

Communications Tips for Teachers



Welcome!

These tips were gathered from a variety of online resources available to help educators communicate about Common Core implementation and assessment.

Current Situation

- We're in Transition
 - In this first year of testing parents and guardians will naturally have questions
- Teachers are on the front line of parent communication
 - As the easiest person to ask for clarification and answers, teachers are in the hot seat
- Teachers need clear responses to parent questions and concerns
 - Consistent messages help mitigate confusion and the ability of critics to use inconsistency to muddle and complicate the story.

Effective Practices for Addressing Tough Questions

Effective Practices

- Anticipate Concerns – Practice Response
 - Be prepared
- Acknowledge Concerns – Be Empathetic
 - It's an adjustment for everyone
- Remain Neutral
 - Keep tone congenial and body language friendly

Effective Practices – the Hostile Questioner

- Listen thoughtfully
 - Maintain eye contact
 - Stay relaxed
 - Set a reasonable tone
- Rephrase the question using neutral words before responding
- Share your experiences, if applicable – a personal story can diffuse tension

Effective Practices – escalate if necessary

- Refer unsatisfied parents to your principal

Some Key Talking Points

We're Preparing for a New Future

- Our students will live and work in the world of tomorrow
- We had to update our curriculum to match the demands students will face
- Tomorrow's need? Workers who are:
 - Adaptable
 - Can apply knowledge to unpredictable problems
 - Can find information, assess its value and integrate it to arrive at creative solutions

We've built up to this moment

- Implementation of the new approach has been a process
 - Teachers have been learning new practices
 - The curriculum has been remodeled
 - Now the annual test will give us a measure of our progress

The test is like your child's regular check-up with the pediatrician

- Provides a consistent check on progress - Is the student meeting expected milestones?
- Allows teachers and parents to measure growth year to year
- Provides information that teachers and parents can act on – is focused support needed?



Tests provide Information

- Information is used to show us where we need to improve teaching
- Information is used to target support before students fall too far off track
- The annual test is just one measure along with classroom projects and assessments

Addressing Concerns about Time

- Less than 1% of the school year is spent on the annual statewide test
- Since the test measures the skills and knowledge we teach all year, there is no focus on test preparation
- There's no time limit – students have the time they need to show what they know and can do

Talking Points – What's New about the Test

Assesses Desired Skills

- Problem Solving Perseverance
- Application of Knowledge
- Listening
- Reading Complex Texts
- Research

New Problem Types: More Engaging - 4th Grade Math

43328



Jared is testing how much weight a bag can hold. He plans to put juice bottles into three bags. He wants each bag to have a total weight within the given range.

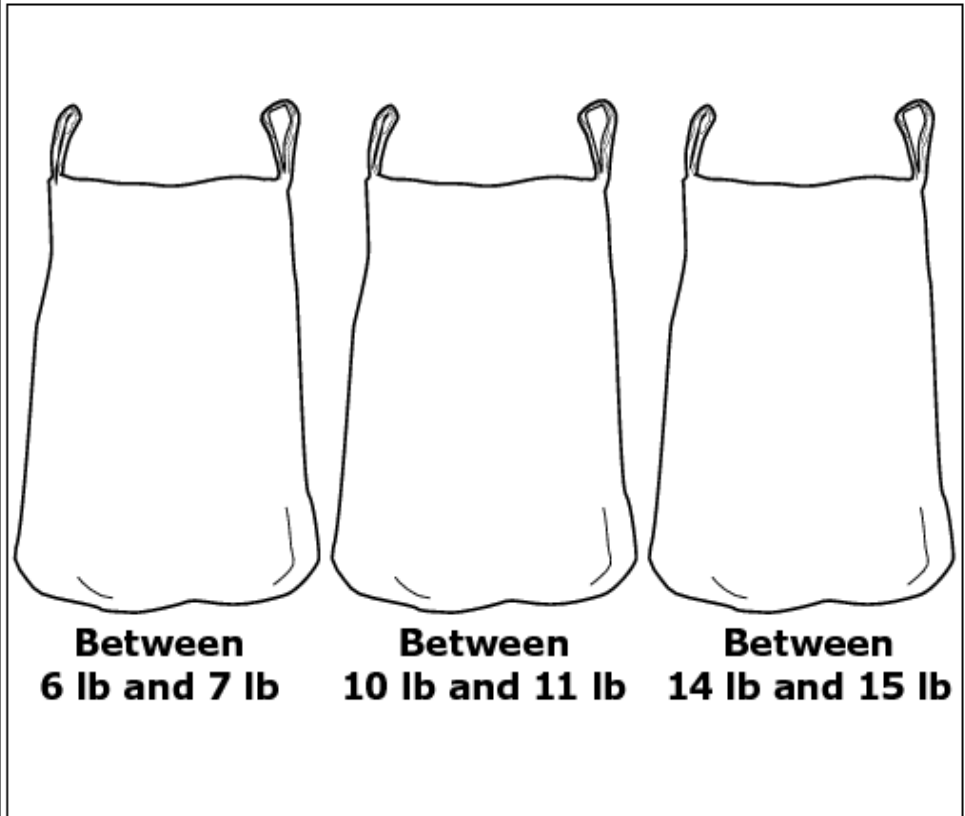
- Drag juice bottles into each bag so that the weight is within the given range.
- Leave the bag empty if the given range is not possible using juice bottles.

