



Capture the Core

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Twelfth Grade

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Prairie State Achievement Test

The major purpose of the PSAE is to measure the **Illinois Learning Standards** in: **Reading, Mathematics, Science, and Writing**. – ISBE

The Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) measures the achievement of grade 11 students in reading, mathematics, science, and writing.



The spring 2014 PSAE includes three components: (1) the ACT Plus Writing, which includes the ACT battery of four multiple-choice tests (English, mathematics, reading, and science) and a writing prompt, (2) an ISBE-developed science assessment, and (3) two WorkKeys assessments (Applied Mathematics and Reading for Information).

In addition, in spring 2014, ACT's WorkKeys Locating Information assessment will be administered at district discretion after the three PSAE Day 2 tests. This will allow students who earn qualifying scores the opportunity to be eligible for ACT's National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC). Scores for WorkKeys Locating Information assessment will not be used in any PSAE score calculations.

For details on Day 1 click [here](#) .

For details on Day 2 click [here](#)

For general; information: <http://www.isbe.state.il.us/assessment/psae.htm>

Information taken from the [ISBE website](#)

WorkKeys Support Sites

Click on the links below:

[Preparing for the WorkKeys Assessment - ACT](#)

[Reading Resources for WorkKeys and GED Prep -PBS Learning Media](#)

[Websites for WorkKeys Applied Math Practice Questions - Edwardsville](#)

PSAE Dates		Make Up Dates		Accommodations Window	
Day 1	April 23, 2014	Day 1	May 7, 2014	Day 1	April 23 - May 7, 2014
Day 2	April 24, 2014	Day 2	May 8, 2014	Day 2	April 24 – May 8, 2014

Shift Kits Designed for Illinois Educators

In order to be truly aligned with the Common Core State Standards, there are instructional shifts in English Language Arts and Literacy which are required of teachers.

The ELA Content Specialists, in partnership with ISBE, created Shift Kits to provide schools and districts resources aligned with each shift of instruction.

There is a total of nine Instructional Kits and one Administrator Kit.

Each kit contains:

- A guide
- Recommendations from the International Reading Association
- PowerPoint(s) including facilitator's guides and handouts
- A list of recommended journal articles and books

Each kit also includes a table of contents where additional tools such as videos, webinars, and websites, for that shift are provided.

Educators are encouraged to visit the site and sign up for the listserv to receive notifications of updates on the Shift Kits as well as additional ELA Resources.

Educators can access the Shift Kit website at

[http://
education.illinoisstate.edu/
casei/ela/](http://education.illinoisstate.edu/casei/ela/)



English Language Arts Shift Kit

The English Language Arts Shift Kit provides information on expectations of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in the area of English language arts.

In addition to the power point presentations which are accompanied by facilitator guides and handouts, the kit's contents include the following:

- Thinkfinity Reading and Writing Strategies

- Videos on Literary Nonfiction
- Lessons on short stories and on analyzing essays
- Poetry lessons
- Photo journal handouts and projects
- Information on teaching the speaking and listening
- Adding informational text to the English classroom
- Experiencing texts in multiple ways



Text Complexity

The Text Complexity Shift Kit provides background information on text complexity as well as valuable resources. Its contents include the following:

- An introduction and definition of text complexity
- Presentation materials to build capacity at the school and district levels

“The clearest differentiator in reading between students who are college ready and students who are not is the ability to comprehend complex texts.”

ACT Report

[http://www.act.org/research/
policymakers/pdf/
reading_report.pdf](http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/reading_report.pdf)

- Journal articles describing the research which supports the need for complex instruction
- Power Points accompanied by facilitator guides and handouts
- Text Complexity Rubrics for both literary and informational and texts
- Videos and websites

Effectively Incorporate Technology in the Classroom

Today's students will continue to grow up in a rapidly evolving digital age. With this in mind, we need to expose our students to quality technology in a meaningful way to prepare them for the future. The new Illinois Learning Standards incorporating the Common Core specifically say students should be using technology to learn. Mathematical Practice Standard 5, **Use appropriate tools strategically**, says "When making mathematical models, (students) know that technology

can enable them to visualize the results of varying assumptions, explore consequences, and compare predictions with data." Two examples from the Content Standards are: F.IF.7 "Graph functions expressed symbolically and show key features of the graph, by hand in simple cases and using technology for more complicated cases." and S.ID.8 "Compute (using technology) and interpret the correlation coefficient of a

linear fit." The National Library of Virtual Manipulatives is free and has activities separated by grade level and Domains.<http://nlvm.usu.edu>. GeoGebra is free dynamic software that allows students and teachers to create and manipulate shapes and equations. It also has a large selection of free materials/videos already created for every grade level. <http://www.geogebra.org>. A free online graphing calculator can be found at <https://www.desmos.com/>.

Professional Development Opportunities

Save the Dates

ISBE and the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools are hosting two **Summer Conferences** at the Springfield Convention Center on June 17th and 18th and at Pheasant Run in St. Charles, IL on June 11th and 12th. Save the dates to join teachers and

other educators who are making the new standards come alive in their classrooms and schools!

If you missed the **Illinois Institute for Mathematics Leaders** last year, have no fear, another institute is being hosted by ISBE. Save the date for June 16th and 17th in Springfield.

