

## Appendix A- Implementing Common Core Standards

The state of North Carolina recently adopted Common Core as the new path to educating students in a cross curricular, vertical planned education system spanning the mandatory twelve years of public schooling. Author Robert Rothman, a senior fellow **at the** Alliance for Excellent Education, has succinctly organized and explained the key points that this Curriculum Unit seeks to fulfill<sup>i</sup>

***More Nonfiction-*** Reflecting the fact that students will read primarily expository texts after high school, the Standards call for a much greater emphasis on nonfiction. The document proposes that about half the reading in elementary school and 75 percent in high school should be nonfiction.

***Focus on Evidence-*** In reading, students will be expected to use evidence to demonstrate their comprehension of texts and to read closely in order to make evidence-based claims. To prepare them to do so, teachers will need to take time to read carefully with their students and in many cases reread texts several times. In writing, students are expected to cite evidence to justify statements rather than rely on opinions or personal feelings.

***“Staircase” of Text Complexity-*** Students will be expected to read and comprehend increasingly complex texts in order to reach the level of complexity required for success in college courses and the workplace...teachers will have to choose materials that are appropriate for their grade level...

***Speaking and Listening-*** The Standards expect students to be able to demonstrate that they can speak and listen effectively—two aspects of literacy rarely included in state standards. One of the consortia developing assessments to measure student performance against the Standards will create a speaking and listening assessment. Expect to see teachers asking students to engage in small-group and whole-class discussions and evaluating them on how well they understand the speakers’ points.

***Literacy in the Content Areas-*** The Standards include criteria for literacy in history/social science, science, and technical subjects. This reflects a recognition that understanding texts in each of these subject areas requires a unique set of skills and that instruction in understanding, say, a historical document is an integral part of teaching history. This means that history teachers will need to spend time making sure that students are able to glean information from a document and make judgments about its credibility. Science teachers will need to do the same for materials in that discipline.<sup>ii</sup>

---

<sup>i</sup> <http://www.hepg.org/hel/article/543#home>

---

*Robert Rothman is a senior fellow at the Alliance for Excellent Education and the author of [Something in Common: The Common Core Standards and the Next Chapter in American Education](#) (Harvard Education Press, 2011).*

ii *ibid*