

comments

from CRISS

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Welcome Back!

News from the CRISS National Office

Upcoming Newsletters and Call for Articles

Are you or someone you know doing great things with CRISS? Want to share your ideas with others? We are always looking for new authors for the newsletter. Articles should be 300-750 words in length and should focus on how CRISS and a particular topic work together for student growth. Lesson plans may be in any format but all aspects of a CRISS learning plan should be evident. Data, student samples, and teacher and student reflections are encouraged. Include a brief biography and a headshot of the author (in jpeg). Additionally, we're always happy to receive "quick share" pieces of 250 words or less – let us help you spread your successes!

If you're interested in submitting an article or quick share piece, please send a one paragraph abstract by December 15 to Anna Deese at adeese@projectcriss.com. If accepted, articles will be due by January 15, 2012.

Is there a topic you'd like to see in future issues of Comments? Please contact the editor of *Comments from CRISS*, Anna Deese at adeese@projectcriss.com with your ideas.

Have Student Sample Work?

If your students rock a strategy or write some interesting reflections, we'd love to see samples! Share with us how different students approach the same task (such as activating background knowledge) or examples of how you used strategies to build on each other over the course of a lesson. Student reflections explaining why a part of a lesson was particularly helpful are also incredibly powerful. Please consider taking a photograph or scanning the work and sending it to Anna Deese at adeese@projectcriss.com. Your colleagues thrive on shared success!

New Level I Training and Manual Available!

Has it been a while since you were CRISS trained? Consider attending the new 4th edition Level I training. Learn the CRISS Frameworks for Teaching and Learning and experience two new learning plans with new strategies and familiar strategies used in new ways. See how CRISS is your key to implementing Common Core. Contact your local CRISS trainer or the CRISS National Office for more information.

No time for a full Level I but interested in owning a copy of the new manual? Previous participants can purchase a replacement manual for \$35. Use the order form [here](#). Purchase of the manual includes a year's access to the online resource center for 4th edition Level I participants – access PDF and Word versions of your favorite CRISS graphic organizers and tools! If you are only interested in access to the online resources, [contact us](#) for information.

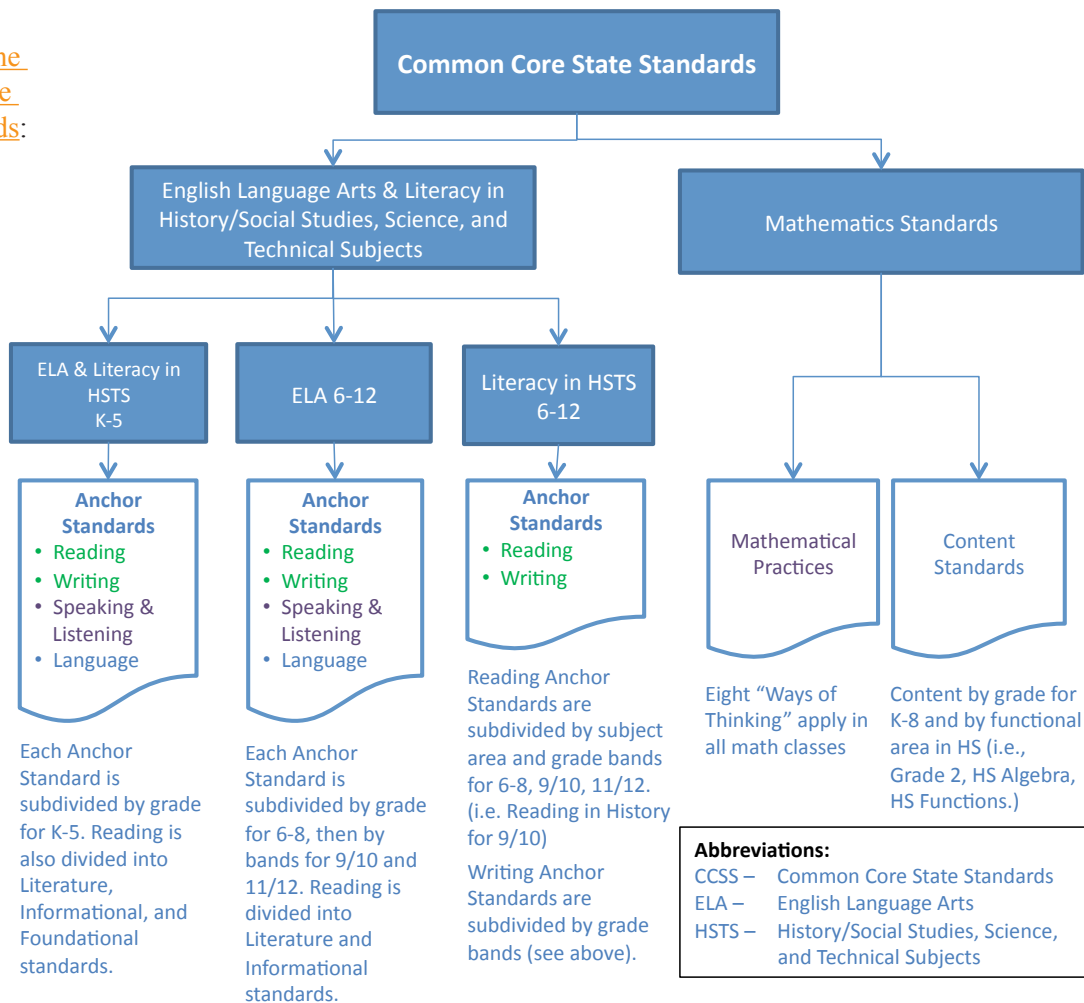
Your Classroom, Project CRISS, and the Common Core

By Anna Deese

? Without the fluff, what do I need to know about the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)?

