

Module 1  
Participant  
Guide

Focus on Instructional Shifts

## Activity 3

Connecticut Core Standards for  
English Language Arts and  
Literacy



Grades K–5

*Systems of Professional Learning*

### **Connecticut Core Standards Systems of Professional Learning**

The material in this guide was developed by Public Consulting Group in collaboration with staff from the Connecticut State Department of Education and the RESC Alliance. The development team would like to specifically thank Ellen Cohn, Charlene Tate Nichols, and Jennifer Webb from the Connecticut State Department of Education; Leslie Abbatiello from ACES; and Robb Geier, Elizabeth O'Toole, and Cheryl Liebling from Public Consulting Group.

The Systems of Professional Learning project includes a series of professional learning experiences for Connecticut Core Standards District Coaches in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Humanities, Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM), and Student/Educator Support Staff (SESS).

Participants will have continued support for the implementation of the new standards through virtual networking opportunities and online resources to support the training of educators throughout the state of Connecticut.

Instrumental in the design and development of the Systems of Professional Learning materials from PCG were: Sharon DeCarlo, Debra Berlin, Jennifer McGregor, Michelle Wade, Nora Kelley, Diane Stump, and Melissa Pierce.

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Activity 3

## Activity 3: Reading, Writing, and Speaking with Evidence

### DESCRIPTION

**Part 1:** In table groups of grades K–1, 2–3, and 4–5, coaches will reflect on a video example of a teacher’s text-dependent questions based on a content-rich nonfiction text.

**Part 2:** Participants will create an anchor chart reflecting “take-aways” for Shift 2.

### RESOURCES

- Video: Grade 4, ELA/Science – “Mars – Supporting Evidence” (Price)
- <http://commoncore.americaachieves.org/module/20> (Segment: 1:30 – 8:30) 7 minutes
- Lesson plan for “Mars – Supporting Evidence”
- Text exemplars from Appendix B
  - Grades K–1, Read-Aloud Informational Text: Jenkins, Steve and Robin Page. *What Do You Do With a Tail Like This?*
  - Grades 2–3, Informational Text: Alike. *A Medieval Feast*
  - Grades 4–5, Informational Text: Lauber, Patricia. *Hurricanes: Earth’s Mightiest Storms*
  - Grades 4–5, Informational Text: Simon, Seymour. *Horses*
- Connecticut Core Standards English Language Arts, K–5 Standards Progression

## Activity 3, Part 1: Viewing a Video

### DIRECTIONS

View a video of instruction related to Shift 2 and discuss your observations.

We are going to view segments of a video lesson that show a grade 4 class reading closely, Melvin Berger’s, *Discovering Mars: The Amazing Story of the Red Planet*. For Activity 3, we focus on the teacher’s text-dependent questions and the students’ text-based answers.

As you watch the video, focus on the text-dependent questions that the teacher poses and the students’ responses to the questions.

- Do the questions specifically address content-rich material in the text? What types of questions is the teacher asking?
- Are students successful in responding to the questions with textual evidence?
- Pay special attention to the way that the teacher helps students become proficient on the reading, writing, and speaking with evidence standards for the lesson:
  - RI.4.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
  - RI.4.3 Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.
  - RI.4.4 Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area.
  - RI.4.7 Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.
  - RF.4.4 Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
  - RF.4.4.a Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding.
  - SL.4.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

After watching the video, briefly review the lesson plan. “Turn-and-Talk” to your neighbor to discuss what you observed in the video and lesson plan that exemplifies the value of text-dependent questioning in close reading of meaningful content.

