

Rigor, Relevance, & Best Practice Newsletter

Elementary Educator Edition

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Northeast Regional Center

Collaboration among the Education Service Agencies of
Apache, Coconino and Navajo County

Preparing Today's Students for Tomorrow's Challenges

BREAKING NEWS: AZ Announces New Test to Replace AIMS From Expect More Arizona

On November 3, the Arizona State Board of Education adopted Arizona's Measurement of Educational Readiness to Inform Teaching (AzMERIT) as the new statewide test. The assessment will be given to Arizona students in 3rd grade through high school this spring and will replace the AIMS test in reading, writing and math.

The test will be administered by the American Institutes for Research (AIR), a private, not-for-profit test vendor, and will be overseen and controlled by Arizona. The test will be unique to Arizona and will engage Arizona educators and education experts in developing questions for the new assessment. The assessment will also draw from AIR's work in other states to ensure that student test information is comparable across states.



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WHY A NEW TEST?

While testing is sometimes not fun, parents and teachers agree that assessments are important tools that provide valuable information to support student learning. The new tests will be aligned to what is being taught in classrooms today and will help parents and teachers know if our students are on track to succeed.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE NEW TEST

At the high school level, assessments will be given at the end of English and math courses, similar to a final exam. Passing the end-of-course tests will not be a high school graduation requirement. School districts and charter schools can choose to administer the assessment via pencil/paper or on a computer. Personal student data has never been, and never will be, shared with the federal government. Student test data is protected via a number of state and federal laws, including: A.R.S. §§ 15-1041 through 15-1045, Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA). The new test replaces AIMS in reading, writing and math, but the AIMS science test will still be given to students in Grades 4, 8 and high school.

NEW TEST, DIFFERENT SCORES

The new tests will also help Arizona set a more realistic benchmark for student performance. Because we have a completely new test, scores will look different and may be lower than before; however, this doesn't mean that our students are doing worse. Instead, the scores will provide a more accurate view of how our students are performing. Both students and teachers will need time to adjust to the new assessment. With time and our support, we know Arizona students will rise to the challenge.

WHAT'S NEXT?

There are a number of details that need to be determined about how the assessment will be implemented and how scores will be used for students, teachers and schools. The State Board of Education is meeting in December to discuss the potential of a hold harmless year that would give teachers, schools and students flexibility with accountability measures while they adjust to the new tests.

The Arizona Department of Education is working to address implementation issues, including when the testing window will be and how the new test will be delivered.

SIGN UP TO GET UPDATES AND HEAR OPPORTUNITIES TO BE INVOLVED

As these items are being discussed, there will be opportunities for parents, teachers and community members to get involved to share their perspectives. Your opinion matters! It is up to all of us to be involved to support our kids, teachers and schools!

MORE DETAILS

Read more about the selection process used by the State Board of Education.

Learn more about AzMERIT.

<http://www.expectmorearizona.org/blog/2014/11/03/new-test/#sthash.UkZ68dMQ.dpuf>

<http://www.azed.gov/assessment/azsampleassessmentitems/>

Resources

Here are a few links containing additional information, including details on what each child will be expected to know and do in each grade and tips for parents:

<http://ccesa.az.gov/>

<http://www.azed.gov/assessment/azsampleassessmentitems/>

<http://achievethecore.org/>

<https://www.engageny.org/>

www.corestandards.org

www.pta.org/parentsguide

<http://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/files2012/05/rttt-implementation-plan-2-6-12.pdf>

www.theteachingchannel.org/



Writing Focus: Begin with Standard # 10

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

This year's CCESA Anchor Standards' Challenge focuses on writing. To date the CCESA Office of I & D has highlighted the first three Anchor Standards. This was done to bring attention to the three types of writing the AZCCRS for ELA, Social Studies, History, Science & Technical Subjects ask students to know and be able to do. This year's CCESA newsletters will have a focus of writing and delve into what students will need to accomplish at each grade level in order to become college and career ready. We begin this series of newsletters with standard ten due to the nature of its demand to implement writing into all coursework throughout the year. "To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students need to learn to use writing as a way of offering and supporting opinions, demonstrating understanding of the subjects they are studying, and conveying real and imagined experiences and events (CCAS, 2010). Standard ten requires students to "write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences" (CCAS, 2010).

Organizing and building classroom activities that meet this standard along with combining with other literacy standards is a critical factor for the student. "They develop the capacity to build knowledge on a subject through research projects and to respond analytically to literary and informational sources. To meet these goals, students must devote significant time and effort to writing, producing numerous pieces over short and extended time frames throughout the year" (CCAS, 2010).

Strategy: Quick Write/Quick Draw

Quick Write/Quick Draw: using the graphic organizer found here, students will be asked to reflect on something they have learned through writing. The key is to only allow so much time to complete the writing/drawing and not worry about grammatical errors. The concept is more about getting thoughts on paper. Students are asked to write or draw everything they remember about the learning experience. Students may brainstorm new vocabulary words learned at the bottom of their Quick Write as well. Prompts may be given to students such as the following:

- What did you learn?
- What did you think about?
- What did you like the most?
- What did you not like?
- What surprised you?
- What made you curious?
- What was the coolest thing you remember?



Some variations on this strategy are to ask students to summarize what was learned or connect to background information or students' lives.

