight Vocabulary

Words become part of a reader’s sight vocabulary in two basic ways:
- Through direct teaching of specific words.
- Through effective word solving of unfamiliar words encountered in text.

The vast majority of the words that become part of a reader’s sight vocabulary are acquired through effective word solving during reading.

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The Development of Sight Vocabulary

Foundational Skills Play a Critical Role in Word Learning

- They enable readers to:
  - Hypothesize about the identity of an unfamiliar word
  - Use a variety of sources of information to revise and confirm hypotheses
  - Add words to the body of words that can be identified automatically
  - When a reader can effortlessly identify most of the words in a text, his/her cognitive resources can be devoted primarily/exclusively to meaning construction

In Summary...

- Becoming literate is a complex process that requires the integration of a variety of knowledge sources, skills, strategies, and dispositions.
- The ELA Common Core State Standards reflect this complexity.
- However, the integration is left largely to teachers.

Thank you for listening!