**Common Core: Preparing Globally Competent Citizens**

By [**Anthony Jackson**](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/global_learning/) on January 27, 2012 5:38 AM

*The Common Core State Standards are designed to be relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers in the global economy. I've asked Margaret Reed Millar, Senior Program Associate for Standards, Assessment, and Accountability at the* [***Council of Chief State School Officers***](http://www.ccsso.org/) *to share how developing student global competence fits with the new Standards in this two-part series.*

**by Margaret Reed Millar**

The adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English language arts and mathematics in 45 states and the District of Columbia offers educators an unprecedented opportunity to marry the skill development and acquisition of core content needed to develop [**globally competent**](http://asiasociety.org/education/partnership-global-learning/making-case/global-competence-prepare-youth-engage-world) citizens with the rigorous skills and core content needed to prepare all students for college and careers.

The [**global competence matrix**](http://www.edsteps.org/ccsso/ManageContent.aspx?system_name=I5nka44NofDD3IY38QBonx+Crwfdw+uF&selected_system_name=DRkDdjiObdU=) complements, and in many cases directly overlaps with, the expectations set forth for students in the Standards. In concert with clear expectations for reading, writing, speaking, listening, language, and mathematics, the expectations outlined in the CCSS include the development of students' abilities to think critically, reason, communicate effectively, and solve problems that arise in everyday life, society, and the workplace.

The intersection of the CCSS and the global competence matrix can best be demonstrated through the lens of the four components of the matrix. For each, at least one example of direct intersection between the Standards and the matrix is provided, as well as suggestions for how educators may choose to embed opportunities for students to develop their global competence as part of CCSS aligned curriculum and instruction.

**Investigate the World**  *Globally competent students investigate the world beyond their immediate environment.*

The CCSS for English language arts make clear that building research skills is integral to preparing students for the expectations of college and career, "To be ready for college, workforce training, and life in a technological society, students need the ability to gather, comprehend, evaluate, synthesize, and report on information and ideas, to conduct original research in order to answer questions or solve problems, and to analyze and create a high volume and extensive range of print and nonprint texts in media forms old and new. The need to conduct research and to produce and consume media is embedded into every aspect of today's curriculum." More directly, two of the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing directly state that students must:

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.

Similarly, included in the Common Core State Standards for Mathematical Practice is the expectation that college and career ready students will be able to "construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others," which includes developing abilities to "analyze situations," "justify their conclusions," and make "plausible arguments."

This emphasis on the ongoing and intentional development of students' research, analysis and argumentation skills is repeated in the Investigate the World capacity defined in the global competence matrix, which calls for students to "identify and weigh relevant evidence," to "analyze, integrate, and synthesize evidence," and to "develop an argument based on compelling evidence...and draw defensible conclusions." The higher-order analytic skills and research abilities that describe college and career readiness are equally a part of developing students to be globally competent citizens.

Where the global competence matrix expands upon the CCSS is in an expectation that some of the research students conduct will focus on questions of global significance and that the investigations into these researchable questions will include consultation of a variety of sources—including international sources and those sources that may exist in a non-native language. Educators looking to infuse opportunities to build global competence into a CCSS aligned curriculum may consider posing a globally relevant problem that requires the use of mathematical reasoning to develop an argument to address, or developing assignments that ask students to conduct original research into topics that have an impact beyond the local community and providing access to international sources.

**Recognize Perspectives**  *Globally competent students recognize their own and others' perspectives.*

The Common Core State Standards for English language arts include a series of statements that, while not directly standards themselves, offer a portrait of the capacities of literate students who meet the Standards. One of these seven statements directly addresses the importance of college and career ready students coming "to understand other perspectives and cultures." The statement continues, "Students appreciate that the twenty-first-century classroom and workplace are settings in which people from often widely divergent cultures and who represent diverse experiences and perspectives must learn and work together. Students actively seek to understand other perspectives and cultures through reading and listening, and they are able to communicate effectively with people of varied backgrounds."

This statement directly mirrors many of the statements in the Recognize Perspectives capacity of the global competence matrix, including the expectations that students "Recognize and express their own perspective," and "Examine perspectives of other people, groups, or schools of thought."

Where the global competence matrix expands upon the CCSS for English language arts document is in the expectations that a student will "identify the influences" on his or her own perspectives and on the perspectives of others, as well as "explain how cultural interactions influence situations, events, issues or phenomena." These statements call for students to go beyond the recognition of existing differences in perspectives by conducting an analysis of the potential influences on one's perspective and how the interaction of individuals and societies with different perspectives influences history. Educators wishing to incorporate this extension into an aligned CCSS curriculum may consider, for example, developing assignments that ask students to interview others about their perspective on a given issue, or analyze the perspective of an author or public figure, and then compare and contrast that to their own individual perspective on the given topic.