Click and Drag
animation



$3\frac{5}{8}$ lb

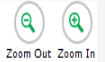
Delete



Three empty bags are shown, each with a different weight range below it:

- Between 6 lb and 7 lb
- Between 10 lb and 11 lb
- Between 14 lb and 15 lb

New Problem Types: Challenging Tasks – 5th Grade Math



COMMUNITY GARDEN

Your class is going to plant vegetables in a section of the local community garden. The garden manager has provided an area to plant the vegetables as follows:

The total area for the class to plant vegetables will be a rectangle 40 feet long and 30 feet wide.

The class has decided to plant four rectangular sections of the class garden with vegetables according to this plan:

- **1/4 of the garden will be planted with carrots.**
- **1/6 of the garden will be planted with potatoes.**
- **1/8 of the garden will be planted with broccoli.**
- **1/12 of the garden will be planted with corn.**

In this task, you will analyze the class plan and determine an alternate plan that will help make the most use of the available area.

“Analyze the class plan and determine an alternative that will help make the most of the available area “

- Drawn from real life
- Requires multiple steps
- No one right answer

1

Using the connect line tool, draw rectangles on this model of the garden to represent the four rectangular sections for planting vegetables according to the class plan. The garden model is divided into 5 feet by 5 feet sections.

- Use whole number side lengths.
- Each square on the model represents 1 square foot.
- Drag the correct label that shows the vegetable for each section.

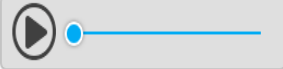
New Problem Types: Listening Questions – 7th Grade ELA



A Human Wall for Baby Turtles

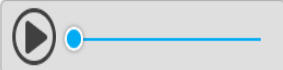
Listen to the presentation

Listen to the presentation. Then answer the questions.



Click to hear the meaning of the word below.

Instinct



Audio glossaries for words above grade level

Asks students to provide evidence for answers

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The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A

What is the **most likely** reason the author made the presentation?

- Ⓐ to explain how animals' natural behavior can be harmful
- Ⓑ to give an example of humans helping animals
- Ⓒ to prove that city lights are harmful to turtles
- Ⓓ to teach a lesson on the life cycle of turtles

Part B

Which detail from the presentation **best** supports your answer in part A?

- Baby turtles are born on the same beach as their mothers.
- Baby turtles go towards bright light because of their instincts.
- The baby turtles were guided to the ocean by a wall of people.
- Lights from houses, hotels, and airports make turtles go the wrong way.

Meaning in Context – 11th Grade ELA

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A student is writing a critical review for the high school newspaper about an upcoming music revue. Read the draft of the review and complete the task that follows.

The high school music revue is always one of the most eagerly anticipated events of the school year. With more than fifteen acts taking part in the proceedings, this year's event was of a very high caliber. Particularly impressive was when the high school orchestra closed the event with a series of ragtime classics. Performing their closing number for a second time, the orchestra returned to the stage at the end of the night for what would be a richly received segment.

The student wants to make sure that his word choices are appropriate to inform his audience about the upcoming music revue. Choose the **best two** words to replace the underlined word.

- interlude
- sequel
- encore
- overture
- reprise
- prelude

Choose the best two words to replace the underlined word

More than one answer

Unique Accessibility Features: Example - Pop Up Glossary

9

George earns

raise

Glossary

higher pay

...ves a 20% raise.

