



Correlation of  
Read and Rise to the  
Common Core State Standard  
Initiatives for  
English Language Arts

GRADES K-7



# READ AND RISE: Build a Partnership with Common Core State Standards

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) aim to help *all* students, grades kindergarten through grade 12, develop a common core of knowledge and skills so they graduate high school with a high quality education, well-prepared for college and careers. As concerned caregivers, who care deeply about our students' academic success, it's reassuring to know that as we follow the guidelines of **Read and Rise**, we are implementing the key goals of the Common Core. Indeed, **Read and Rise** helps us support the Common Core work already underway in classrooms across the states. Let's find out how.

## A Note About the Interactive Read-Aloud

**Read and Rise** is framed around an **interactive read-aloud**, a read-aloud plus text talk, and is based on three understandings; it: 1) encourages students to become active learners during book reading; 2) provides feedback that models more sophisticated language; and 3) challenges children's knowledge and skills by raising the complexity of the conversation. The Common Core State Standards speak to the essential importance of the interactive read-aloud particularly for younger children:

Because...children's listening comprehension likely outpaces reading comprehension until the middle school years, it is particularly important that students in the earliest grades build knowledge through being read to as well as through reading, with the balance gradually shifting to reading independently. By reading a story or nonfiction selection aloud, teachers allow children to experience written language without the burden of decoding, granting them access to content that they may not be able to read and understand by themselves. Children are then free to focus their mental energy on the words and ideas presented in the text, and they will eventually be better prepared to tackle rich written content on their own (CCSS, 2010).

## Ten Requirements of the Common Core Supported by Read and Rise

### 1. Balancing Fiction and Nonfiction

While there's nothing we love more than sharing a good story with our children, we are immersed in an information-print-rich world. Even very young children notice this *info text*, defined by researcher Nell Duke (2011) as *text that conveys information*—on the TV, in the subway, rolled up in the newspaper that arrives on the front porch every morning, or lining the grocery store shelves. Children need to understand how info text works: its language, structure, formats, heads and subheads, charts, tables, and diagrams. **Read and Rise** demonstrates how to share both magical fictional stories and a range of informational text with children: games and directions, newspapers and magazine articles, web pages and schedules. In this way, we can achieve the Common Core goal of a 50/50 fiction/nonfiction balance for elementary students.

## 2. Building Knowledge

Open a book and access the world. **Read and Rise** recommends fascinating books about a range of topics across science, social studies, and more. Children not only learn about each topic they explore in a book, but also all the words and concepts that are associated with the topic. For example, if they are reading a **Read and Rise** recommended title such as *True or False: Reptiles*, they will encounter words and concepts such as *cold-blooded*, *scaly*, and *habitats*. **Read and Rise** includes thoughtful questions, discussion tips, and extension activities that make every read-aloud a rich learning experience.

## 3. Using Challenging, Complex Texts

The Common Core recommends that students read challenging books on their grade level, and **Read and Rise** recommends books that are grade-appropriate. Ideally, every book we share with children will provide a thinking workout, especially as we engage in lively discussions about the books we read together. Children who enjoy early experiences with books tend to become successful readers who can read grade level books with fluency and accuracy (Duke & Carlisle, 2011). And more good news: strong readers often become strong writers and spellers, too (Krashen, 2004).

## 4. Promoting Close Reading and Citing Text Evidence

**Read and Rise** demonstrates how to discuss books and ask questions that lead children back to the book to search for answers. In other words, just as the Common Core recommends, we can anchor book discussions in the text, and when a child wants to express an opinion or argue a point, we can encourage her to return to the text, read closely and analytically, and look for the part in the book that confirms her opinion. Central to academic success is understanding how to ground ideas and opinions in published, high quality text written by experts.