The CCSS have been adopted in all but the following states and territories: Alaska, American Samoa, Minnesota, Nebraska, Puerto Rico, Texas, and Virginia. In those areas, similar, rigorous standards are in place and often the relevant state/territory education website will make explicit connections between the CCSS and the state standards.

Here is the [Structure of the Common Core State Standards](#):



- The anchor standards do not exist in a vacuum; there are logical connections between each.
- All teachers are responsible for supporting the **Reading** and **Writing** standards (the anchor standards are identical) as well as any specific content standards for their subject/grade level (only ELA and Math subject standards can be found in the CCSS document).
- All teachers will find relevance in the **Speaking & Listening** anchor standards and the **8 Mathematical Practices**; teachers should be familiar with them despite not being required.
- The **Language** anchor standards cover using proper English conventions, selecting appropriate words, and vocabulary acquisition. For HSTS 6-12 teachers, these goals are covered by the combination of the Reading and Writing anchor standards and any relevant subject area standards.

Click [here](#) to access a copy of the anchor standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and the Mathematical Practices posted on the Project CRISS website. You can also easily sort through the specific standards for ELA [here](#) or Math [here](#) or by downloading the Common Core app available for iOS or Android devices.



I already have lots on my plate – where should I focus?

Start by considering how the CCSS apply in your classes:

- If students read for your classes, review the Reading anchor standards.
- If students write for your class, review the Writing anchor standards.
- If students participate in discussion or otherwise speak and listen in order to learn for your classes, review the Speaking and Listening anchor standards.
- If students must use proper language conventions or specific vocabulary in your classes, review the Language anchor standards (non-ELA teachers in grades 6-12 should read the Language anchor standards and consider how they are incorporated into the Reading and Writing anchor standards for HSTS 6-12).
- If students must think critically or systematically, problem-solve, or analyze information, review the eight Mathematical Practices. Some practices include reasoning abstractly and quantitatively, constructing viable arguments and critiquing the reasoning of others, and looking for and making use of structure. All teachers should consider how the Mathematical Practices resonate in their own subject area and teach students skills that can cross curricular areas.

Then as the year moves on, rotate through the anchor standards and consider how a recent lesson supported them and what changes you can make to support any that weren't. This will help you gain basic familiarity with the standards and prepare you to make changes as you dive into the specifics relevant to you.

What does this mean for my classroom? What do I need to do right now?

If you incorporate reading and writing into rigorous lessons, most likely you are hitting many of the standards. The key is to be systematic. Take a short time to read the standards so you can discuss their applications in your discipline with colleagues, administrators, parents, students and record them (as needed) in your lesson plans. There is no reason to purchase or invest in a special curriculum. The CCSS are designed to work with teacher-designed lessons and with a wide variety of content. They thrive on the teacher's in-depth knowledge and passion! That said, some basic things you can do to ensure you are addressing the CCSS include:

- Use a wide variety of challenging resources (textbooks, data, journal articles, novels) and ask students to collect evidence or arguments from each of those sources.
- Make comparisons and transfer knowledge between resources and contexts; how might the same topic, content, or theme be used in a totally new subject area or scenario? Consider how the topic is relevant at a personal or macro level.
- Incorporate writing frequently and for a variety of purposes in *all* classes.
- Integrate technology: students should know the appropriate tools needed to take in and display information. Help students focus on clear communication, not just the mechanics of the programs.
- Question the author. With all materials, ask students to consider why the author used specific terms or formats. What is the motive? What is the purpose? Where is the bias?
- Read, write, and discuss in all classes using descriptive, appropriate, and precise vocabulary.

Changing the way you plan your lessons to support the CCSS is not as basic of a change but it also likely won't be a dramatic upheaval. Essentially, focus on an Enduring Understand, or "big idea," for a unit, and deconstruct it as appropriate for each lesson. Use several resources to help deliver new information, and ask students to integrate information from all those sources to create arguments or provide evidence. Ask students to think critically and question each source, and encourage them to consider how (or if) the author is trying to manipulate them and why.



How are students being assessed?

The [FAQs section of the CCSS website](#) states:

Like adoption of common core standards, it will be up to the states: some states plan to come together voluntarily to develop a common assessment system, based on the common core state standards.