**LESSON: MARS/EARTH COMPARISONS**

<b>Grade</b>	4 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Subject</b>	Reading/Science
<b>Unit name</b>	Literature Settings: Weather or Not	<b>Lesson</b>	Mars/Earth Comparison
<b>Lesson #</b>	3	<b>Teacher</b>	Kim Price

<b>CC Standards for English Language Arts</b>	<p><u>RI.4.1</u> Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.</p> <p><u>RI.4.3</u> Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.</p> <p><u>RI.4.4</u> Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a <i>grade 4 topic or subject area</i>.</p> <p><u>RI.4.7</u> Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.</p> <p><u>RF.4.4.a</u> Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. a. Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding.</p> <p><u>SL.4.1</u> Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher led) with diverse partners on <i>grade 4 topics and texts</i>, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.</p>
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**LESSON PLAN: MARS/EARTH COMPARISONS**

SECTION	TIME	SHIFT	DETAIL
<b>Introduction</b>	5 minutes		<p>Explain to students that they will be working on a close read for the next 1–2 weeks.</p> <p>Go over the expectations of a close read and the purpose for close reading.</p> <p>Discuss the expectations and purpose of answering text-dependent questions.</p> <p>Explain that this close reading will incorporate the reading and discussing of two expository texts and one video.</p>
<b>Independent Reading</b>	10 minutes	Building content knowledge through content-rich nonfiction text	Students will read the Mars passage independently just focusing on the text.
<b>Vocabulary Instruction</b>	5 minutes	Academic vocabulary	Teacher will then review the underlined and bolded vocabulary words in the text.
<b>Read Aloud and Buddy Reading</b>	10 minutes	Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction	<p>Teacher will read passage aloud to model fluency.</p> <p>Students will read text again independently and then with a partner to grant multiple opportunities to access text and build knowledge through rereading the text. During this time, students will identify vocabulary words that are still confusing.</p>
<b>Sharing Questions and Answers</b>	10 minutes	<p>Text-based questions</p> <p>Speaking and writing grounded in evidence from the text</p>	Students will discuss questions that accompany the text and write the answers to the questions on their own.

SECTION	TIME	SHIFT	DETAIL
<b>Independent Reading</b>	10 minutes	Building content knowledge through content-rich nonfiction text	Students will read the Earth passage independently just focusing on the text.
<b>Vocabulary Instruction</b>	5 minutes	Academic vocabulary	Teacher will then review the underlined and bolded vocabulary words in the text.
<b>Read Aloud and Buddy Reading</b>	10 minutes	Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction	Teacher will read passage aloud to model fluency. Students will read text again independently and then with a partner to grant multiple opportunities to access text and build knowledge through rereading the text. During this time, students will identify vocabulary words that are still confusing.
<b>Sharing Questions and Answers</b>	10 minutes	Text-based questions	Students will discuss questions that accompany the text and write the answers to the questions on their own.
		Speaking and writing grounded in evidence from the text	
<b>Video Viewing</b>	10 minutes	Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction	Students will view a video on Mars and complete the note-taker while watching the film. Group and class discussion of the video.
		Speaking and writing grounded in evidence from the text	
<b>Closing</b>	5 minutes	Speaking and writing grounded in evidence from the text	Group and class discussion of the culminating questions. Students will write the answers to the final three questions on their own.



## Activity 3, Part 2: Creating an Anchor Chart

The purpose of an anchor chart is to “anchor” the teaching and learning that takes place in the classroom. The work of the class is kept visible for reference by the teachers and students. You will be creating an anchor chart, relative to each of the three instructional shifts of the Core Standards.

### DIRECTIONS

1. Divide your chart paper into three sections and label as shown below:

The diagram shows a large rectangular area representing a piece of chart paper. At the top, there is a white rectangular box containing the text: **Shift 2: Reading, Writing, and Speaking Grounded in Evidence from Text**. Below this box, on the left side, are three more white rectangular boxes stacked vertically, each containing a label: **Observations**, **Supports**, and **Questions**. The rest of the chart paper area is blank, intended for notes. The bottom right corner of the chart paper is folded over, showing a grey underside.

2. Discuss with your table: “What would you expect to see and hear in a classroom aligned with Shift 2?” In the section of your anchor chart labeled **Observations**, make notes about what you would expect to observe in an aligned classroom.
3. Discuss with your table: “What supports will teachers and students need in order to implement Shift 2 effectively?” In the section of your anchor chart labeled **Supports**, make notes about your discussion.
4. In the section labeled **Questions**, note any questions or further comments participants at your table have about implementing Shift 2.

