



April Showers and Core Advocate News

We hope everyone is enjoying spring, even if your April showers are snow showers! The end of the school year is in sight, and this month's newsletter provides classroom resources, learning opportunities, and inspiration from other Core Advocates. You will see lots of information connected to our recent work creating resources for supporting English Language Learners (ELLs). Student Achievement Partners is gearing up for our big May Core Advocate convening, *Learn, Lead, Impact!* Even if you aren't able to join us in Denver, we hope you'll engage with the learning on Twitter (search for #CoreAdvocates to see the latest updates) during the weekend of May 19–20. And we always encourage you to help grow the Core Advocate network by engaging your colleagues! Forward this newsletter to a friend, or have them join you for an upcoming webinar. The strength of the Core Advocate network lies in all of YOU!

Jump to April 2018 Highlights

[Upcoming Webinars](#)

[Present a Session in May!](#)

[Resources for Supporting ELLs](#)

Core Advocate Learning

Webinars

[Assessing Literacy: A Model for using Achieve the Core's ELA mini-Assessments](#)

SAP's literacy mini-assessments were designed to provide teachers with ready-

to-use assessments for their classrooms. These resources, however, are far more than an individual assessment tool: they can serve as a model for the creation of higher-level assessments in your classroom. In next month's webinar, Core Advocates from Kentucky will discuss how they have used the mini-assessments in their schools and districts, and will explain concrete steps you can take to integrate the mini-assessments into your classrooms, PLCs, and districts. You will also learn how to use the mini-assessments as a model to create your own rigorous assessments. Join us on May 2, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. Eastern for this informative webinar!



[Register for the May Core Advocate Webinar](#)

Collaborative Learning with Math Mini-Assessments

Looking for ways to engage grade-level teams in content-rich conversations that carry over into classroom practice? In this webinar, participants will engage with SAP-developed math mini-assessments and discuss the benefits of using them as part of a collaborative learning structure. The step-by-step process used to examine a mini-assessment with grade-level teams will be shared and elaborated upon. Come join on Wednesday, June 6, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. Eastern as we discuss ways to use resources within existing structures and deepen your understanding of the mini-assessment!

[Register for the June Core Advocate Webinar](#)

Now Accepting Proposals for Core Advocate Showcase Sessions

Our May Core Advocate convening *Learn, Lead, Impact!* will feature hour-long showcase sessions where attendees can share their Instructional Advocacy efforts with the broader network. This is your chance to share how you've made a difference in your school, district, or state, and inspire others to learn, lead and create impact in their settings! Don't be shy - we know you are doing great things! Applications for showcase sessions are being accepted now through Wednesday, April 11, 2018. Click [here](#) for more information and [here](#) to submit your proposal.

In the News

Positive Results Teaching Math to English Language Learners

A [report](#) recently released by Education Trust – West highlights the successes of several districts in California in closing the achievement gap in mathematics that exists between native English speakers and those learning the language. The report's recommendations include:

- Adopting and/or developing instructional materials such as language-rich collaborative math tasks.
- Facilitating structured opportunities for English Language Development (ELD) and math specialists to work together across schools and districts to support teachers and integrate ELD into the math curriculum.
- Reducing tracking in math classes and providing open access to advanced courses with appropriate language supports for ELLs.

Learn more about the report and the district efforts in [this article](#).



Helping Students Become Better Writers

The Common Core State Standards have raised the bar for student writing, and many educators are struggling to hit the mark with their students. Organizations like the [National Writing Project](#) are tackling this challenge by providing online professional learning and resources for teachers to advance their writing instruction. Read more [here](#).

Resources

Supporting English Language Learners

Writing and Discussion

Written work and classroom discussions are a critical part of college- and career-ready instruction and your English Language Learners CAN participate in these rich learning opportunities with the right support. Try some of [these scaffolding techniques](#) to support ELLs in accessing grade-level writing and discussion activities

Using the Academic Word Finder

The [Academic Word Finder](#) now features guidance on using the word lists produced by the tool to support English Language Learners. As always, you can copy and paste any

text into the Academic Word Finder to generate a list of academic vocabulary words, definitions, and sample sentences. But what then? The Academic Word Finder now features a new resource: Using the Word List and ELL Supports to help users tailor the list to support ELL needs and identify effective, evidence-based activities to reinforce new vocabulary.

