Module 1:
Common Core Instruction for ELA & Literacy

Writing to Sources
Audience: K-5 Teachers

Expected Outcomes

› Become familiar with the emphasis on writing from sources.
› Become familiar with the Common Core State Standards for argument and informative writing at your grade level.
› Understand the relationship between the CCSS Reading Standards and Writing Standard 9 (beginning in grade 4).

What is the instructional shift?

› Increased emphasis through the grades on
  ◦ Analysis of literary and informational texts
  ◦ Argument and evidence
  ◦ Informative/explanatory writing
  ◦ Frequent short, focused research projects
  ◦ Comparison and synthesis of multiple sources

› Decreasing emphasis through the grades on
  ◦ Narrative, especially personal narrative
  ◦ Writing in response to decontextualized prompts
What is “writing to sources?”

- Analytical writing tied to literary and informational texts; writing in response to texts; writing about texts.
  - Students analyze the text, make valid claims about the text, and support those claims with evidence from the text.
- Writing arguments and informational reports from sources.
- Generating reports from research; writing from multiple sources.

Organization of Writing Anchor Standards

- Text Types and Purposes
  - #1 – 3.
- Production and Distribution of Writing
  - #4 – 6.
- Research to Build and Present Knowledge
  - #7 – 9.
- Range of Writing
  - #10

Text Types & Purposes

- Writing Anchor Standards
  - #1 Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
  - #2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization and analysis of content.
  - #3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
Both argument and persuasion have as their goal persuading people to believe something is true or change their beliefs or behavior.

- Persuasion relies on persuasive strategies.
  - Appeals to audience’s self interest, sense of identity, emotions, credibility or authority of the writer, etc.
- Argument relies on logic.
  - Convinces audience because of the perceived merit and reasonableness of the claims and proofs offered

K – 5 Writing: Argument

- K – state an opinion or preference
- 1 – state an opinion and supply a reason
- 2 – state an opinion, supply reasons, and use linking words to connect them (e.g., because)
- 3 – state an opinion, provide reasons, and use linking words and phrases to connect them (e.g., since, for example)
- 4 – state an opinion, provide reasons that are supported by facts and details, and use words and phrases to link them (e.g., in order to, in addition)
- 5 – state an opinion, provide logically ordered reasons supported by facts and details, and use words, phrases, and clauses to link them (e.g., consequently, specifically)
Activity: Examine Writing Standards 1 - 3

- Look at the standards at your grade level for the three types of writing on the handout.
- How do they compare with current practice? (What is familiar? Different? Anything new? Dropped?)
- How does the level of difficulty in these CCSS Standards compare with grade level expectations based on the previous ELA Standards?

Research to Build & Present Knowledge

Writing Anchor Standards
- #7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- #8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
- #9 (Begins in grade 4) Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS Writing Standard 7: Grade-specific examples
- Grades K – 2:
  - “Participate in shared research and writing project ....”
- Grades 3 – 5:
  - “Conduct short research projects ... that build knowledge ... of a topic”
CCSS Writing Standard 8: Grade-specific examples

- Grades K – 2
  - “… Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources…”
- Grades 3 – 5
  - “Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources.”

CCSS Writing Standard 9

- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- Grades K – 3 (begins in grade 4)
- Grades 4 & 5
  - “Apply grade [4 or 5] Reading standards to literature and to informational text.”

Grade-specific Reading Standards related to Writing Standard 9

- 4th grade (literature)
  - 4.RL.2. Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text.
- 4th grade (informational text)
  - 4.RI.6. Compare and contrast a firsthand and second hand account of the same event or topic; describe the differences in focus and the information provided.
- 5th grade (literature)
  - 5.RL.3. Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).
- 5th grade (informational text)
  - 5.RI.6. Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.
Activity: Apply Writing Standard 9 to the Reading Standards

- Look at the CCSS Reading Standards at grades 4 and 5. Identify ones that are appropriate to use for written responses that fit Writing Standard 9.
- Write prompts specific to texts currently in your curriculum for a few of the CCSS Reading Standards. Try to generate both opinion and informative prompts.

How did we do?

- What is meant by the shift toward greater emphasis on writing from sources?
- What percentage of classroom time and/or writing experiences should be devoted to analytical writing (argument and explanation) at your grade level? What percentage would we expect to be devoted to narrative?
- What are a couple of your current classroom practices that fit the standards for writing from sources?
- What changes do you anticipate in your classroom practice to accommodate this shift?

Suggested follow-up activities

- Identify current classroom resources and learning activities that are a good fit to Writing Standards 7 & 8.
- Grade 4 and 5 teachers develop lesson(s) focused on a text selection that call for students to write opinions or explanation that will “draw evidence from literary or informational text to support analysis, reflection, and research.” (Writing Standard 9)
- Read and discuss the writing samples and annotations in Appendix C, which illustrate the criteria required to meet the CCSS for particular types of writing at a given grade.