

SHIFTING TO COMMON CORE LITERACY

Reconceptualizing How We Teach & Lead

CHERYL ZINTGRAFF TIBBALS
VICTORIA L. BERNHARDT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

About the Authors xiii

**INTRODUCTION We're Not in
Kansas Anymore** 1

Intended Audience 1

The Purpose—A Time to Rethink CCSS

Implementation Efforts 2

Chapter Descriptions 3

Epilogue 5

Tools and Resources 5

Bon Voyage! 6

**CHAPTER 1 Where Are We Now?
Standards Déjà Vu** 9

Technological Advances: Anyone Know What
a Zettabyte Is? 10

Where the United States Stands: Closing the
Thinking Gap—Can We Be What We Were? 11

College Readiness: Stuck in College and Can't
Get Out? 12

The Need for Knowledge Workers 13

Out of the Old World and Into the New 13

Moving Out of the Teaching Factory: Robots for
Sale, Thinkers for Hire 14

We Are What We Learn 15

The Global Race to the Top 15

Questions for Reflection and Collaborative
Discussion 16

CHAPTER 2 Back to the Future: Road to the Core	19
The 1980s and Moving Beyond the Bubble	19
The Poetry of Logical Ideas.	20
A Nation at Risk	21
Discontent in America	22
The 1990s and the Fall of the Wall	23
National Education Goals	24
National Education Goals Panel: From Inputs to Outputs.	24
A Nation at Risk Is No Longer a Nation at Rest	25
Discrepancies in Evaluating State Standards: My State’s Standards Got an F, Really?	26
The Dot-Com Crash and the Start of a New Century	27
Into the New Millennium With No Child Left Behind	27
Narrowing the Curriculum and Making All Students Proficient by 2014	28
NCLB and Closing the Achievement Gap	29
Addressing Teacher Quality	30
Gaming the System—Voodoo Statistics.	30
The Awakening.	31
The Great Recession	32
A Perfect Storm	33
The Common Core and a Race to the Top	33
In a Time of Drastic Change	34
Questions for Reflection and Collaborative Discussion	35
CHAPTER 3 International Benchmarking: Go East, Young Man! Far East!	37
While America Took a Nap	37
A Global Report Card	38
Can U.S. Students Access, Retrieve, Integrate, Interpret, Reflect, and Evaluate?	39
Can We See the CCSS in a PISA Task?	39
How Have U.S. Students Performed on the PISA?	42
What Can We Learn From the PISA?	44
Inequity—The United States Has Work To Do	45
The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study	46
Some Good News!	47
A Sample PIRLS Released Item	47
What Can We Learn From the PIRLS?	51

How Can the PIRLS Data Inform the Common Core?	51
The American Education Roller Coaster	53
The Nation’s Report Card.	54
How Does the NAEP in Reading Compare to the CCSS?	56
Can We Talk Write Our Way Out of This?	57
How Does the NAEP in Writing Compare to the Common Core?	58
NAEP Resources for Teachers and Students.	58
And the Point Is?.	59
Questions for Reflection and Collaborative Discussion	60
CHAPTER 4 Ready, Set, Shift: Three Seismic Shifts to Move Us Into the 21st Century	61
Shift 1: Regular Practice With Complex Text and Its Academic Language—Changing the Learning Landscape	62
An Academic Bermuda Triangle	63
Text Complexity	64
The Quantitative Measure of Text Complexity—Anchoring Text Complexity to College Expectations	65
Text Selection—Setting College and Career Examples Starting in Kindergarten	69
Are We There Yet?	69
Shift 2: Reading, Writing, and Speaking Grounded in Evidence From Both Literary and Informational Text.	70
Shift 3: Building Knowledge Through Content-Rich Nonfiction.	72
“But I Teach Literature,” Says the English Teacher.	73
“I Teach Content, Not Reading,” Says the Science Teacher.	73
Deep Data Dig Into the Shifts	76
Questions for Reflection and Collaborative Discussion	78
CHAPTER 5 A Core That’s Not So Common—Are the CCSS Really That Different From Recent State Standards?	81
Anchor and Grade-Specific Standards	82
How Are the Grade-Specific Standards Grouped?	85
The Content-Literacy Gap.	85
Interconnectedness of the Standards—More Bang for the Buck	87
Out of the Silos—A Call for Collaboration.	87