Design Juicy Sentence Discussions

Written language is different than everyday spoken English, and can pose comprehension challenges for all students, but especially English Language Learners. Structure classroom discussions focused on helping students take apart a sentence to discover how vocabulary, syntax, and grammatical choices convey meaning. [This new protocol](#) helps teachers identify "juicy sentences," provides a 10-step protocol for conducting a classroom discussion, and includes video examples. Special thanks for [Core Advocate Aaron Grossman](#) who helped design the protocol!

For Your Classroom

Free Resources – Elementary Art

Are you looking for resources to support elementary students' arts education? Check out the free resources offered by [Doodles Academy](#). Doodles is designed to minimize teacher prep, and to prepare educators of all backgrounds to offer their students a high-quality art experience. Doodles' resources are aligned to the National Art Standards, the Common Core Standards, and the research behind Shift 3. Interested in hearing more about the benefits of school-wide implementation? Doodles is looking for partner schools right now to pilot brand new, ELA aligned modules-- [email here](#) for more information!



Foundational Skills

Are you looking to increase the amount of time spent in early elementary classrooms on foundational skills? Use [these guidance documents](#) to help support classroom needs and teacher learning. Read about one school's experience [here](#).

Interim Assessments

SAP has recently been spending some time digging into the interim assessment landscape. We are often asked questions about what constitutes interims, what purposes they serve, and how the data can be used, so we've turned to research for the answers. We'll be exploring the topic more at the May Core Advocate Convening, but in case you aren't attending or want an introduction, we've found [this brief](#) by Joan Herman to be useful as we've explored the world of interims.

Earth Day

Are you celebrating Earth Day (April 22, 2018) with your students this year? If so, SAP has a [mini-assessment](#) on the topic. While this mini-assessment is specific to the grade 6 Literacy standards, maybe you'll find inspiration for your classroom by reading over the stimuli and questions.



Showcasing Our Network

Question of the Month

This Month

What professional learning opportunities will you engage in as the school year ends and summer begins?

Submit for a chance to win a \$25 Amazon gift card

Last Month

What spring routines, celebrations, and activities keep your students motivated and engaged in their learning?

Winning Answer: "I never go more than 45 minutes without getting students out of their seats to play a game, do a go noodle activity, or just have some free time."

-Jeremy Thompson

Other Noteworthy Answers:

"I collect empty 12-count egg cartons to motivate learning with my students. Each egg cup is labeled with a number at the bottom from 1-12. This activity calls for the students to toss two cubes in the carton, shake the carton, and allow the cubes to fall on two different numbers. They then add or subtract the two numbers together. This is a

fun filled activity that engages my learners and motivates them to learn math.

-Darlene Kimble

Showcasing Instructional Advocacy

Instructional Advocacy Action Spotlight

Core Advocates from around the country are making an impact on educators and students through their instructional advocacy! We love to hear stories about the great work being done by Core Advocates in classrooms, schools, districts, states, and beyond! You can share your stories by filling out the quick Instructional Advocacy Action Form survey each time you engage in work related to aligned instructional practice, materials, and assessment. In the newsletter each month, we will be highlighting a response by one of the Core Advocates. Be sure to **tell us about your action** for a chance to be selected and win Core Advocate gear!

