Integrating the Common Core Standards into the Music Curriculum

Tom L. Foust

January 24th, 2013

Illinois Music Educators Conference

Peoria, Illinois

What is the Common Core?

The Common Core State Standards Initiative is a series of learning standards in English, Language Arts, and Math that were developed by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers.

The standards are designed to prepare students by teaching skills necessary for college and the workforce of the future. The Common Core is *not* a replacement for Illinois Learning Standards in Fine Arts. The new standards only focus on the three areas listed above: all other subjects are encouraged to support and enrich learning in the Common Core subjects by incorporating the CCS into existing curricula.
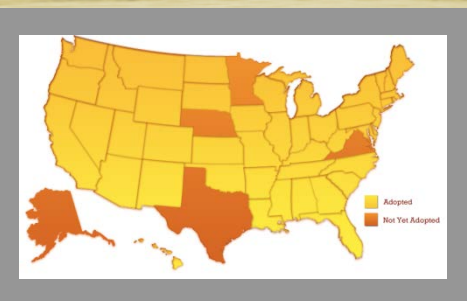
45 States have either fully or partially implemented the Common Core State Standards Initiative.

Image source:
http://www.corestandards.org/in-the-states

How to Integrate the Common Core

Identify What You Already Do

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are not a replacement for the Illinois Learning Standards in Fine Arts. As a result, music educators do not need to completely remake existing curricula. In most cases, educators are already doing much of the learning outlined in the CCSS. Music teachers will find that simply reviewing the CCSS through the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards will reveal many similarities in instruction.

Use the College and Career Anchor Standards

The CCSS Initiative began by identifying the skills students need to be prepared for—and exceed in—college and future careers. These "anchor" standards are divided into four *domains*: writing, reading, speaking & listening, and language. They are also separated between K-5 and 6-12 grade levels.

Since all grade-specific standards are based off of an anchor, sometimes the best strategy is to read through the College & Career Readiness anchor standards while comparing the learning found within your own instructional unit. Once you find an anchor standard that incorporates your classroom activity, you can find the specific grade standard and code and add it to your existing list of standards for that unit.

Anchor Standards vs. Grade-Specific Standards

The CCSS has two levels of learning standards. The *College & Career Readiness Anchor Standards* are broad, multi-grade learning standards whereas the English *Language Arts Learning Standards for History, Science and Technical Subjects* and the *Mathematical Standards* are more narrower standards that are targeted to specific grades. In the interest in helping the widest number of music educators (and reducing the size of this document) only the CCR Anchor Standards will be addressed.

If asked why a music teacher should use the CCR Anchor Standards and not the grade-specific standards, it might be useful to point out that many educators teach across multiple grade levels and any lesson plan which is applied to more than one grade level would be a better fit for the CCR Anchors.

The Structure of a Common Core Standard
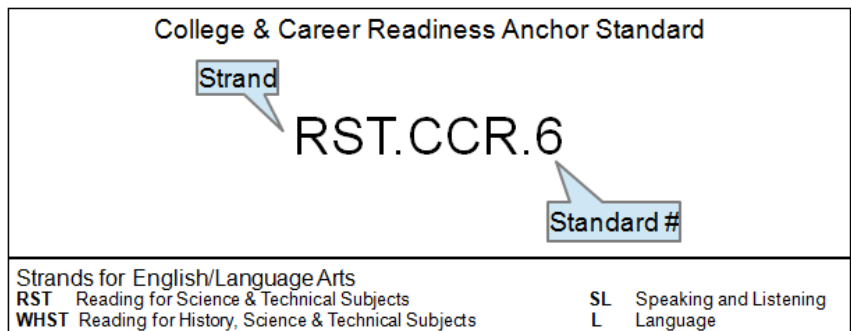
Step 1

Select an instructional unit from your existing curriculum

Step 2

Read Anchor Standards and look for commonalities to student activities in your unit

How to Identify Common Core in your Existing Curriculum

The Common Core should not require extensive reworking of your existing curriculum, but rather a simple review looking for key words and activities that apply to the CCSS.

For example, instructional units that are aligned to Common Core standards may include:

- **reading informational texts about composers,**
- **learning about phrasing or articulation**
- **critically reviewing a performance**
- **comparing two different settings of the same text**
- **asking students to express a reasoned opinion (with evidence, or course)**

Step 3

Use Anchor Standard to find specific Common Core Standard for that grade level

Some Interpretation Required

Music is Language

Remember that music is a language, and therefore holds many opportunities to reinforce the concepts taught in English and Language Arts classes. For example, standard *R.10.5* (The fifth standard for 10th grade Reading) asks students to "Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text   relate to each other and the whole."

In this situation, any rehearsal which asks students to identify why a certain phrase needs to be long to convey a feeling—and what that feeling may be—will satisfy this standard. In order to be certain that you have successfully reinforced a Common Core Standard, conclude the point on phrasing with, "   and does anyone have an example of that in spoken or written language outside of this song?"

Defending your Creative Interpretations

If you ever encounter someone who claims that using music as a reading source does not follow the spirit of the Common Core Standards, refer them to this list from the Common Core State Standards Initiative.

What a College & Career Ready Student Looks Like

- they demonstrate independence
- they build strong content knowledge
- they respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline
- they comprehend as well as critique
- they value evidence
- they use technology and digital media strategically and capably
- they come to understand other perspectives and cultures

(*Common Core State Standard For English Language Arts & Literacy In History/Social Studies, Science, And Technical Subjects*, Introduction, p.7)

Music is the universal language of mankind. ~Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Outre-Mer

K-5

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing

Text Types and Purposes

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

Production and distribution of Writing

4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Range of Writing

10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

.

K-5

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading

Key Ideas and Details

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Craft and Structure

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.*

8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

K-5

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening

Comprehension and Collaboration

1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

.

K-5

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Language

Conventions of Standard English

1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

Knowledge of Language

3. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

Vocabulary acquisition and Use

4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

6. Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression

6-12
College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading

Key Ideas and details

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Craft and Structure

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently
    .

6-12

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing

Text Types and Purposes

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

Production and Distribution of Writing

4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each

Source, and Integrate the Information While Avoiding Plagiarism.

9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Range of Writing

10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

6-12

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening

Comprehension and Collaboration

1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

6-12

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Language

Conventions of Standard English

1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

Knowledge of Language

3. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

Vocabulary acquisition and Use

4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

6. Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Brainstorm: List of Musical Activities

Please list all the learning activities your students do. For example: reading about composers, expressing opinions about a concert or listening example, identifying phrases and articulation, etc.

Common Core Standards in English and Language Arts for Technical Subjects

http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RST

(use left-hand navigation menu)