The Ubiquitous Nature of Research, Media, and Technology	88
Learning Progressions—Avoiding Learning Potholes	88
Power Standards?	90
Impact Standards	91
Reading Anchor Standard One—The “Show Me the Money” Standard	91
Reading Anchor Standard Ten—The Accessibility Standard	92
Have an Opinion! Can You Support It? Prove It!—Writing Anchor Standards One and Nine and Speaking and Listening Standard Four	92
Additional Resources for Comprehending the Standards	94
Changing Course	95
Questions for Reflection and Collaborative Discussion	96
CHAPTER 6 A Deep Dive Into the CCSS	99
Parts-Is-Parts Instruction	100
Engaging Students in Work Worth Doing and Tests Worth Taking	102
Teaching the Whole Standard or Not?	105
Standards Study—Digging Into the CCSS	106
Putting Humpty Dumpty Together Again	107
Reading to Build Content Knowledge—Vision or Lottery?	109
In Summary—A Lesson on Standards From the Big Box Stores	109
Questions for Reflection and Collaborative Discussion	110
CHAPTER 7 Centering CCSS in CSI	113
The Gorilla in the Room	114
A Shared Vision—Getting to Where We Want to Get To	115
A Protocol: Developing a CCSS Shared Vision	117
Step 1: Kick Off the Collaborative Work—Large Group	118
Step 2: Review the Big Picture of Creating a Shared Vision—Large Group	118
Step 3: Create Individual Values and Beliefs—Small Group	119
Step 4: Merge Individual Thinking on Values and Beliefs in Small Groups	119
Step 5: Merge Small-Group Thinking on Values and Beliefs Into the Whole Group	119
Step 6: Agree on the School’s Purpose in the Large Group	122
Step 7: Develop a Mission Statement in the Large Group	122
Step 8: Review Core Values and Beliefs, and Record Individual Thoughts About Vision	123

Step 9: Merge Individual Thoughts of the Vision to Small-Group Visions	123
Time to Change Ships	133
Questions for Reflection and Collaborative Discussion	133
CHAPTER 8 Role Over! New Roles in the CCSS School . . .	135
A Teacher With a Vision of What Learning Should Look Like	138
On Being Transformers	139
A Change in Roles	139
Out-of-Role Thinking	140
A Protocol for Developing CCSS Roles	141
Sharing the Small-Group Role Descriptions Charts With the Large Group . . .	160
Melding the Small-Group Role Descriptions Into a Schoolwide Role Description Chart	161
Developing the Student Role	161
Developing the Teacher Role	162
Developing the Principal Role	162
Developing the District Role	163
Transforming Role Descriptions Into Action Plans	164
Using a Professional Learning Plan to Support the Shared Vision	175
The Cost of Transforming and Not	175
Questions for Reflection and Collaborative Discussion	177
Epilogue	179
Thinking Outside the Box	179
Leaping Over the Rainbow	180
References and Resources	183
Index	193

students for success in college and careers in this 21st century. Couple this with a blueprint for developing a shared vision of a CCSS school that gives growth to new roles for students, teachers, principals, and district leaders, and what we accomplish might seem almost magical.

The authors hope that this book will assist all of those involved in implementing the Common Core State Standards in their state, district, or school, including the following.

- Teachers
- District and school leaders
- Professional learning providers
- District and school support staffs
- College education professors and their students
- Nonprofit organizations that are professional learning providers
- Policymakers whose work influences the implementation of the Common Core

The Purpose—A Time to Rethink CCSS Implementation Efforts

The purpose of this book is to help state, district, and school staffs that may feel that their Common Core implementation efforts could benefit from a re-examination or that they are not exactly on track, are out of sync, or are losing momentum. The Common Core brings with it significant shifts in how students learn, teachers teach, and leaders lead. From the Core arise new challenges that can be both exciting and daunting. After only a short period of implementation, schools now face new and demanding assessments for which they most likely do not feel ready. The fact that almost every state in the United States adopted these new standards has increased public attention and focus on both the CCSS and the new assessments. While the majority of Americans seem solidly behind the standards, some places are experiencing a backlash that can be disheartening to educators who are trying very hard to create and implement CCSS programs that will prepare their students for the global workplace they will enter.

While most district and school staffs across the United States realized from the start that the CCSS were more rigorous than past state standards, until they got deeper into the implementation of the Common Core, they probably did not realize just how much more demanding these standards are. The sample items and tasks

from the new assessments bring focus to this. States that did crosswalks of their state standards with the CCSS may have underestimated the differences between them. Districts and schools who believed that just tweaking their past instructional programs would suffice are probably realizing that tweaking isn't enough.

Chapter Descriptions

For those leading, as well as those supporting, the district or school transformation to the Common Core and 21st century learning, this book provides the kind of information and resources required to *reconceptualize* what and how students learn.

Chapter 1, “Where Are We Now?” highlights some of the economic, societal, and educational demands of U.S. society today. In this chapter, the authors discuss the needs of the 21st century workplace, the explosion in digital information, the rise of the knowledge worker, the mismatch between secondary and postsecondary education expectations, and the need to move out of the 20th century factory model of schooling into the information age. Understanding the shifts in American society since the 1960s helps us understand the shifts in the Common Core.

Chapter 2, “Back to the Future,” offers educational leaders a snapshot of the educational, historical, and political context from which the Common Core arose. Key events, reports, and studies provide insights into why and how these standards were developed. With knowledge and context about how the CCSS arose, educational leaders, teachers, professional development providers, and policymakers will acquire a deeper understanding of the standards themselves and the kind of instructional programs they are designed to support.