## A Guide to Creating Text-Dependent Questions for Close Analytic Reading

### Text-Dependent Questions: What Are They?

The Core Standards for reading strongly focus on students gathering evidence, knowledge, and insight from what they read. Indeed, eighty to ninety percent of the Reading Standards in each grade *require* text-dependent analysis; accordingly, aligned curriculum materials should have a similar percentage of text-dependent questions.

As the name suggests, a text-dependent question specifically asks a question that can only be answered by referring explicitly back to the text being read. It does not rely on any particular background information extraneous to the text nor depend on students having other experiences or knowledge; instead it privileges the text itself and what students can extract from what is before them.

For example, in a close analytic reading of Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address,” the following would not be text-dependent questions:

- Why did the North fight the civil war?
- Have you ever been to a funeral or gravesite?
- Lincoln says that the nation is dedicated to the proposition that “all men are created equal.” Why is equality an important value to promote?

The overarching problem with these questions is that they require no familiarity at all with Lincoln’s speech in order to answer them. Responding to these sorts of questions instead requires students to go outside the text. Such questions can be tempting to ask because they are likely to get students talking, but they take students away from considering the actual point Lincoln is making. They seek to elicit a personal or general response that relies on individual experience and opinion, and answering them will not move students closer to understanding the text of the “Gettysburg Address.”

Good text-dependent questions will often linger over specific phrases and sentences to ensure careful comprehension of the text—they help students see something worthwhile that they would not have seen on a more cursory reading. Typical text-dependent questions ask students to perform one or more of the following tasks:

- Analyze paragraphs on a sentence by sentence basis and sentences on a word by word basis to determine the role played by individual paragraphs, sentences, phrases, or words
- Investigate how meaning can be altered by changing key words and why an author may have chosen one word over another

- Probe each argument in persuasive text, each idea in informational text, each key detail in literary text, and observe how these build to a whole
- Examine how shifts in the direction of an argument or explanation are achieved and the impact of those shifts
- Question why authors choose to begin and end when they do
- Note and assess patterns of writing and what they achieve
- Consider what the text leaves uncertain or unstated

### **Creating Text-Dependent Questions for Close Analytic Reading of Texts**

An effective set of text-dependent questions delves systematically into a text to guide students in extracting the key meanings or ideas found there. They typically begin by exploring specific words, details, and arguments and then moves on to examine the impact of those specifics on the text as a whole. Along the way, they target academic vocabulary and specific sentence structures as critical focus points for gaining comprehension.

While there is no set process for generating a complete and coherent body of text-dependent questions for a text, the following process is a good guide that can serve to generate a core series of questions for close reading of any given text.

#### *Step One: Identify the Core Understandings and Key Ideas of the Text*

As in any good reverse engineering or “backwards design” process, teachers should start by identifying the key insights they want students to understand from the text—keeping one eye on the major points being made is crucial for fashioning an overarching set of successful questions and critical for creating an appropriate culminating assignment.

#### *Step Two: Start Small to Build Confidence*

The opening questions should be ones that help orientate students to the text and be sufficiently specific enough for them to answer so that they gain confidence to tackle more difficult questions later on.

#### *Step Three: Target Vocabulary and Text Structure*

Locate key text structures and the most powerful academic words in the text that are connected to the key ideas and understandings, and craft questions that illuminate these connections.

### Step Four: Tackle Tough Sections Head-on

Find the sections of the text that will present the greatest difficulty and craft questions that support students in mastering these sections (these could be sections with difficult syntax, particularly dense information, and tricky transitions or places that offer a variety of possible inferences).

### Step Five: Create Coherent Sequences of Text-Dependent Questions

The sequence of questions should not be random but should build toward more coherent understanding and analysis to ensure that students learn to stay focused on the text to bring them to a gradual understanding of its meaning.

