

ELA REPORTER



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YOUR PROFESSIONAL RESOURCE FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY

A HEART FOR EDUCATION

CAROLYN WATERS, ELA PROGRAM MANAGER

I have been fortunate to travel across the state of Georgia and meet the most incredible teachers! It is both humbling and exhilarating to know how hard you work and how many challenges you face with such dedication and dignity!

We have set our feet on a course toward cultivating a mutual understanding of what is necessary to elevate student achievement. Indeed, it is in our best interests to do so! We share a universal desire to be more deliberate and more focused on the *right* things. How do we maintain the integrity of our classrooms in the face of so many challenges? Polonius, one of Shakespeare's most endearing characters in *Hamlet* gives timeless advice, "To thine own self be true!" Take heart – all of you – for the TEACHER remains the single-most important cornerstone of the institution of education. I believe that with all my heart! Having said that, I wish to share a few insights that have been gleaned from conversations I've had with teachers, RESA specialists, ELA Advisory Committee members, and administrators.

Here are the key shifts upon which to focus:

- ◆ Close reading strategies (increasing reading stamina)
- ◆ Text-based evidence
- ◆ Writing from sources (including multiple sources and in all genres: narrative, explanatory, argument)
- ◆ Academic language (analyze, synthesize, compare, evaluate, etc.)
- ◆ Text complexity
- ◆ Importance of argument (claim/counterclaim)
- ◆ Emphasis on informational text (across the disciplines)
- ◆ Creating a collaborative culture
- ◆ Calibrating or "norming" the scoring of essays

The greatest challenges we face are inherent in **reading** complex texts and **writing** to demonstrate a deep understanding. **Reading? Writing?** Sound familiar? We English teachers travel in circles, don't we?

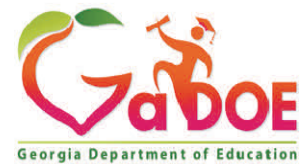
Jim Burke (2015) advises us "to be intentional when choosing texts, topics, tasks, tests, technology, and techniques"; in other words, teach by design. Commit to "sustained inquiry," using a full range of literacies. Understand "Learning Progressions" of increasing complexity, and "emphasize depth" over breadth. It sounds easy, right? Wrong! We will focus our efforts on providing Georgia teachers with resources that can help us achieve higher goals!

Teachers, there is no silver bullet! You must rely on your own creativity and passion to create excitement for learning, to cultivate a love of learning, and to reach every child! There has never been a scripted program that can do what you do! Together, we can meet any challenge! In the meantime, remember to write positive messages on as many hearts as you can....

Georgia
Department
of Education

Richard Woods,
Georgia's School
Superintendent

"Educating Georgia's Future"



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BUILDING STRONG FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Foundational Skills K–5

Comprehensive Reading Solutions, in collaboration with the Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) Program, has provided professional learning modules for use with birth through grade twelve literacy instruction. The SRCL Professional Development Architects: Michael C. McKenna, Pd.D., University of Virginia, Sharon Walpole, University of Delaware and Terri Purcell, Ph.D., Cleveland State University have developed research-based learning modules that have been added to the Comprehensive Reading Solutions website. The site has been established to archive and provide contracted services for direct teacher professional learning (specific to early literacy, elementary, middle, and high school). The modules provide free access to professional learning that may be used to support literacy instruction. The content of the professional learning modules include topics (but not limited to) Assessment, Language & Literacy Development, Building Basic Skills, Strategies for Student Reading, Teaching Vocabulary and Writing. The modules may be used independently, in a study group, or within a professional learning community.

Comprehensive Reading Solutions has designed a Building Foundational Skills modules to help with understanding foundational skills (Print Concepts, Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Word Recognition, and Fluency). The modules emphasize the importance of allowing teachers to build their capacity for helping students master foundational reading skills.

To access these modules, click here: <http://www.comprehensivereadingsolutions.com/building-foundational-skills/>



Home About Birth-Pre K Grades K-5 Grades 6-12 Contact

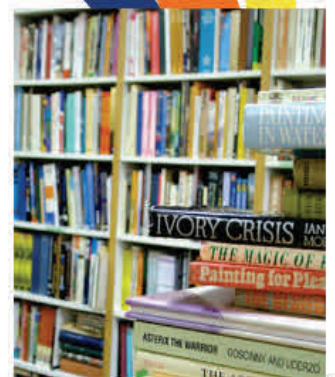
Building Foundational Skills



This module is designed to help administrators and teacher leaders understand the role of foundational skills (print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, and fluency) in the overall design of the Common Core State Standards. We provide a rationale for reexamining your existing instructional materials for their match to the accelerated grade-level expectations of the CCSS and several choices to consider if they are not.