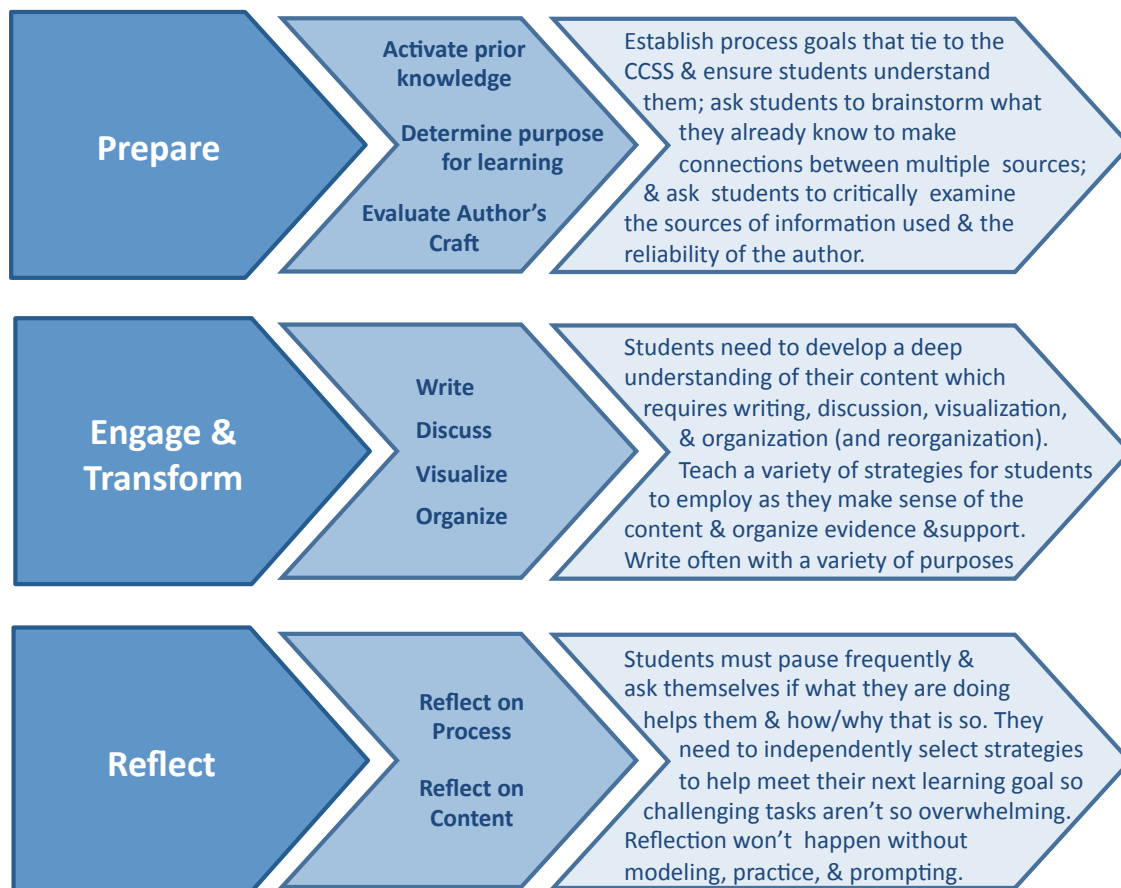
Two national initiatives are developing CCSS assessments: the [Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers consortium](#) and the [Smarter Balance Assessment consortium](#). At the local level, many districts are creating their own benchmark course assessments.

If you are looking for ideas and resources, prompts, or sample student work, examine the appendixes found on the [standards website](#).



How can CRISS help me with the CCSS?

The focus of Project CRISS has always been to develop independent, thoughtful students and that's exactly what the CCSS is asking of students. The [image below](#) summarizes the relationship between the CCSS and the elements of the Framework for Learning.



At the most basic level, students need to learn a variety of strategies and the rationale and context(s) for using them. Students need to learn a variety of methods to make connections between resources, and to write, read, discuss, and visualize so the content becomes more accessible. Teachers need to identify content goals and process goals (often aligned with the CCSS) and ask students to reflect. Teachers must be selective and allow time for students to work through the challenges and produce high quality work.





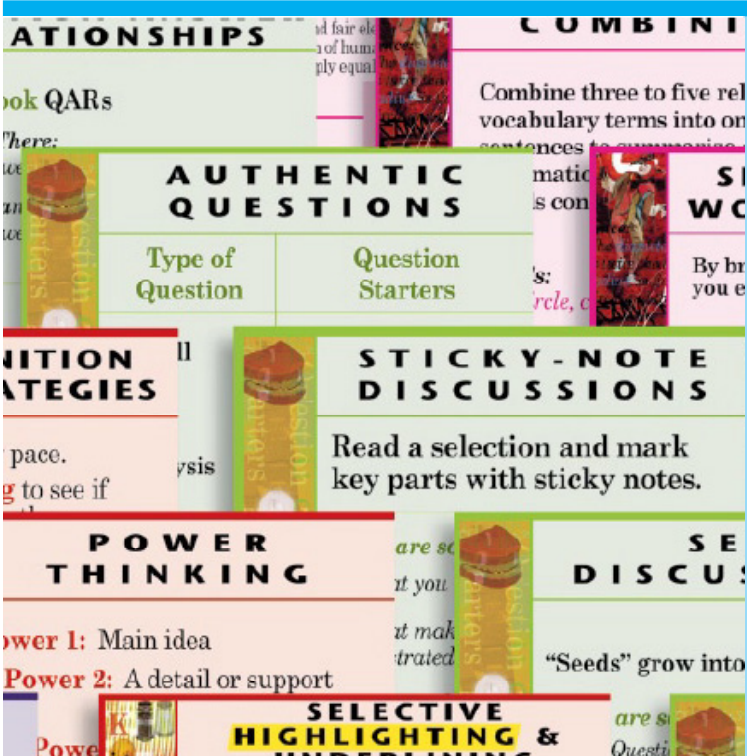
Where can I get additional information?

1. The [Common Core](#) website has many resources.
2. Your state or territory's department of education website will have information specific to your locale.

Other rich CCS resources are:

3. [Engage NY's Common Core page](#); especially the pedagogical shifts document that can be found [here](#).
4. The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) [implementation page](#)
5. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) EduCore [website and tool](#)
6. Numerous [Pinterest](#) users have created boards dedicated to the CCSS. You can go directly to Pinterest and then search for Common Core or start by reviewing [this](#) user's board.
7. Download the Common Core app available for both iOS and Android systems.

Anna Deese is the Associate Director of Project CRISS as well as a National Trainer. She taught students science in inner-city Chicago as well as rural Oregon and now lives and plays in Whitefish, MT with her husband and pup.



