

Top 10 FAQs on K-12 Implementation of Common Core

1) Q. When will teachers implement the units of study this year?

A. Kindergarten and first grade teachers will implement the units of study beginning Monday, April 29, 2013. All other teachers, grades second through fifth grade, will implement after the completion of the CST. In addition, all **intermediate** teachers teaching 7th Grade Science, 8th Grade History, 6th Grade Math, Algebra I, 6th Grade ELA, 7th Grade ELA, 8th Grade ELA and **high school** teachers teaching Biology, US History, World History, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, 9th/10th English, 11th/12th English will teach the unit of study after the completion of the CST.

2) When will I be able to see the units of study for my grade level or content area?

A. The first draft of units of study is scheduled to be completed by the end of March. At that time, the department chairs and grade level chairs will be provided the drafts to share with the rest of their grade level or content area. All teachers will have the opportunity to provide feedback at that time. The revised units of study will be complete by mid April.

3) Why is Santa Ana developing professional development modules?

A. The implementation of the Common Core involves all teachers in the development of students as critical, analytic thinkers and collaborators. To support the development of foundational pedagogical knowledge across all grade spans and content areas, the district is developing three professional development modules in the areas of text complexity, collaborative conversations and development of academic language.

4) How many professional development modules will sites implement this year?

A. For the 2012-2013 school year, all schools are asked to implement the professional development module on **text complexity** to all classroom teachers. The module includes six activities designed to be learned over a several week period to allow teachers to internalize, practice and apply their learning over time.

5) Why was the professional development module on text complexity selected to be the first module?

A. There are four aspects of the Common Core standards that set them apart from earlier iterations of state and/or national standards: *close and critical reading*, integration of language processes and disciplinary content, media/research literacy, and *text complexity*. These four aspects are highlighted in our selected instructional shifts. You will notice that two of the aspects center on text complexity. We know that in order for students to be able to read texts of increased text complexity, teachers must understand how and why a text is complex and identify scaffolding strategies supportive of student need. We also know that being able to read complex text independently and proficiently is essential for high achievement in college and the workplace and important in numerous life tasks.

6) How does text complexity apply to content areas such as mathematics?

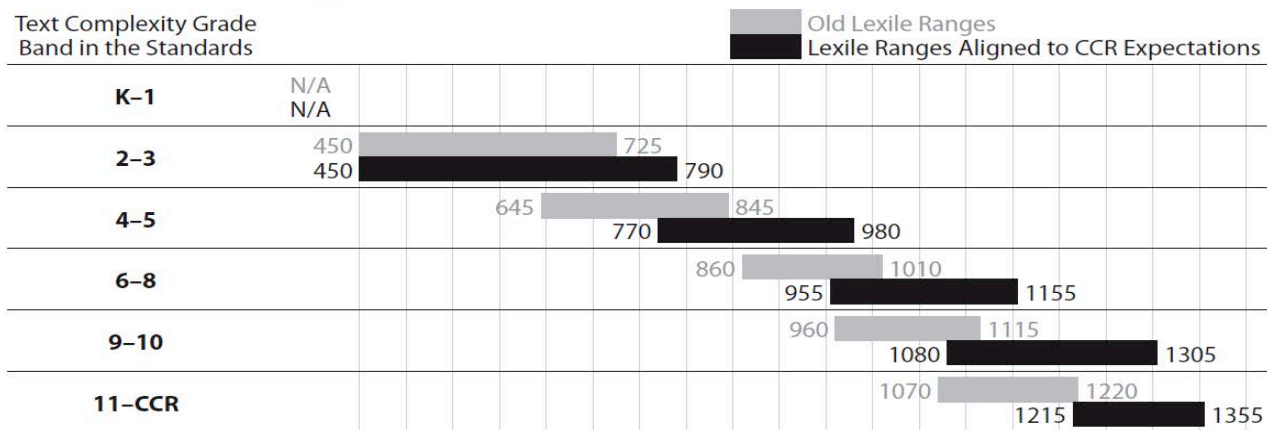
A. The authors of the Common Core are also looking at text complexity as the new assessments will require students to read complex text to understand the mathematical context. Recent research has shown that student math performance was poorer for word problems written in more complex language compared to the same problems in easier text, and the weakest performance was observed for problems that were both linguistically and mathematically challenging. The complex language of the problem can affect students' ability to identify the operation needed to solve it and increases the probability that they will make computation errors then the item is assessing more than students' mathematical proficiency.

7) What is a Lexile score?

A. A Lexile® measure is a valuable piece of information about either an individual's reading ability or the difficulty of a text, like a book or magazine article. The Lexile measure is shown as a number with an "L" after it — 880L is 880 Lexile. Lexile measures can range from below 200L to above 1700L. What is considered grade level appropriate has increased with the implementation of the Common Core.

Figure 1

The "Staircase"—Text Complexity Grade Bands and Associated Lexile Ranges (in Lexiles)



Source: *Common Core State Standards, Appendix A (2010b)*, p. 8

8) How can I get more information about Common Core Implementation?

A. We held a CCSS 6 Month Update Meeting for elementary staff on January 23rd. We will be holding a CCSS 6 Month Update for intermediate staff on January 31st from 3:30-4:30 at the District Office and high school staff on February 13th from 3:45-4:45 at Century High School. Please note the change in date for the high school 6 Month Update. The update will highlight SAUSD's progress towards implementing the Common Core, discuss future opportunities for staff to get involved in the implementation and feedback process and discuss next steps.

9) Q. What are some online resources provided by SAUSD that students and teachers can use to perform academic research?

A. There are two major online research resources that you can use for academic research including:

Britannica Online

Britannica Online School Edition offers encyclopedias and related materials for students of all levels. Users can also take advantage of the Learning Materials, a collection of educational exercises, activities, and study guides.

Britannica's Spanish Reference Center - This site offers resources in Spanish for all ages in two unique interfaces, each with its own comprehensive encyclopedia: *Enciclopedia Moderna* for high school ages and up and *Britannica Escolar Online* for ages 6-12.

Ebsco—This collection of academic research resources is available at all high schools

MAS Ultra - School Edition

Designed specifically for high school libraries, this database contains full text for nearly 500 popular, high school magazines. *MAS Ultra – School Edition* also provides more than 360 full text reference books, 85,670 biographies, over 107,000 primary source documents, and an Image Collection of over 510,000 photos, maps & flags, color PDFs and expanded full text backfiles (back to 1975) for key magazines.

Newspaper Source

Newspaper Source provides cover-to-cover full text for more than 40 (U.S.) & international newspapers. The database also contains selective full text for 389 regional (U.S.) newspapers. In addition, full text television & radio news transcripts are also provided

Health Source - Consumer Edition

This database is the richest collection of consumer health information available to libraries worldwide, providing information on many health topics including the medical sciences, food sciences and nutrition, childcare, sports medicine and general health. *Health Source: Consumer Edition* provides access to nearly 80 full text, consumer health magazines

TOPICsearch

TOPICsearch contains full text for over 150,961 articles from 475 diverse sources including international and regional newspapers, EBSCO's unparalleled collection of periodicals, biographies, public opinion polls, book reviews, pamphlets, and government information

10) Q. Is there more than one way to do a close read?

A. Yes, depending on the context, purpose and audience, there are different ways to lead a close read. Students should do an intensive analysis of a text in order to come to terms with what it says, how it says it, and what it means. Despite the various ways in which you can introduce a close read, there are certain essentials, which remain constant, which include text dependent questions, minimization of external explanations, and focus of attention on texts and ideas. Understanding the different ways that text can be complex will help teachers effectively plan instruction that supports students as they grapple with complex text.