

11 things parents need to know about the Common Core State Standards



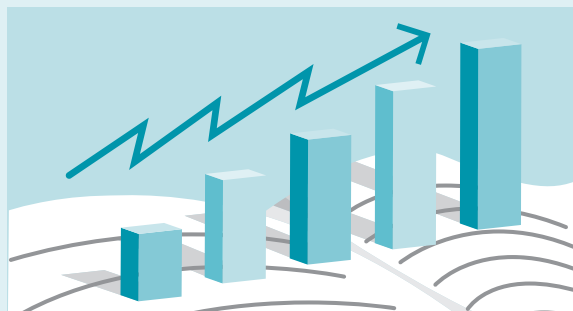
Studies show that parents and families have a huge impact on how well students learn in school. Here are important things you need to know:

What are the Common Core State Standards?

1 The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are rigorous academic requirements in important subject areas for grades K-12. Common Core standards emphasize critical thinking and effective communication.

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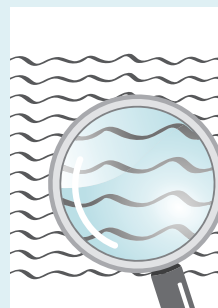


What subjects does the Common Core cover?

2 The Common Core State Standards outline the skills and content in English Language Arts and math that students should master in each grade. They also require that students in higher grades be able to read and write well not only in English, but also in social studies, science and technical subjects.

Why were the standards written and how will students benefit from them?

3 The Common Core standards were designed to make sure that students gain a more in-depth mastery of the knowledge and skills they will need to succeed in college and compete in the global workforce.



Because the standards have been adopted by the large majority of states, students across the country now have access to the same rigorous, world-class education.



Who developed the standards?

4 The standards were developed by education leaders, teachers, principals and parents in a state-led effort. They are state standards, not a federal government curriculum.



Does the Common Core tell teachers how to teach?

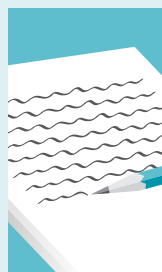
5 No. The Common Core standards don't tell teachers how to teach, or what books students should read. Instead, they are standards for what students should know at each grade level. Teachers create their own lessons for their students, just as they always have.



How does the Common Core affect what students learn in English Language Arts?

6 The standards cover reading, writing, speaking & listening, and language.

- **Reading:** Students are expected to read and understand texts of increasing complexity. They read more nonfiction material. In grade 6 and above, students read more in all of their subjects.



- **Writing:** Students do more writing in all of their classes. The CCSS require students to think critically and support opinions and ideas with evidence from things they've read. Students also conduct research projects.

- **Speaking & listening:** Students must learn how to give effective oral presentations, and gather information and points of view from one-on-one and group discussions with peers.

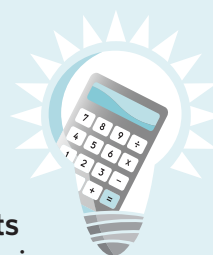


- **Language:** Students build their vocabularies through conversation and reading, and learn accepted English grammar.

How do the standards affect what students learn in math?

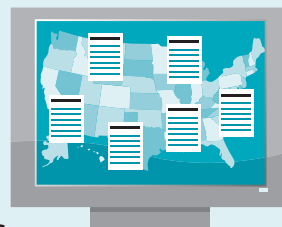
7 In math, students get more in-depth exposure to the most important skills and concepts. They will work on increasingly complex math concepts over the course of several grades, building on what they have already learned as they progress in school. In addition, they are expected to:

- **Make sense of problems** and stick with them until they solve them.
- **Reason abstractly** and calculate in context.
- **Construct valid arguments** and critique others' reasoning.
- **Apply what they have learned** to solve real-world problems.
- **Identify and use patterns** to help solve problems.



What about testing?

8 Each state chooses which standardized tests to give its students. The tests are primarily online. There is a test at the end of the year, and there may also be assessments during the year to see if lesson adjustments need to be made. The tests assess students' critical thinking: instead of being tested only on facts, students are expected to apply the skills they have learned. In the tests' first years, this increased rigor may produce lower student scores.



How can I help my child?

9 There are no special skills required to help your child meet the standards. But there are many great ways to support school success. Here are five:

1. **Make sure** your child attends school on time every day.
2. **Make time** for reading with your child every day. Be a reading role model.
3. **Monitor** your child's homework and be aware of her progress.
4. **Ask your child** about school every day.
5. **Stay in contact** with teachers, especially if your child is struggling.

What about homework?

10 To support the standards at home:

- **Ask your child** to predict what will happen next while he's reading.
- **Encourage your child** to relate what he is learning to things he already knows.
- **Urge your child** to write. Read what he's written and praise the things he did right.
- **Help your child** discover resources: the Internet, newspapers, experts, the library.



How can I get more information?

11 You can find detailed information online at: www.corestandards.org.

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