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- Strategies for Learning
- Organizing for Learning
- Writing
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Also, available as a full set of 36 posters.

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Click [here](#) for more information.

Facilitating Research with Second Grade Students

By Sara Stone

Students in the second grade at West Side Elementary in rural Elkhorn, WI complete a research project each year. One heterogeneous class of 24 students completed their two week project on dinosaurs. The teacher worked with students to select a dinosaur and then found a variety of resources for each student. Picture books, easy readers, as well as chapter books were available, allowing the instructor to accommodate skilled and beginning readers.

Students researched their dinosaur by reading texts with pictures. Struggling readers could extrapolate information from the pictures. As the students read, they made notes in a revised version of the CRISS Content Frame. Students folded their paper in fours and in the center wrote the name of their dinosaur (Power 1). All students had the same four categories (Power 2s) in the corners to direct inquiry. Details were the Power 3s. The teacher provided an example and modeled the research process, emphasizing that they were recording words or phrases only found while researching.

Habitat Swamp, water, some trees, plants	Enemies T-Rex
Triceratops	
Physical Characteristics 3 horns Bumpy skin	Food Herbivore Likes to eat plants

Upon completion of their research, students started writing. They had written essays before and were well aware of the teacher's expectations. Sentence Expansion with "The dinosaur was here." engaged students. When asked if they thought the sentence was good, the students responded it was not acceptable because there were no details. When asked what should be done to make the sentence better, they felt using the dinosaur's name would be a good idea: *The triceratops was here.* Then the class described what the dinosaur looked like: *The triceratops with bumpy skin was here.*

Again students were asked if the sentence was OK and again they did not agree; they wanted more details, and agreed to describe where the dinosaur was located. Examples were tied to specific dinosaurs; including: *in the swamp, above the volcano, through the forest.* Students then read aloud the sentences. When prompted, the students decided to add an action verb to replace "was." Final sentences included: *The three-horned triceratops ate plants in the swamp., The ferocious T-Rex*

stomped through the forest., and The pointy beaked pterodactyl flew above the volcano.

During Sentence Expansion, students drew upon their research notes. What started out as a lesson to expand a boring sentence resulted in a lesson using several grammatical components that enhanced the students' writing; nouns, verbs, adjectives, and prepositional phrases were all incorporated in the lesson. Students were engaged, eager, and excited to describe their dinosaurs. They were told they only had to write one sentence, but most wanted to make more! Many students generated three to six sentences independently; even struggling students were able to complete the required sentence and 1-2 more with some support. Final projects included a picture with the writing and then pages were bound into a class book. This was one of the students' favorite books to check out and share at home!

Standards Check

Review the Common Core anchor standards for Reading, Writing, and Language. Which are most relevant to this unit?
(See the last page for our take!)



Sara Stone is a CRISS National Trainer and Principal of West Side Elementary in Elkhorn, WI. She has a background in gifted and talented education and has been with her school district for 15 years. Sara says that this year, she's focusing on differentiation techniques like flexibly grouping students for math and leveled reading groups in order to better support the learner while still targeting the educational need.

Implementing Project CRISS

By Nancy Welday

Has it been a while since your last Level I or follow-up?

Read this article for a reminder of what Project CRISS could look like in your classroom.

What is the focus in a CRISS classroom?

A CRISS classroom focuses on teaching students how to learn through reading, writing, talking, and listening. Students learn to apply CRISS principles in all subject areas. The purpose is to teach students to become better learners.

What should a CRISS classroom look like?

With instruction focused on the CRISS Framework for Learning, the teacher moves away from being “the sage on the stage;” instruction is student-centered and is organized around **preparing** students for new information; **engaging** students with content, followed by student-led information **transformation** through writing, discussion, visualization or reorganization; and then having them **reflect** on the new content and the processes they used to learn. The following things should be happening in your classroom:

- The **purpose** of the lesson should be posted or repeated frequently in student-friendly language. The type of **assessment** or assessments that will be used should be shared with students at the beginning of the lesson or unit.
- **Background knowledge** should be elicited every time new information is introduced. This will prepare students for learning and allow the instructor to identify misconceptions.
- Students should be **writing** informally or formally, in every class, every day.
- Students should be **discussing** content meaningfully every day. The focus should be on student-to-student interactions; good discussion technique takes practice.
- Students should be **organizing** and re-organizing information. Organized information is easier to recall.
- Students should be using numerous **strategies** to take in new information. Engagement while reading, listening, or doing builds in processing opportunities.
- Students should be taught strategies explicitly through teacher modeling, guided practice, and independent application. Students must learn why and how strategies are used.
- Students should **reflect** on *what* and *how* they’ve learned so they may become independent, metacognitive, life-long learners.
- Teachers should expose students to a variety of strategies across the curriculum with the goal of allowing them to choose strategies that are appropriate for the learning task and work best for them.

Reflections

Reflection is *the* metacognitive principle underlying all of Project CRISS. A student should be able to explain what they’ve done to help themselves be successful at learning the new content and why those strategies or actions were helpful. Quality reflections take practice. Consider asking students to answer the following questions during a brief reflective process conference:

1. What are you doing?
2. Why are you doing it?
3. How are you doing it?
4. Is it helpful? How can you tell?

These reflections can be formal or informal: whole class discussion, written reflections on the back of an assignment, or an exit ticket at the end of class.