* **Categories:** [**International Education**](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/global_learning/international-education/?tagID=0&blogID=112&categoryID=1288)

**Common Core: Preparing Globally Competent Citizens, Part 2**

By [**Anthony Jackson**](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/global_learning/) on January 31, 2012 5:10 AM

*Margaret Reed Millar from the* [***Council of Chief State School Officers***](http://www.ccsso.org/) *continues her exploratory essay on ways the Common Core State Standards dovetail with* [***global competence***](http://asiasociety.org/education/partnership-global-learning/making-case/global-competence-prepare-youth-engage-world)*. Be sure to see the first part posted on Friday.*

**by Margaret Reed Millar**

The adoption of new and rigorous college- and career-ready standards creates an historic opportunity for schools, districts, and states across the nation to rethink the curriculum.

As the introduction to the English language arts Standards notes, "by emphasizing required achievements, the Standards leave room for teachers, curriculum developers, and states to determine how those goals should be reached and what additional topics should be addressed."

The time is now for schools and local communities to use the flexibility and opportunity the CCSS provide to consider instruction and curriculum that incorporates global competence into the preparation of college- and career-ready students. On Friday, I shared ways that the CCSS allow students to investigate the world and to weigh perspectives. Today, I'll share ways students can communicate ideas and take action, and how these skills are supported by the new Standards.

**Communicate Ideas**  *Globally competent students communicate their ideas effectively with diverse audiences.*

The Common Core State Standards for English language arts document is replete with standards and statements that call for students to develop effective communication skills—in writing, in the creation of media, and in speaking and listening, both formally and informally. For example, one of the key features describing the Standards for Speaking and Listening is "flexible communication and collaboration," noting that the Standards "require students to develop a range of broadly useful oral communication and interpersonal skills. Students must learn to work together, express and listen carefully to ideas, integrate information from oral, visual, quantitative, and media sources, evaluate what they hear, use media and visual displays strategically to help achieve communicative purposes, and adapt speech to context and task." As another example, the fourth College and Career Readiness Standard for Writing asks students to "Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience."

Likewise, the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics require students to develop effective communications. For example, the third Standard for Mathematical Practice asks students to "Construct viable arguments" and "communicate them to others."

The expectations for effective communications set forth in the Common Core State Standards are shared by the Communicate Ideas column of the [**global competence matrix**](http://www.edsteps.org/ccsso/ManageContent.aspx?system_name=I5nka44NofDD3IY38QBonx+Crwfdw+uF&selected_system_name=DRkDdjiObdU=), which sets the expectation that students will "communicate their ideas effectively with diverse audiences."

Where the matrix expands upon the CCSS is in the expectations that students will "recognize and express how diverse audiences may perceive different meanings from the same information" and "reflect on how effective communication affects understanding and collaboration." Educators wishing to extend the curriculum to incorporate opportunities to build global competence in communications while maintaining alignment to the Standards may wish to facilitate discussions on how the same message can be understood differently by different individuals and groups, and ask students to reflect—either in writing or orally—about the importance of effective communication to successful collaboration with others from different backgrounds, cultures, and nations.

**Take Action**  *Globally competent students translate their ideas and findings into appropriate actions to improve conditions.*

Taking action on issues of significance requires the ability to communicate information and ideas clearly—be it through narrative or informational writing, formal presentation, or mathematical representation. The Common Core State Standards focus on the development of these foundational reading, writing, speaking, listening, language, and mathematical skills and understandings that research and evidence support as most essential for students to master in order to be ready for college and careers. These skills and competencies lay the foundation to develop students with the capacity to take action to improve conditions in their local community, state, the country, and the world.

The Standards place an emphasis on real-world applicability of knowledge and skills, such as the fourth Standard for Mathematical Practice focused on modeling, which notes that "mathematically proficient students can apply the mathematics they know to solve problems arising in everyday life, society, and the workplace." Furthermore, an entire strand of mathematics in high school is devoted to modeling so students become adept at taking a real world situation and identifying when and how mathematics should be applied to solve a particular problem. The decision left to educators, families, and communities is to determine how best to create opportunities for students to demonstrate their abilities and to take action.

Those interested in building into student learning experiences an expectation that students take action to improve conditions may consider designing extended projects to give students this opportunity. These projects may require students to identify a problem or substandard condition, assess options and plan actions based on evidence, act personally or collaboratively to execute the planned actions, assess the effectiveness of their actions, and ultimately reflect on the experience. These types of opportunities may take place within the traditional school environment, in an outside of school environment, or even at the self-direction of a student.

* **Categories:** [**International Education**](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/global_learning/international-education/?tagID=0&blogID=112&categoryID=1288)