### Step Six: Identify the Standards That Are Being Addressed

Take stock of what standards are being addressed in the series of questions and decide if any other standards are suited to being a focus for this text (forming additional questions that exercise those standards).

### Step Seven: Create the Culminating Assessment

Develop a culminating activity around the key ideas or understandings identified earlier that reflects (a) mastery of one or more of the standards, (b) involves writing, and (c) is structured to be completed by students independently.

*This document was sourced from [www.achievethecore.org](http://www.achievethecore.org),  
And developed by Student Achievement Partners*

## Text Excerpts from CCS-ELA Appendix B

**Grades K–1, Read-Aloud Informational Text: Jenkins, Steve, and Robin Page. *What Do You Do With a Tail Like This?* Orlando: Houghton Mifflin, 2003. (2003)**

What do you do with a nose like this?

If you're a platypus, you use your nose to dig in the mud.

If you're a hyena, you find your next meal with your nose.

If you're an elephant, you use your nose to give yourself a bath.

If you're a mole, you use your nose to find your way underground.

If you're an alligator, you breathe through your nose while hiding in the water.

What do you do with ears like these?

If you're a jackrabbit, you use your ears to keep cool.

If you're a bat you "see" with your ears.

If you're a cricket, you hear with ears that are on your knees.

If you're a humpback whale, you hear sounds hundreds of miles away.

If you're a hippopotamus, you close your ears when you're under water.

What do you do with a tail like this?

If you're a giraffe, you brush off pesky flies with your tail.

If you're a skunk, you lift your tail to warn that a stinky spray is on the way.

If you're a lizard, you break off your tail to get away.

If you're a scorpion, your tail can give a nasty sting.

If you're a monkey, you hang from a tree by your tail.

What do you do with eyes like these?

If you're an eagle, you spot tiny animals from high in the air.

If you're a chameleon, you look two ways at once.

If you're a four-eye fish, you look above and below the water at the same time.

If you're a bush baby, you use your large eyes to see clearly at night.

If you're a horned lizard, you squirt blood out of your eyes.

What do you do with feet like these?

If you're a chimpanzee, you feed yourself with your feet.

If you're a water strider, you walk on water.

If you're a blue-footed booby, you do a dance.

If you're a gecko, you use your sticky feet to walk on the ceiling.

If you're a mountain goat, you leap from ledge to ledge.

What do you do with a mouth like this?

If you're a pelican, you use your mouth as a net to scoop up fish.

If you're an egg-eating snake, you use your mouth to swallow eggs larger than your head.

If you're a mosquito, you use your mouth to suck blood.

If you're an anteater, you capture termites with your long tongue.

If you're an archerfish, you catch insects by shooting them down with a stream of water.

*Excerpted from WHAT DO YOU DO WITH A TAIL LIKE THIS? By Steve Jenkins and Robin Page. Copyright © 2003 by Steve Jenkins and Robin Page. Used by Permission of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. All rights reserved.*

**Grades 2–3, Informational Text: Aliko. *A Medieval Feast*. New York: HarperCollins, 1986. (1983)**

It was announced from the palace that the King would soon make a long journey.

On the way to his destination, the King and his party would spend a few nights at Camdenton Manor. The lord of the manor knew what this meant. The king traveled with his Queen, his knights, squires, and other members of his court. There could be a hundred mouths to feed!

Preparations for the visit began at once. The lord and lady of the manor had their serfs to help them. The serfs lived in huts provided for them on the lord's estate, each with its own plot of land. In return, they were bound to serve the lord. They farmed his land, managed his manor house, and if there was a war, they had to go to battle with the lord and the King.

But now they prepared.

The manor had its own church, which was attended by everyone on the estate.

The manor house had to be cleaned, the rooms readied, tents set up for the horsemen, fields fenced for the horses. And above all, provisions had to be gathered for the great feast.

The Royal Suite was redecorated.

Silk was spun, new fabric was woven.

The Royal Crest was embroidered on linen and painted on the King's chair.