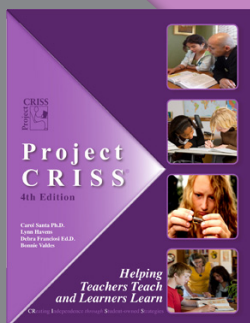
Implementing CRISS School wide

Project CRISS was born of teacher collaboration. Recruit a handful of like-minded teachers and try any of the following:

- Take the Framework for Teaching Inventory (3rd edition – Teacher Survey; 4th edition Online Reproducibles, Chapter 10).
- Examine the Framework for Learning and the underlying principles and philosophies and focus on one segment at a time. For example, in November your team starts with activating background knowledge, in December, organizational strategies, etc. Share successes at the end of each month.
- Conduct action research in your classrooms. Compare a class where you are implementing CRISS to a “non-CRISified” class, or one where strategies are used without the reflection and modeling. Share your results. Use the examples in Chapter 11 or the article [here](#) as a guide.
- Share! Share best practices, your action research, student samples, and lessons at department and faculty meetings, parent nights, and on bulletin boards. Share (anonymous) student reflections—those often convince others to try CRISS.
- Try different strategies and share with your colleagues what worked and troubleshoot with them what didn’t quite go as planned. Consider video recording a lesson to review. Reflect on its impact, propose suggestions, and retry with students.
- Make sure students keep a list of the strategies they use, how and in what classes they used them, and reflections on how they helped.
- Read and distribute research articles that support the use of reflection and strategies to improve comprehension.

Nancy Welday is a CRISS National Trainer, Miami-Dade County Secondary Reading Teacher of the Year, and a member of the first All USA TODAY Teacher Team. She presently works with student teachers as an adjunct at Florida Atlantic University. Nancy has been involved with Project CRISS since 1995, and it’s been the focus of her teaching, whether as a classroom teacher or as a coach for other teachers. In Nancy’s spare time she enjoys hanging out with her husband, Bob, traveling to places far and near, and spending time with her family.

Want to upgrade to the new 4th edition manual?



**In 2012 Project CRISS
released the new 4th edition manual!**

**This new edition explains the reorganization of the Principles & Philosophy into two easy-to-understand Frameworks, greatly expands on research in text complexity and vocabulary acquisition, adds some new strategies and provides many more examples, support, and extensions for existing strategies.
A one year subscription to the online resources is included.**

Click [here](#) for the order form!

Helping Students Reflect

By Bruce Marshall

I teach a two-year curriculum for middle school students with diagnosed learning disabilities. My students submit a Reading Strategy Log (RSL) once a week that describes how they used two CRISS strategies in class or homework lesson from any of their other core subjects for that week. The students pick the core subject, two strategies (one if it's a "big" strategy), and demonstrate usage in the text or on the assignment page, and attach the work to the RSL. The heart of the RSL is in the reflection. Students must write down if the strategies were successful (or not) for that content lesson and why. It is in the *why* that the student and I derive the most understanding about the strategy's use, effectiveness, and applicability.

Recently, I've been introducing and modeling Reciprocal Teaching to my colleagues across content areas. I have used student RSL entries related to this strategy to address with teachers the feasibility of its use in their classes—the *why* part of the RSL entries often drive that connection home for them. [Here](#) are three middle school student examples of the RSL. Two examples focus on the use of Reciprocal Teaching (SQNP = summarize, question, note difficult parts, predict), and one explores other strategies taught.

READING STRATEGY LOG

Name _____ (1 point) Date 9-10-12 (1 point)

Subject: Pre-Algebra (1 point)

Date of assignment: 9-12-12 (1 point)

Page number(s) or description (Worksheet, lab report, article, etc.) p 9A (1 point)

Description of assignment: Do all of the problems assigned on page 9A in the Pre-Algebra textbook.

_____ (3 points)

The strategies I used for this assignment were notes on the side and Highlights (2 points total)

I found using these strategies with this lesson to be very helpful because now I understand the math on my homework more. Also, while I was doing the notes and the highlighting I also in away reworked the problem in my head. There were no errors! I have more of an understanding of the math on my homework. So this strategy helped in so

READING STRATEGY LOG

Name _____ (1 point) Date 4/30/12 (1 point)

Subject: Social Studies (1 point)

Date of assignment: May 3, 2012 (1 point)

Page number(s) or description (Worksheet, lab report, article, etc.) Ch 19.1 580-583 (1 point)

Description of assignment: read and answer leading questions

_____ (3 points)

The strategies I used for this assignment were SQNP and _____ (2 points total)

I found using these strategies with this lesson to be Okay because last time I said I didn't think it helped me understand the section, as I have done this I have gotten better at doing it and kinda enjoy doing it. the only thing that I don't like is it's all about asking questions and predictions, but I went to make statements, so I would want to make SQNP into SQNP, and the "K" would stand for Key Facts.

READING STRATEGY LOG

Name _____ (1 point) Date 4/30/12 (1 point)

Subject: Romeo & Juliet (1 point)

Date of assignment: APR/30/2012 (1 point)

Page number(s) or description (Worksheet, lab report, article, etc.) P 127-129 (1 point)

Description of assignment: You must read the last three pages of the Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet, and there will be a test on Friday

_____ (3 points)

The strategies I used for this assignment were SQNP and _____ (2 points total)

I found using these strategies with this lesson to be Useful because It helped me to slow down and pay more attention to the ^{main idea} ~~main idea~~ and not get sucked up inside the grammar and vocabulary. In Mrs. G's class, she does that a lot it seems, and we have to pay so much attention to the syntax, grammar and vocabulary, that I often don't even know what is going on in the play. This strategy forces me to slow myself down and focus.