What Grade K-2 Teachers Should Know About Writing Standard # 10

Although Standard 10 doesn't begin until 3rd grade, students in first grade need to have the foundation laid for this standard. Much of the work of standard 10 can be accomplished by analyzing quality writers through read alouds. At a very young age, students need to learn the purpose that an author writes and who the audience is that the author is writing for.

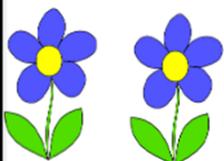
Students also need to have the option of technology to support their growing storytelling ability even if their ability to write on paper has not advanced at the same pace. Websites to assist with this are:

- www.voki.com for character development
- www.storybird.com houses a wealth of tools for creating stories with artwork that is already uploaded.
- **Things to Think About** is a student created iTunes app that challenges kids to make decisions about interesting topics.

Writing in Math: K-2 Examples from EngageNY

EngageNY is a website developed by the New York State Education Department to support the implementation of the CCSSM. The website provides educators with professional learning tools and resources for support of achieving college and career readiness for all students. EngageNY instruction resources that include in class activities, activities, and practice sets with teacher notes and sample student responses.

**Draw 3 more flowers that are shorter than these flowers.
Count how many flowers you have now. Write the number
in the box.**



KINDERGARTEN EXAMPLE

This is the homework problem for Lesson 1 in Kindergarten Module 3 Topic A. Module 3 focuses on Measurement & Data and the comparison of length, weight and volume, which will lead to comparisons of numbers. This problem also applies knowledge from the previous knowledge as students must use counting and cardinality to add draw three more flowers and find the total number of flowers. <https://www.engageny.org/resource/kindergarten-mathematics-module-3>

Writing in Math: K-2 Examples from EngageNY (continued from pg. 2)

Read the math story. Make a simple math drawing with labels. Circle 10 and solve.

Maddy goes to the pond and catches 3 bugs, 2 frogs, and 8 tadpoles. How many animals did she catch altogether?

$$\begin{array}{r} \underline{\quad} + \underline{\quad} + \underline{\quad} = \underline{\quad} \\ 10 + \underline{\quad} = \underline{\quad} \end{array}$$

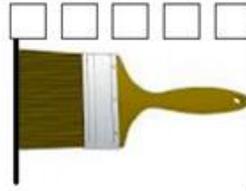
Maddy caught _____ animals

2nd GRADE EXAMPLE

This is an Exit Ticket for Lesson 1, Topic A in 2nd Grade Module 2. Module 2 focuses on 2.MD.1 Measure the length of an object by selecting and using appropriate tools such as rulers, yardsticks, meter sticks, and measuring tapes. This problem also addresses Practice Standard 3: Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others. As an exit ticket, reviewing their work allows a teacher to assess the students' understanding of measurement and using the tool of the centimeter blocks.

<https://www.engageny.org/resource/grade-2-mathematics-module-2-lesson-1-exit-ticket>

Sara lined up her centimeter cubes to find the length of the picture of the paintbrush. Sarah thinks the picture of the paintbrush is 5 centimeter cubes long.



Is her answer correct? Explain why or why not.

Writing in Math: 3-5 Examples from EngageNY

The picture below shows 2 groups of apples. Does the picture show 2×3 ? Explain why or why not.



3rd GRADE EXAMPLE

This is from the Problem Set for Lesson 1, Topic A in 3rd Grade Module 1. Module 1 focuses on Operations and Algebraic Thinking. Topic A of Module 1 really looks at the meaning of multiplication, the vocabulary, and some of the misunderstandings that go with it. This problem is perfect to question the meaning of multiplication. So quickly students learn a topic and want to apply it to every situation. Here, a student must construct an argument as to why or why not multiplication is applicable in this situation, thus creating grounding for using Practice Standard 3.

<https://www.engageny.org/resource/grade-3-mathematics-module-1-lesson-1-problem-set>

Emily's pet snake is 5 feet long. Kristen's snake is 50 inches long. Kristen says her snake is much longer because 50 is so much more than 5. Is Kristen right? Why or why not?
Ben helps his dad make chicken soup. Their recipe makes 15 cups of soup. If they each eat 2 cups and freeze the rest, will the leftovers fit in a 64 ounce container?

5th GRADE EXAMPLE

This lesson focuses on 5.MD.1 Convert among different-sized standard measurement units within a given measurement system (e.g., convert 5 cm to 0.05 m), and use these conversions in solving multi-step, real world problems. P. 170

<https://www.engageny.org/resource/grade-5-mathematics-module-2-lesson-1>

Dog	Weight
Great Dane	59 kg
Golden Retriever	32 kg 48 g
Chihuahua	1,329 g

The table to the right shows the weight of three dogs. How much more does the Great Dane weigh than the Chihuahua?

3rd GRADE EXAMPLE

This is from the Exit Ticket for Lesson 2, Topic A in 4th Grade Module 2. Module 2 focuses on measurement and Data, with this lesson specifically looking at 4.MD.2. Use the four operations to solve word problems involving distances, intervals of time, liquid volumes, masses of objects, and money, including problems involving simple fractions or decimals, and problems that require expressing measurements given in a larger unit in terms of a smaller unit. Represent measurement quantities using diagrams such as number line diagrams that feature a measurement scale.

<https://www.engageny.org/resource/grade-4-mathematics-module-2-lesson-2-exit-ticket>