



COMMON CORE LEARNING STANDARDS

The New York City Department of Education (DOE) serves more than 1.1 million students and their families in over 1,700 schools. We are committed to providing useful information to parents and families and offering them multiple opportunities to participate in our City's public school programs and initiatives. This overview is designed to explain the Common Core Learning Standards and how they relate to your child's education.

WHAT ARE THE COMMON CORE LEARNING STANDARDS?

Learning standards describe what students should know and be able to do in each grade. Over the next few years, New York and more than 40 other states across the country will transition to a new set of learning standards called the Common Core. These new standards provide a clear picture of what students need to learn each year in order to graduate from high school ready to succeed in college and careers.

The Common Core standards were developed by educators and other experts based on research and lessons learned from top-performing countries. The standards describe the skills and knowledge our students need to succeed in a rapidly changing world, including the ability to think creatively, solve real-world problems, make effective arguments, and engage in debates.



In New York State, the Common Core includes standards for students in pre-kindergarten through grade twelve in English language arts and math. The English standards include a focus on literacy in history, science, and technical subjects—emphasizing that teachers in all subjects are responsible for teaching literacy. As schools implement these new standards, students will be asked to do significantly more writing and to read increasingly complex texts, with an emphasis on nonfiction. In math, students will take more time to understand concepts deeply, make connections between topics, and master complex ideas through hands-on learning.

WHAT DOES THE COMMON CORE MEAN FOR NEW YORK CITY STUDENTS?

The Common Core standards provide us with a powerful opportunity to develop students' critical thinking skills. As our schools work to ensure all students achieve at high levels, students are engaging in these new, higher standards more and more. Last year, all New York City students completed at least one literacy assignment and one math assignment aligned to the Common Core, each as part of a larger unit of curriculum. In 2012-13, all New York City students are learning from multiple units of curriculum in different subjects that are aligned to the Common Core.

In literacy, students are being asked to read and analyze pieces of nonfiction writing and use evidence from the text to write opinions and arguments in response. In math, students are solving challenging problems based on real-world situations and exploring the reasoning behind arguments. Common Core-aligned tasks are presented in a variety of forms so that they are accessible to all learners, including students with disabilities and English language learners. Next year, schools will work to fully align curricula in literacy and math to the Common Core.

New York City schools are receiving support to transition to the Common Core. Through training and online resources, teachers are developing a deeper understanding of the new standards and adjusting their classroom practice to make sure all students are on track for college and careers.



HOW WILL NEW YORK STATE TESTS CHANGE TO INCLUDE THE COMMON CORE?

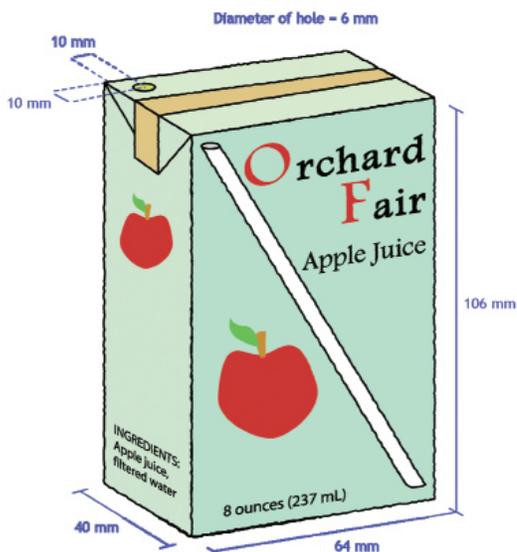
Every year, students in grades 3–8 take New York State tests in English and math to demonstrate their mastery of State standards. Beginning in the 2012–13 school year, these tests will assess student performance according to the Common Core. Exams for high school students will begin to change in the 2013–14 school year.

By the 2014–15 school year, State tests will look very different from the tests students take now. New York is working with a group of 23 other states to develop tests that require students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills through a new kind of question, known as a performance task. Rather than filling in bubbles to answer multiple-choice questions, students will be asked to demonstrate that they understand the concepts they have learned and can apply them—often in unfamiliar, real-world situations. Performance tasks will require students to think critically while engaging in extended writing assignments and solving problems with multiple steps.

The following is a sample performance task:

The Straw and the Juice Box

A company that sells juice in small cartons like the one shown below has a problem. The straight straw attached to the outside of each carton keeps getting lost inside.



Use mathematics to explore and describe the nature and cause of the problem faced by the company.

Investigate how the problem could be fixed.

Create a report for the company describing as many different solutions to the straw-and-juice-box problem as possible.

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HOW CAN I SUPPORT THE COMMON CORE STANDARDS AT HOME?

Student progress is a shared priority for teachers, principals, and families. We will be working together as a City over the next several years to help all students master the Common Core standards. Your feedback and support will be critical to our success.

To learn more about the Common Core in New York City schools and how you can support your student at home, ask your child's teacher or visit our Common Core Library at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/CommonCoreLibrary/FamilyResources>.

LEARN MORE

- Log in to ARIS Parent Link—visit: <https://arisparentlink.org/parentlink>.
- Get your copy of the NYC Family Guide and learn useful tips to keep your child on track for success—visit: <http://schools.nyc.gov/ParentsFamilies>.
- Find out about the Common Core standards nationally—visit <http://corestandards.org>.
- Talk with other parents about the new standards for teaching and learning.
- View the National PTA's *Parents' Guide to Student Success*—visit: <http://www.pta.org/4446.htm>.
- Learn more about the Department's vision for students and schools by reading *Raising the Bar for Students and Schools: Our Commitment to Action*—visit: <http://schools.nyc.gov>.