Related Modules

- [Rethinking Shared Reading Professional Development for Principals](#)
- [Interactive Read Alouds](#)
- [Planning the ELA Block](#)



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print all

Planning to Build Foundational Skills

Instructional leaders are faced with the reality of the Common Core State Standards – whether they want to be or not. In this module, meant for leaders, we provide our take on the role of foundational skills in CCSS implementation.

Learn More



One of our go-to websites is Reading Rockets. Here



USA TODAY with in-text assessments on Curriculet – Free!

USA TODAY is now available exclusively on Curriculet’s digital reading platform. Curriculet’s exclusive partnership with USA TODAY provides leveled in-text assessments for elementary, middle and high school and real time reports that show student progress on each reading assignment.

Curriculet’s easy-to-use platform provides 1000’s of texts embedded with standards-aligned questions, annotations, videos, images and other rich media (“curriculets”). Teachers can use Curriculets as is, edit them or create their own using our platform.

The best news?

USA TODAY, the in-text assessments and the real time data are FREE to access this spring.

Go to [curriculet.com](https://www.curriculet.com)

Click the Join Free button - <https://www.curriculet.com/signup>

Create a teacher account.

Have your students create student accounts. - <https://www.curriculet.com/signup>

Access **USA TODAY** and many other texts with embedded instruction for free.

Watch your students’ reading skills progress with real time, assignment-level data.

Curriculet is also creating a summer reading program that you won’t want to miss. If you are interested in making it available to your students, please email Julie@curriculet.com

“Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember.

Involve me and I learn.”

- Benjamin Franklin

Resource We Recommend



The [Innovation in Teaching Competition: Beyond the Textbook](#) began as part of Georgia's Race to the Top plan to create and support highly-effective teachers. The competition has two main goals. First, to recognize and reward educators from across our state who are using innovative strategies in teaching the CCGPS. And second, to make videos of the winning teachers, along with their unit plans and supplementary materials, available to all Georgia educators.

On this site, you will find videos, unit plans, and supplementary materials from these winning teachers. These resources represent a variety of grade levels and innovative strategies, from project-based and applied learning to differentiated small group instruction and creative classroom management techniques. All of the resources you will find here are real unit plans created by real teachers, and are designed to help you as you implement the CCGPS in your own classrooms. Most importantly, though, we hope that these resources will help your students learn in new ways – off the grid, past the classroom walls, and beyond the textbook.

Resources and videos of the Innovation in Teaching can be accessed at the following link:

<https://www.georgiastandards.org/resources/Pages/Innovation-in-Teaching-Competition-Beyond-the-Textbook.aspx>

While the Competition is a Race To the Top (RT3) Initiative, we recommend you check the site periodically for updates and/or continuation of the program.

Join Our ListServ and Check out our Wikis

One of the best ways to stay connected for information specific to your grade band is through our listserv (email list).

No username or password required

ELA K-5	Join-ela-k-5@list.doe.k12.ga.us
ELA 6-8	Join-ela-6-8@list.doe.k12.ga.us
ELA 9-12	Join-ela-9-12@list.doe.k12.ga.us
ELA District Support	Join-ela-districtsupport@list.doe.k12.ga.us
ELA Administrators	Join-ela-admin@list.doe.k12.ga.us

Wikis:

High School Wiki: <http://elaccgps9-12.wikispaces.com/>
 Middle Wiki: <http://georgiaelaccgps6-8.wikispaces.com/>
 Elementary Wiki: <http://georgiaelaccgpsk-5.wikispaces.com/>



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Richard Woods, Georgia's School Superintendent
 "Educating Georgia's Future"

How Can We Help?

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DOE ELA Home Page:

[http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/](http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/ci_services.aspx)

[ci_services.aspx?](http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/ci_services.aspx)

[PageReq=CIServEnglish](http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/ci_services.aspx)

GeorgiaStandards.Org ELA Page:

[https://www.georgiastandards.org/](https://www.georgiastandards.org/Common-Core/Pages/ELA.aspx)
[Common-Core/Pages/ELA.aspx](https://www.georgiastandards.org/Common-Core/Pages/ELA.aspx)