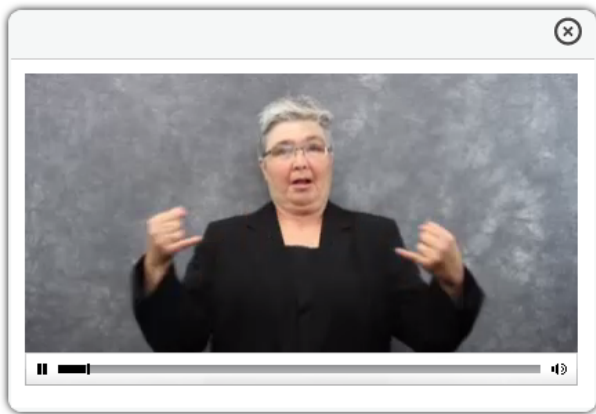
How can George calculate his new weekly pay rate?

Roll cursor over shadowed words – glossary pops up

Select **all** calculations that will result in George's new weekly pay rate.

- divide \$455 by 0.20
- divide \$455 by 1.20
- multiply \$455 by 0.20
- multiply \$455 by 1.20
- solve for x : $\frac{x}{455} = \frac{120}{100}$
- solve for x : $\frac{455}{x} = \frac{20}{100}$

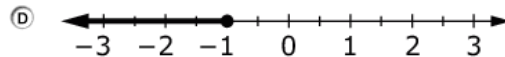
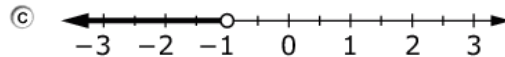
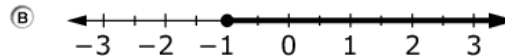
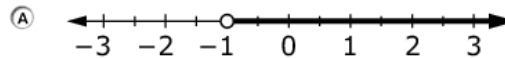
Unique Accessibility Features: Example - American Sign Language Videos



3



Which number line shows the solution to the inequality $-3x - 5 < -2$?



Talking Points about Scores

Results: Last Year's vs. This Year's

It's Like Apples and Oranges – you can't compare

The old test measured different skills

Overall Scores – 2 Areas, 4 Levels

English Language Arts and Mathematics



Additional Scores – 3 levels, 8 topics



Above Standard

English Language Arts

1. Reading
2. Writing
3. Speaking & Listening
4. Research/Inquiry



At/Near Standard

Mathematics

1. Concepts & Procedures
2. Problem Solving
3. Communicating Reasoning
4. Modeling & Data Analysis



Below Standard

A Framework for Interpretation

It's a beginning– this year's score is your baseline.

It's a transition – results may show fewer students have the skills right now, but we are on the right path.

It's the information we need – to help prepare kids for college and careers.

Practice Role Plays

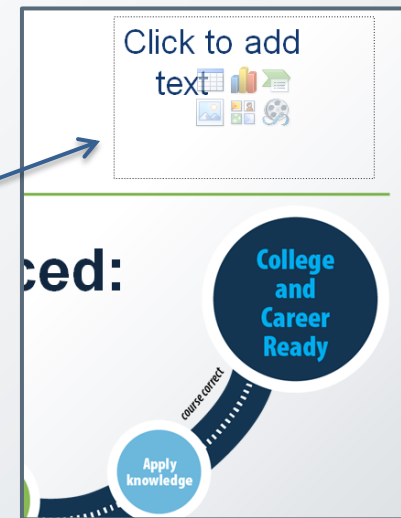
Customizing this Deck

To pick the slides you want to use:

- Choose View Tab - choose Normal
- In the slide list on left, right-click on the slide you don't want – select “Hide Slide” at the bottom of the menu

To Brand with School Logo and Colors

- Look for insert box on cover slides
- Cut and past logo there



Customizing this Deck

To change color scheme

- Click View tab → click Slide Master choice
- Titles: Select slide → highlight header text → click Home tab → choose text color → return to View tab
- Body: Select slide → highlight body text → click Home tab → choose text color → return to View tab
- Green line: Select slide → highlight line → click Home tab → select Shape Outline → choose color → return to View tab
- When all changes are made → click Slide Master tab → click Close Slide Master view

The changes should apply to all slides in the deck.

The colors on the Graphics provided will not change.