Chapter 3, “International Benchmarking,” discusses briefly how U.S. students perform on international assessments and on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). It provides teachers, leaders, and professional development providers sample questions and tasks from two international assessments, tasks that pose difficulty for many U.S. students. Why is this information valuable to classroom teachers and instructional leaders? It is valuable because the Common Core was benchmarked internationally. These sample items offer us insight into the content and demands of the CCSS.

Chapter 4, “Ready, Set, Shift,” takes readers deep into the three major shifts reflected in the Common Core State Standards for English language arts and literacy and discusses the significant implications of these shifts for leadership, curriculum, instruction, and assessment. This chapter reveals the connections between the shifts and the demand to be college and career ready in the global workplace. Understanding these shifts provides teachers and leaders with a deeper understanding

of the instructional implications of the standards, as well as an effective way to explain the CCSS to their publics. It helps district and school leaders to reconceptualize leadership in a CCSS world and provides them with the knowledge they need to help their staffs effectively implement the CCSS schoolwide.

Chapter 5, “A Core That’s Not So Common,” walks leaders, policymakers, and professional learning providers through an informative review of the Common Core’s organization, content, design, and intent, pointing out the relationship between the college and career readiness anchor standards (CCRA) and the grade-specific standards and the interconnectedness of the standards within and across CCSS strands and content areas. For district and school leaders and professional development providers, routine re-examination of the structure and content of the CCSS is an important part of checking for understanding to ensure the district’s and school’s implementation efforts are on track. We can get lost in the standards if we don’t remind ourselves continually of how the CCSS collectively represent something much grander than each standard alone.

Chapter 6, “A Deep Dive Into the CCSS,” discusses why the parts-is-parts standards-based instruction of the past (teaching primarily to isolated pieces of deconstructed standards) is insufficient in preparing students to be 21st century knowledge workers. Unpacking the CCSS has advantages for both the teacher and student, but the standards must eventually be repacked and assessed holistically so students realize the full impact of the standard in the context of relevant work. This chapter discusses the value of a more holistic approach to standards-based instruction and assessment that readies students for the kinds of work they will be expected to do in college and beyond. For teachers, district and school instructional leaders, and professional development providers, this requires rethinking lesson selection and design to avoid the type of decontextualized instruction we have too frequently seen in the past.

Chapter 7, “Centering CCSS in CSI,” addresses one of the biggest misconceptions related to the CCSS—that just tweaking an existing continuous school-improvement (CSI) plan to accommodate the CCSS is enough. The authors suggest that the intent of the CCSS cannot be realized without staff developing a *shared vision* of what a CCSS school ought to look like. It is from this shared vision that the CSI plan should grow. This chapter provides processes and a protocol to develop a transformational shared vision of a CCSS school—what it looks like, what students are doing, what teachers are doing, what core values and beliefs the school reflects, and whether the students are doing relevant work that reflects 21st century skills akin to the Framework for 21st Century Learning (Partnership for 21st Century Learning, n.d.). A sample CCSS shared vision is included in the chapter.

Chapter 8, “Role Over!” outlines a process that district and school leaders and professional learning providers can use to guide staff through the reconceptualization of their roles based on the school’s *shared vision* of what a CCSS school ought to be. This chapter provides a protocol for identifying the roles of students, teachers, principals, and school and district support staff members in a CCSS-true school. The process starts with the student’s role. The student’s role defines the roles of teachers, school leaders, and district leaders. As with any major change, schools will require professional development and other resources to support the role changes that must occur to sustain the staff’s shared vision. The authors provide a template that can be used in developing a professional learning plan to support role changes.

Epilogue

The epilogue briefly describes how some of America’s top innovators used out-of-the-box thinking and encourages educators at the school and district levels to apply this kind of thinking as they implement their new roles. For district and school leaders and professional development providers, the shared vision, role descriptions chart, role-implementation plan, and professional learning plan form the start of a new CCSS continuous school-improvement plan designed to prepare students for the global workplace they will enter. The Epilogue ends with some thoughts about what makes students want to come to school to learn and how effective implementation of the CCSS can help our students achieve their 21st century dreams.

Tools and Resources

At the end of each chapter, there are questions to stimulate deep discussions in collaborative work groups, schoolwide communities of professional practice (CoPPs), or professional learning communities (PLCs). The questions grow out of the concepts and tools introduced and discussed in each chapter.

Visit go.hbe.com.au to download the following reproducibles described in this book.

- **Shared Vision Templates:** Blank Shared Vision Chart Templates for Instruction, Curriculum, Assessment, and Learning Environment for staffs to use to develop their own shared visions
- **“CCSS Role Descriptions Chart”:** A template for developing the new role descriptions for students, principals, and school and district support staff
- **“CCSS Role-Implementation Plan”:** A template for describing the kinds of instructional supports, facility modifications, and technology required to implement the new role descriptions