Bruce Marshall, a National CRISS trainer, Learning Specialist, and teacher, starts his 32nd year in the classroom. Over the last 22 years, he has used Project CRISS as the centerpiece of the curriculum he uses with students with diagnosed learning disabilities, struggling readers, at-risk students, and students who have failed the state reading assessment. As the grandfather of a very intelligent three year old and an inquisitive eighteen month old, he relishes the learning opportunities they continuously present.

Power Thinking Revisited

By Sue Dailey

Power Thinking has been part of Project CRISS since the very beginning. Often, though, teachers view Powers as basically outlining but without the cumbersome rules. Unfortunately, this narrow view often turns teachers off from trying it.

A Review: What are Powers?

Consider the words below. How would you organize them to make sense?

basketball, baseball, football, goalie, hockey, pitcher, point guard, sports

Chances are, you'd sort them somewhat like the following:

sports, football, quarterback, basketball, point guard, hockey, goalie, baseball, pitcher

Now, how would you explain the relationship between the terms? You'd probably state *sports* is the general term or heading and that is why it is first. The next entry is an example of the first category (e.g. football is an example of a sport) and the term is a position in that sport (e.g. quarterback is a position, or a player, in the sport of football.) Ideally as you move down the line of terms, it becomes clear you can reuse the vocabulary explaining the relationships (e.g. hockey is an example of a sport and goalie is a position, or a player, in the sport of hockey).

Jump back to the main term (sports). Consider all the words that mean the same thing as "main idea." Others that may easily come to mind are subject, topic, thesis, theme. With Powers, we call the biggest thing that we are talking about at one time, whether it is as broad as World War II or as narrow as what I had for breakfast, the Power 1.

When you consider words for the next lowest category of information (detail, example, subtopic, support, etc.) and the category under that (detail, example, subtopic, support, etc.), it becomes clear how referring to the various hierarchical levels as Power 2 and Power 3 clarifies the organization. Consider how difficult it is to explain to students the need for additional information; "You need another detail to support this detail" can be confusing. It is easier to explain, "You have a good Power 3 here. Could you think of two Power 4s to better support that Power 3?" The student will understand exactly what is meant and will be able to provide that additional support.

Why use Powers?

Other than providing a common language, another advantage is the ability to better explain parallel structure to students. It is easy for them to understand that if the first Power 2 is the name of a sport, the other Power 2s should be the same thing. If the first Power 3s are positions in that sport, the other Power 3s should also be positions. While this is not always a hard and fast rule, it is worth introducing the student to this concept as it will help when they are planning for writing longer and longer papers. It's also useful for students to learn how to identify this type of structure in the materials they read. As we develop readers who hopefully become active and informed citizens, we want to encourage them to read critically and identify arguments that are well-supported. We want them to find the Power 3s and 4s and be able to research to see if the arguments are in fact true and to compare those arguments against those opposing the Power 1.

Additionally, Powers can be used in all subjects in many different ways – to format writing, assist reading comprehension, take notes, and transform content into graphic organizers. Powers lay the groundwork for easier mastery of all of these things, thus it is important to spend time allowing students to practice with Powers.

Once all students have an in-depth understanding of Powers, they can be used with many of the strategies in the CRISS manual. Writing Templates, Spool Papers, Selective Underlining, Pre- and Post-Reading Maps, Content Frames and other transformation devices all can be explained using Powers (see example on the next page). The advantages are that teachers have an easy method to explain structure to students, leaving more time to work on idea development and students can concentrate on content more than struggling with the structure of their writing and reading.



Powers in my own classroom

I remember the first Power Thinking I did with a group of teachers first learning about Powers—struggling to identify Power 3s, 4s and 5s for “World Religions” made us aware of how little we really knew about the topic. When I introduced Powers into my 7th grade classroom, students quickly understood the interrelationships of ideas with simple instruction. Powers replaced traditional outlining with a far easier format. It helped me to teach main idea/detail in reading. It helped me to teach well-organized writing. It helped students to take in-depth notes on subjects in history. It clarified the different vocabulary used across content areas (e.g., thesis, main idea, example, supporting detail).

My use of Powers in my classroom led me to believe Power Thinking is one of the most beneficial CRISS strategies for all students. As students encounter larger and larger amounts of information to process, the need to differentiate between main ideas and details becomes more important. The information often becomes a barrage of unrelated facts which are difficult to retain; Powers require the student to step back and look for relationships between these facts and ideas. Powers became the first thing that I taught in my classroom and were an integral part of all of my instruction.

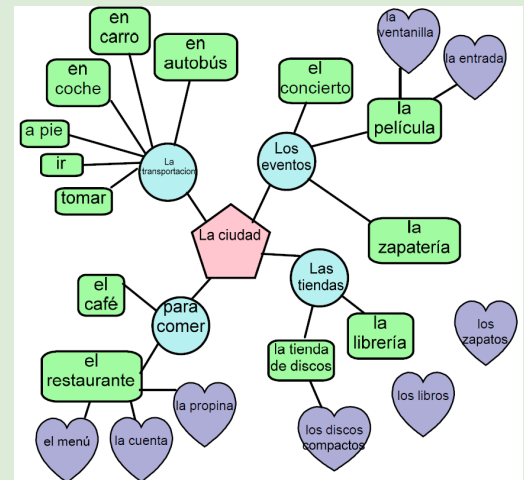
Sue Dailey is a National Trainer who has been involved with CRISS since its inception. She taught 7th grade reading and Montana History and was a 7-12 Resource teacher until she retired in 2010. She and her husband live on a small farm in the Shields River Valley, MT. She is currently an OPI School Improvement Consultant in the town of Poplar, MT on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation, where she again has the opportunity to share CRISS strategies with teachers!