There will be two concurrent institutes: K-5 and 6-12. More information and registration is coming soon.

"Go down deep enough into anything and you will find mathematics."

Dean Schlicter

High School Geometry

The teaching channel is a resource that has many videos available providing examples of teachers teaching students lessons that are built upon the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics. In this example, the teacher gives examples of students discussing 3-D shapes from the real world exploring G.MG.3 – Apply geometric

methods to solve design problems (e.g., designing an object or structure to satisfy physical constraints or



minimize cost; working with typographic grid systems based on ratios). As the students discuss architecture and its geometric representation, they are also engaging in MP4 – Model with Mathematics.

<https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/teaching-geometry-with-algebra>



Dealing with Mid-Year Stress

Keeping Assessment in Perspective

During this time of year, teachers and students often start to feel low energy as well as an urgency in regard to annual assessments. Testing can offer valuable information, but may also cause concern, stress or fear. Teachers can help keep assessment in perspective by:

- **Maintaining a balanced approach to testing**
Annual testing is just *one* component of a balanced assessment strategy and should be considered in proportion with other assessment feedback.
- **Focusing on assessment's purpose**
Gaining a cumulative measure of student learning that highlights learning strengths and achievement gaps can help identify appropriate interventions and effective teaching strategies.
- **Sharing the "why" with students**
Share with students the purpose and benefits of assessment. Relieve student stress by letting them know how the information gathered will be used to promote their learning.
- **Building skills, not pressure**
Maintain focus on instruction based on learning standards and student *growth*, instead of just grades.

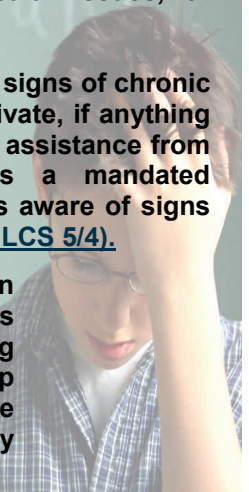
Chronic Stress

Too much stress can become counterproductive and prolonged stress can be disruptive to student learning. Studies have shown that exposure to this kind of chronic stress can produce negative academic (Duplechain, 2008) as well as mental, physical, and social impacts.

Children may experience multiple triggers of chronic stress both inside and outside of school, including divorcing parents, health issues, or bullying (Felitti, 1998).

If a student exhibits re-occurring signs of chronic stress, a teacher may ask, in private, if anything is upsetting him/her and request assistance from school support personnel. As a mandated reporter, a teacher who becomes aware of signs of abuse MUST report them (325 ILCS 5/4).

Dealing with stress is an important life skill that teachers can model powerfully. Learning how to deal with stress can help students and teachers persevere through challenges to ultimately improve student learning.



Making Connections

Social/Emotional Learning Goal 1:

"Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success."

Danielson Framework:

- 1b. Demonstrating knowledge of students
- 2b. Establishing a culture for learning
- 3a. Communicating with students
- 4e. Growing and developing professionally

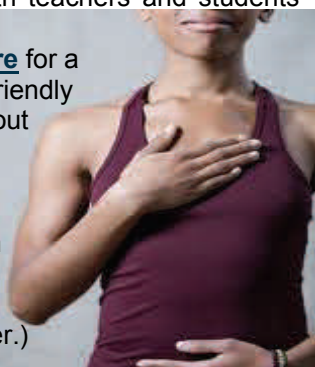
Conditions for Learning Indicators (Rising Star): CL 10 and CL 11

"The school culture promotes and supports the academic, physical, social, emotional, and behavioral skill development and engagement of students.(AND) ...the physical, social, emotional and behavioral health of all school personnel."

Teacher Self-Care

Teachers are also subject to stress, including secondary trauma as they "take on" the stress of their students. Fortunately, teachers can model resiliency, emotional self-monitoring, and strategies that benefit both teachers and students

[Click here](#) for a student-friendly video about reducing stress. (Visit link at bottom of page for online newsletter.)



Signs and Strategies

If chronically stressed, students may:

- Have difficulty paying attention
- Be quiet, upset or withdrawn
- Show changes in performance
- Complain about being tired
- Increase aggressive behavior ([OJJDP](#))

Ways to Reduce Stress at School:

- 1) **Create emotionally safe conditions for learning.**
Ex: recognize/discuss worries
- 2) **Model and practice stress reduction behaviors.**
Ex: peer-support, breathing exercises, physical activity, art
- 3) **Adapt physical environments.**
Ex: music, lighting, nature indoors, less stimulating walls

Related Conditions for Learning Indicators are included in the [Rising Star on IIRC](#) school improvement tool and accessible at [ISBE's Learning Supports](#) web site.

Duplechain, R., Reigner, R. & Packard, A. (2008). Striking Differences: The Impact of Moderate and High Trauma on Reading Achievement. *Reading Psychology*, 29, 117-136.

Felitti, V. et al (1998). Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Leading Many Causes in Adults: The Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Study. *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*, 14 (4).

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). Trauma-Informed Care For Children Exposed To Violence: Tips for Teachers.

Wolpov, R. et al (2011). Compassionate Schools: The Heart of Teaching and Learning. Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) Compassionate Schools.

[Click here](#) for this and archived editions of the *Capture the Core* newsletter.