## 5. Writing About Reading and Writing From Sources

**Read and Rise** offers opportunities for lots of writing about reading—another CCSS requirement. For example, **Read and Rise** recommends that we keep a *dialogue journal*. We can write back and forth with young readers about a book we're reading together—and enjoy a conversation—in writing! Children also enjoy writing about the books they read in a *book journal*, another **Read and Rise** suggestion. Even very young children can draw pictures in their journal and then eventually try writing captions that explain their pictures. Reading and writing are mutually supportive language processes (Graham and Herbert, 2011). When children write about their reading, they reap the learning benefits. Additionally, if a child wants to make a point about a book he's read, encourage him to capture text from the book to prove his point. The Common Core encourages students to back up their arguments and opinions with material drawn from the book—an excellent entry point into research—and something young readers can learn to do through **Read and Rise**.

## 6. Discovering Research: A Way to Build and Present Knowledge

Common Core promotes student research across the curriculum. As part of our **Read and Rise** experience, we can be on the look-out for topics that spark children's interest. We might visit the public library together, search for a set of books that relate to children's interest, and read and discuss. We might make a chart with children: what we know about [topic], what we want to find out, and how we'll learn. As we read books and other written materials together, we can mark off the questions we find answers to in the books and jot down the new questions that might arise. In this way, children will learn the value of investigating multiple sources, considering alternative points of view, and capturing their own thinking in writing that they can then share with others.

## 7. Controlling Academic Vocabulary

The more children read, the more their vocabularies grow (Duke & Carlisle, 2011). Indeed, the research demonstrates that vocabulary growth is primarily the result of avid reading. As students read—or hear stories read aloud—they encounter a wide range of sophisticated words in multiple contexts—and they discover words they're not likely to hear in everyday conversation, such as *festive*, *reluctant*, and *safari*. Reading aloud to children is fantastic, but reading aloud plus talking about the book—also known as text talk (Beck, McKeown, and Kucan, 2002)—is even better. Reading-centered conversations enhance the learning riches of every book.

## 8. Using Listening, Speaking, and Presenting to Learn

The Common Core, like **Read and Rise**, recognizes that conversation, in general, is an indispensable learning tool. When we're with young children, we can maintain a running dialogue about everything we're doing and why. We can describe our actions as well as our thinking, reading, and writing, and help children do the same. Encourage children to ask questions every day, throughout the day, and do your best to provide thoughtful, respectful answers. All that language—describing, questioning, reporting, summarizing, and analyzing—is similar to the academic language children will hear and be expected to use at school. The Common Core understands that the best way to learn is to present to others what you know. To that end, the standards promote student presentations. Using **Read and Rise** recommended books, we can encourage children to talk about—and present to others—what they are learning.

## 9. Learning Foundational Reading and Writing Skills

Part of learning to read, of course, is developing what the Common Core calls *foundational skills* that enable reading—such as learning the alphabet, knowing sound and letter relationships, developing strong control over a growing vocabulary, understanding the role of punctuation, and reading with accuracy and fluency. Every time we share a book with our children, we can talk about the ways in which letters, sounds, and words work together to create a meaningful message. And in a similar way, we can do the same with writing—as we work to help children with a **Read and Rise** book journal, we can begin to introduce them to language conventions—the rules about grammar, spelling, and punctuation that we apply when we write so that others can follow our thoughts and understand our message.

## 10. Developing Intellectual Curiosity and Multiple Perspectives

**Read and Rise** helps students engage with high-quality fiction and nonfiction in ways that “build knowledge, enlarge experience, and broaden worldviews,” a pivotal goal of the Common Core (2010). Helping children develop cultural and linguistic sensitivity and an expansive understanding of our richly diverse world is built into **Read and Rise**, which offers numerous opportunities to explore and celebrate diversity and spark children's intellectual curiosity. A child who reads widely about different cultures, customs, and ways of living around the world develops an open mind and an understanding heart.

## In Sum

Again and again, the research demonstrates that children who learn to read, write, and talk about books, almost from the moment of birth, in the ways in which **Read and Rise** recommends, become engaged learners, successful students, and deep thinkers—for life!

## References

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