Understanding Common Core State Standards

Common Core Terminology:
- **Shift** - A change in how teachers teach and how students learn
- **Text** – Any written work
- **Non-fiction** – Texts about real-life events or facts
- **Evidence** – Bits of proof from the text
- **Judgment** – A student’s conclusion about what they have read
- **Speed and Accuracy** – How quickly a student can solve math problems correctly

Q: What are the Common Core State Standards?

A: The Common Core State Standards create clear expectations for what students in Pre-K through 12th grade should be able to do in reading, writing, speaking and listening, language and mathematics. The standards will help all students across the State learn the same skills to ensure they are prepared for college and careers following graduation. The standards include changes, or “shifts,” in how teachers teach to help children succeed in the topics and skills that matter most.

Q: What’s shifting? What are the changes?

A: The Common Core State Standards ask teachers to make 12 major “shifts” or (changes) in their classrooms – six shifts in English Language Arts (ELA) and six shifts in Mathematics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELA</th>
<th>Math</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Read more non-fiction</td>
<td>• Build on learning year after year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learn about the world through reading</td>
<td>• Spend more time on fewer concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Read more challenging material</td>
<td>• Use math facts easily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Talk about reading using “evidence”</td>
<td>• Develop speed and accuracy in solving problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learn how to write from what is read</td>
<td>• Really know it, really do it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Know more vocabulary words</td>
<td>• Use math in real-world situations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information and resources on what you can do to help your child adjust to these higher expectations, contact your child’s classroom teacher, school principal or visit: **EngageNY.org**
Common Core and Our Children’s Test Scores

The 2013 grades 3-8 English Language Arts (ELA) and Math assessments are best thought of as a new assessment. New York State, for the first time, will be reporting student grade-level expectations against a trajectory of college- and career-readiness reflective of the Common Core State Standards.

For more information and resources on what you can do to help your child adjust to these higher expectations, contact your child’s classroom teacher, school principal or visit: EngageNY.org

Understanding Common Core State Standards
See other side

Q. Why do we need state assessments?
A. Assessment tests do not measure the worth and intelligence of our children, but are an important tool for improving student achievement. The new tests will help principals and teachers identify those students who might need extra support to successfully move on to the next grade level.

Q. Will these new tests be harder?
A. At first, the new tests may seem more difficult. This is normal. The new tests will be based on the “shifts” in the Common Core State Standards.

Q. Will student test scores drop?
A. The number of students that score at or above grade level will likely decrease. This decrease should not necessarily be interpreted as a decline in student learning or a decline in teacher performance. These new assessments will provide a more realistic picture of where students are on their path to being well prepared for the world that awaits them after they graduate from high school.

ELA and Math Assessment Changes:
Increases in Rigor
Questions will be more advanced and complex
Focus on Text
Students will be required to read, analyze passages, and answer questions with evidence gathered from the text
Depth of Math
Students will demonstrate a conceptual understanding of real-world math