“ *Becoming is better than being.* ”

– Carol S. Dweck, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*

Ann Murphy, a teacher and District Trainer at Mukwonago Middle School in Wisconsin, shares with us an assessment used in her Spanish class. Students organized the vast amount of vocabulary from one section of their book into either a Concept Map or Power Notes. Students were to color code the words to show the Powers in either case. Her initial models, conducted on a SMART Board, are at right:

1. La ciudad
2. Las tiendas
3. El cafe
3. El restaurante
4. La propina
4. El cuento
2. Los eventos
3. La pelicula
3. El concierto
2. La transportacion
3. ir
3. tomar
3. en autobus
3. en coche/carro
3. a pie
2. Para comer



A School Psychologist's Lesson Plan on Building Emotional Education

By Laura Fehrenbacher

The aim of this Project CRISS Framework for Teaching was to implement a group counseling emotional education session for my students. The second, broader goal was to assist students in making the connection that emotions are expressed simultaneously through their thoughts, physical symptoms, and behaviors. Finally, I wanted students to understand how informal writing can be used as a process to identify, clarify, and cope with their feelings in relation to a personal experience. Recent research increasingly “reveals that affect labeling, or putting one’s feelings into words, can serve to down regulate” the impact and affect experienced by individuals (Kircanski & Lieberman, in press).

When students feel anxious or depressed, they often experience “automatic thoughts” that create strong feelings of emotion. In the context of group or individual counseling, Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) explicitly teaches students to re-frame their inner thoughts and beliefs. Randy Sprick and Mickey Garrison note that the three main components involved in teaching cognitive strategies are to help a student 1) develop an awareness of changes in emotions, 2) recognize when automatic thoughts or beliefs occur, and 3) assess automatic thoughts and beliefs to determine whether these are distorted or unrealistic (2008).

Learning Plan

(see next page)

Reflection

The Free-Write Entry activity challenged my initial assumption that students would quickly grasp all three ways emotions can be identified. It seemed students easily reacted to the piece by talking about their physical symptoms, such as writing that “*my stomach starts to hurt, and I start to shake*” or by talking about behavioral symptoms, such as “*in classroom I’m really loud and obnoxious but in the hallways I don’t really talk because...*”. However, it was telling that none of students identified self-talk within their writing pieces, (especially as these students have worked with this concept in counseling for several weeks).

Overall, it was surprising to observe the level of honesty that students exhibited within their Free-Write responses. It was also fascinating to watch how this level of vulnerability opened up the door to a deeper level of intimacy in the conversation that followed. In the future, my plan is to provide the group with examples from the Writing Template guide questions in Project CRISS, such as “I can really relate to...because...” to assist them in generating more detailed written responses.

It was interesting to see how the Pattern Puzzle activity and the *Feelings Identification* form guided group discussion; students realized some feeling words that were comfortable for them, such as “love” were actually considered “uncomfortable” by others. Other words, like “serene” weren’t as familiar to the group, but through our discussion, students were able to describe in their own words what they meant. This brought about the opportunity to discuss how having a broader repertoire of emotional words allows one to more accurately describe feelings (e.g. not just feeling “mad,” but actually “frustrated” or “disappointed”).

Each individual student within this counseling group held a different world view as a result of personal background and developmental level. As such, it is too soon to determine the extent to which the Enduring Understandings and each student’s counseling goals were met. However, by helping students to individually monitor their progress and skills, my hope is that they will begin to more deeply understand how they can uniquely apply their knowledge of coping strategies to overcome challenging circumstances throughout their lives.



Plan	<p>Enduring Understandings Content: Students are taught to identify feelings and to understand that they experience emotions through 1) ways of thinking (e.g., self-talk), 2) physical symptoms (e.g. racing heart), and 3) behaviors (e.g. shaky voice). Process: To engage students in processing their emotions through writing</p> <p>Purpose (in student-friendly language): Feelings, thoughts, and behaviors are all connected, and the way we experience different events in our lives and our emotions related to these experiences are connected. When we can identify our feelings, we will be better equipped to know how to communicate them to others throughout our lives.</p>
	<p>Assessments Free-Write, Pattern Puzzles, Think-Pair-Share, Writing Templates <i>Feelings Identification</i> and <i>Expressing Feelings Inventory</i> forms from Sprick and Garrison.</p>
	<p>Content materials Sprick, R. & Garrison, M. (2008). <i>Interventions: Evidence-Based Behavioral Strategies for Individual Students</i>. Reproducible Forms R2, R3, & R4. Eugene: Pacific Northwest Publishing, Inc.</p>
Prepare	<p>Activate Background Knowledge Free-Write Scenario: “Alexa is typically a talkative girl at home, but when she gets to school (the event that triggers her anxiety) she is very quiet. Her body feels tense, she finds it hard to breathe, and she feels like she has a rock in her stomach (the physical experience of anxiety). However much she tries, she cannot get the thought out of her mind that if she talks, she will embarrass herself because people will think her voice sounds strange (thoughts associated with anxiety). As a result, she rarely talks above a whisper (behavior associated with anxiety).”</p> <p>Prompt: “Write freely about anything that comes to mind (opinions, ideas, and questions). I am not going to grade your responses. Responses will be shared together as a group.”</p>
Engage & Transform	<p>Write, Discuss, Visualize, Organize Pattern Puzzles: Give students a packet of flashcards with “feeling words” on each card (i.e., love, compassion) and ask them to sort which feelings are “comfortable” or “uncomfortable” for them. Each student will then complete a “Feelings Identification” form with additional “comfortable” and “uncomfortable” feeling examples.</p> <p>Think-Pair-Share: Volunteers will share their responses leading to a discussion on the various emotions people experience when faced with different situations. I will ask the group to share strategy ideas that each person can use when they are experiencing feelings that are “uncomfortable” for them.</p> <p>To build on their metacognition, I will have students complete the <i>Expressing Feelings Inventory</i> to assess how easy or hard it is for them to express “comfortable” or “uncomfortable” feelings to others. My goal is to have students use this tool as a way to measure their progress while they are undergoing counseling.</p>
Reflect	<p>Metacognitive Prompts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is there a pattern to your choices? For example, is it easier for you to communicate to others when you have comfortable feelings? When you have uncomfortable feelings? What different strategies could you try when it is hard for you to express a particular feeling? 2. How did the earlier Free-Writing help you think about a time when you faced a problem or difficult situation? Did the act of writing help you to clarify the emotions you felt? 3. What are some different methods of journaling that you could use to get your thoughts out on paper when you are experiencing strong emotions (e.g. journaling, writing a letter to a friend, etc.)? <p>Homework Activity: Implement Writing Template activity to enhance students’ awareness of the connections between their feelings and particular situations that they experience. To model, I will complete several of the Writing Template Sentence Starters with my own personal examples, such as “I feel afraid when... <i>I walk into a room and don’t know anyone’s name.</i>” I will ask them to complete the other templates on their own at home.</p>