The lord and his party went hunting and hawking for fresh meat.

Hunting was a sport for the rich only. The wild animals that lived on the lord's estate belonged to him. Anyone caught poaching—hunting illegally—was severely punished.

Falcons and hawks were prized pets. They were trained to attack birds for their masters to capture.

They trapped rabbits and birds of all kinds, and fished for salmon and eels and trout.

Serfs hid in bushes and caught birds in traps. They set ferrets in burrows to chase out rabbits.

There were fruits and vegetables growing in the garden, herbs and flowers for sauces and salads, and bees made honey for sweetening.

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**Grades 4–5, Informational Text: Lauber, Patricia. Hurricanes: *Earth’s Mightiest Storms*. New York: Scholastic, 1996. (1996) From “The Making of a Hurricane”**

Great whirling storms roar out of the oceans in many parts of the world. They are called by several names—hurricane, typhoon, and cyclone are the three most familiar ones. But no matter what they are called, they are all the same sort of storm. They are born in the same way, in tropical waters. They develop the same way, feeding on warm, moist air. And they do the same kind of damage, both ashore and at sea. Other storms may cover a bigger area or have higher winds, but none can match both the size and the fury of hurricanes. They are earth’s mightiest storms.

Like all storms, they take place in the atmosphere, the envelope of air that surrounds the earth and presses on its surface. The pressure at any one place is always changing. There are days when air is sinking and the atmosphere presses harder on the surface. These are the times of high pressure. There are days when a lot of air is rising and the atmosphere does not press down as hard. These are times of low pressure. Low-pressure areas over warm oceans give birth to hurricanes.

*From: HURRICANES: EARTH’S MIGHTIEST STORMS by Patricia Lauber. Copyright © 1996 by Patricia Lauber. Used by permission of Scholastic, Inc.*

**Grades 4–5, Informational Text: Simon, Seymour. Horses. New York: HarperCollins, 2006. (2006)**

Horses move in four natural ways, called gaits or paces. They walk, trot, canter, and gallop. The walk is the slowest gait and the gallop is the fastest.

When a horse walks, each hoof leaves the ground at a different time. It moves one hind leg first, and then the front leg on the same side; then the other hind leg and the other front leg. When a horse walks, its body swings gently with each stride.

When a horse trots, its legs move in pairs, left front leg with right hind leg, and right front leg with left hind leg. When a horse canters, the hind legs and one front leg move together, and then the hind legs and the other foreleg move together.

The gallop is like a much faster walk, where each hoof hits the ground one after another. When a horse gallops, all four of its hooves may be flying off the ground at the same time.

Horses are usually described by their coat colors and by the white markings on their faces, bodies, legs, and hooves. Brown horses range in color from dark brown bays and chestnuts to golden browns, such as palominos, and lighter browns such as roans and duns.

Partly colored horses are called pintos or paints. Colorless, pure-white horses—albinos—are rare. Most horses that look white are actually gray.

Skewbalds have brown-and-white patches. Piebalds have black and white patches. Spotted have dark spots on a white coat or white spots on a dark coat.

*Used by permission of HarperCollins Publishers.*

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*Science, and Technical Subjects*. Washington, D.C.: Authors. Retrieved from <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/>; National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers (2012). See Appendix B: Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks. [http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix\\_B.pdf](http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf)

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## Videos

“Mars - Supporting Evidence” (Price), <http://commoncore.americaachieves.org/module/20>

“The Wonders of Nature” (Liben), <http://commoncore.americaachieves.org/module/6>

“Graphic Non-Fiction: Harriet Tubman” (Sims), <http://commoncore.americaachieves.org/module/2>

## **Websites for Quantitative Text Analyzers**

ATOS Analyzer – Renaissance Learning. Available from <http://www.renlearn.com/ar/overview/atos/>

Degrees of Reading Power – Questar. Available from <http://www.questarai.com>

Lexile Framework – MetaMetrix. Available from <http://www.lexile.com/analyzer/>

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