March Spotlight

This month, we would like to spotlight educators in Detroit! In March, 41 Detroit educators completed the Instructional Advocacy Action Form after participating in the recent Foundational Reading Skills Mini-Course. Detroit educator Nina Shirley said, "Teachers implemented many of the instructional practices. I observed my colleagues implement the practices by observing classroom lessons." Stacie Lewis said, "Teachers watched webinars, videos, and practiced strategies in the classrooms. Teachers had meetings to discuss webinars, videos and lessons." Laura McKinstry said, "We discussed the work in our PLC's and how to implement what we learned." Tracy Chapman said that as a result of the mini-course, we "will continue to upgrade teaching practice as a result of the new knowledge." Simona Pentecost reported, "I just feel like I had an epiphany. As someone who had never taught K-2 until last year, I felt confused as to how I would go about using the tools provided by my district program. The answer was to focus on the Foundational Skills." Thank you Detroit educators for sharing about your learning in the mini-course and the action you are taking as a result. We know K-2 students in Detroit will benefit from your instructional advocacy!

Share what you're doing

Social Media Spotlight



Kate Linnehan
@LinnehanReads

Follow

Took part in the [@achievethecore](#) course on this subject this past fall and learned SO much. Excited to see them bring it to a condensed webinar format. This one is a definite do not miss! [#CoreAdvocates](#)



[achievethecore.org](#) @achievethecore

Join us next month for our next #coreadvocates webinar on ELA mini-assessments! #edupd [bit.ly/2DWoSRh](#)

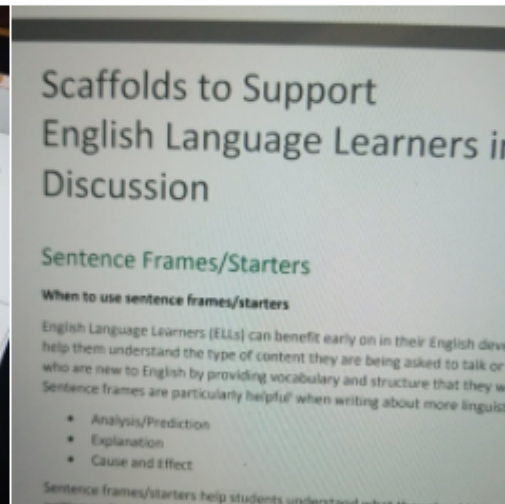
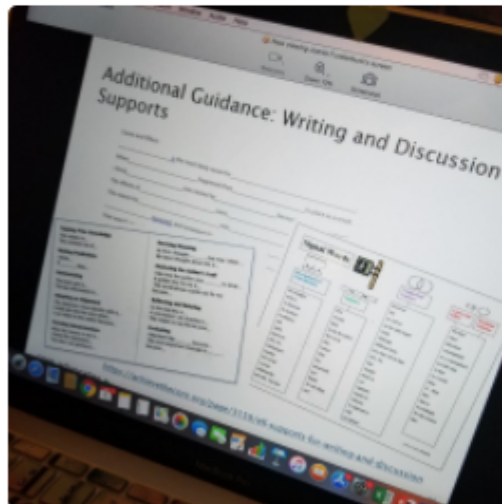
6:48 AM - 5 Apr 2018



Mia Johnson
@miajohnsonn

Follow

So many great ELL resources shared in tonight's Supporting ELL w/ CCR Content webinar! Check out the free resources available [@achievethecore](#) [#coreadvocates](#)



5:02 PM - 4 Apr 2018



Amy Youngblood

@EduOptimus1

Follow



TDQs also help prevent inequality. If we deep dive into the text with TDQs all students can contribute if based on life experiences all may not be able to participate. [#CoreAdvocates](#) [#moedchat](#)

Guide To
Text-
dependent
Questions
GRADES



[achievethecore.org](#) @achievethecore

Young learners need exposure to text-dependent questions, too! TDQs help students develop well-defended claims and essential analytical skills. Find resources on how to create your own TDQs [bit.ly/2FpRyl0](#) [#elachat](#) [#teacherchat](#)

6:41 PM - 3 Apr 2018 from [Missouri, USA](#)



Susan Hitt

@SusanHitt

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A4: I really enjoyed this article on [@achievethecore](#)'s blog, Aligned about how to create an interdisciplinary PLC by Mary Burt! [goo.gl/c5Nc3W](#) [#CoreAdvocates](#)



3:26 PM - 28 Mar 2018



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