Laura Fehrenbacher is in the process of completing her apprenticeship to become a District Trainer for Lake Villa school district in Illinois. The emphasis of metacognition and reflection in Project CRISS compliments the important work she does with her students.



Call out:

We're looking for good reads! What book do you think should be in a school's professional library? Why? We'll publish a list in the next edition of *Comments*. Submit the title, author, and reason you find it invaluable to Anna Deese at adeese@projectcriss.

This selection from the Common Core describes what type of student?

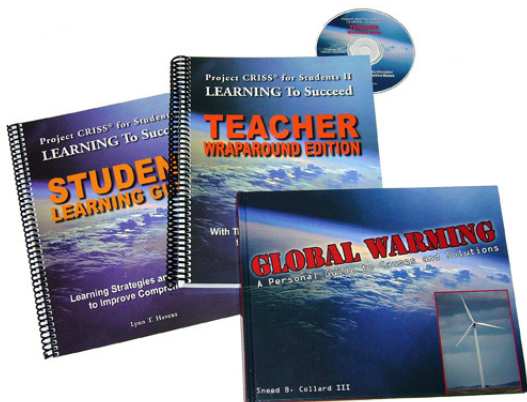
- ✓ [They] start by explaining to themselves the meaning [of the question] and looking for entry points to its solution.
- ✓ They analyze givens, constraints, relationships, and goals.
- ✓ They plan a solution pathway rather than simply jumping into a solution.
- ✓ They consider analogous problems to gain insight into its solution.
- ✓ They monitor and evaluate their progress and change course if necessary.
- ✓ They continually ask themselves, "Does this make sense?"
- ✓ They can understand the approaches of others to solving complex problems and identify correspondences between different approaches.

Solution

Mathematically proficient students!

Even if you don't teach Math, consider how what you do in your class complements *Mathematical Practice 1: Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them*. Click [here](#) for the other Mathematical Practices.

Project CRISS for Students II: LEARNING To Succeed



CRISS for Students II: LEARNING To Succeed is a flexible curriculum designed to teach the CRISS learning principles and strategies directly to students in high school or with advanced middle school students. Half of the lessons in the student workbook are based on the CRISS Keys to Learning—learning principles derived from cognitive psychology and brain research. Alternating with these lessons, students apply strategies to untangle the issue of global warming as presented by award-winning science author Sneed B. Collard III in his book, *Global Warming: A Personal Guide to Causes and Solutions*.

For more information about the CRISS for Students II program and a look at one of the chapters in the student workbook click [here](#).

The Common Core site: www.corestandards.org

Graphical organization of the Common Core Standards: <http://www.projectcriss.com/central/wp-content/uploads/Common-Core-graphic-1-Structure-of-CCSS.pdf>

One page document with anchor standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and the Mathematical Practices: <http://www.projectcriss.com/central/common-core-state-standards-one-page/>

Common Core Standards for English Language Arts: <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy>

Common Core Standards for Math: <http://www.corestandards.org/Math>

FAQs for the Common Core State Standards: <http://corestandards.org/frequently-asked-questions>

The Appendices for the Common Core Standards contain information about resources, prompts, and sample student work. Examine the appendices found on the standards website: <http://corestandards.org/the-standards>

PARCC: <http://www.parcconline.org/about-parcc>

The Smarter Balance Assessment consortium: <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/>

CRISS and the Framework for Learning: <http://www.projectcriss.com/central/wp-content/uploads/Common-Core-graphic-2-CRIS-F4L.pdf>

Engage NY's Common Core page: <http://engageny.org/common-core/>

Engage NY's Common Core Shifts: <http://engageny.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/common-core-shifts.pdf>

Pinterest: www.pinterest.com

Pinterest for Common Core: <http://pinterest.com/lianec/common-core-resources/>

Standards Check

Reading: 1, 2, 10;
Writing: 2, 5, 7, 9, 10;
Language: 1, 2, 3, 6.
(There may be others!)



CRISS PRODUCTS

Form to purchase a 4th edition manual: <http://www.projectcriss.com/central/4th-ed-upgrade-order-form>

CRISS for Students II: LEARNING To Succeed: <http://www.projectcriss.com/44-criss-for-students-ii>

CRISS Learning Poster Sets: <http://www.projectcriss.com/21-order-support-materials>