CIA Director - Dr. Joe Pierce

Dear PC Colleagues

Addressing the Rigor Gap in Schools

Last month I wrote about rigor, relevance and relationships- the "New 3R's." This month, I want to offer you an article related to what has been termed the "rigor gap." Putnam City's poverty rate is approaching nearly 70% now. Therefore, it is critical that we take a deep look inward and explore some of our beliefs and traditions related to poverty and achievement. It's just something for you to ponder as we explore ways to increase rigor and relevance in our transition to the new Common Core State Standards.

In a recent Kappan article, Hofstra University professor Bruce Torff asks whether there might be a third explanation for the persistent achievement gap between the haves and have-nots in American schools. Some people blame poverty, injustice, and resources; others blame teachers, lack of accountability, and unions. Torff wonders if our beliefs about teaching and learning might play a role.

"Alas," he says, "some of our culture's folk beliefs lead to education practices that don't seem optimal." For example, it's widely believed that critical thinking is only for high-achieving students. Being able to draw one's own conclusions, rather than memorizing what's taught, is an important life skill, but many educators believe it's too challenging for low-achieving students. "A rigor gap emerges in which disadvantaged students are judged to require less-rigorous curriculum than that afforded their more privileged peers," says Torff. "A self-fulfilling prophecy may result: The disadvantaged receive watered-down lessons that limit students' academic growth, resulting in additional impoverished curriculum in subsequent lessons; conversely, the advantaged receive challenging lessons that boost students' academic performance, leading to additional rigorous curriculum down the road."

Is it true that low-achieving students can't handle critical thinking? No, says Torff. He points to research showing that these students benefit just as much as high achievers when immersed in a high-critical thinking learning environment. Effective teachers have always delivered the same high level of rigor to all their students.

But most teachers have different beliefs, and these beliefs are resistant to change, both during teacher training and on the job. "Once the inservice years begin," says Torff, "teachers' beliefs tend to remain steadfast no matter what kinds of experiences they have, how long they have been teaching, or how much inservice education they attain. As with other elements in folk psychology, beliefs about learning and teaching seem to be etched in stone and difficult to rewrite."

Torff believes there are six factors at work when teachers opt for a less-rigorous curriculum for their disadvantaged students:

- Students' level of prior knowledge;
- Students' level of academic achievement;
- Students' level of motivation;

(continued on pg. 2)

Dear PC Colleagues (from pg. 1)

- Time constraints;
- Parents' influence;
- Colleagues' influence.

"These are the triggers of the rigor gap," he says. But he believes they can be challenged and changed through the following professional-development activities:

• Conversations, journals, and assignments designed to get teachers to reflect on their existing beliefs. Telling people what to believe doesn't work, but getting them to think about their own beliefs in light of other evidence just might.

• Detailed analysis of case studies about disadvantaged students being denied access to rigorous curriculum experiences.

• Evaluating programs that get disadvantaged students successfully engaging in critical thinking.

• Involving teachers in writing curriculum that gets all students working at high levels.

"Taking aim at the beliefs underlying the rigor gap, these strategies have potential to help close the achievement gap," Torff concludes. "Of course, poverty and social injustice are problematic, as are under-performing teachers and lack of accountability. But at least part of the problem lies elsewhere: in our culture's well-intended but off-target beliefs about appropriate curriculum for disadvantaged students."

As summarized in the Marshall Memo, www.marshallmemo.com. "Teacher Beliefs Shape Learning for All Students" by Bruce Torff in Phi Delta Kappan, November 2011 (Vol. 93, #3, p. 21-23),

Dr. Joe Pierce

Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment

Secondary Language Arts - Ranee Staats

Text Complexity in the Common Core

The Common Core State Standards provide a clear and consistent framework to prepare students for college and careers. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that students need for success after high school.

There are three main sections of the Common Core: K-5 (cross-disciplinary), 6-12 (English language arts), 6-12 (literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects). There is an obvious shared responsibility among all teachers for students' literacy development including reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language. Media skills are integrated throughout the grade levels. Included in the appendices are research and evidence, a glossary of key terms, reading text exemplars (sample performance tasks), and annotated student writing samples.

The following chart describes text complexity in terms of Lexile ranges (see www. lexile.com for more information). In three years, students will be expected to read and comprehend at higher levels (CCR = college and career ready).

Text Complexity Grade	Old Lexile Ranges	Lexile Ranges Aligned to CCR Expectations
K-1	N/A	N/A
2-3	450-725	450-790
4-5	645-845	770-980
6-8	860-1010	955-1155
9-10	960-1115	1080-1305
11-CCR	1070-1220	1215-1355

Common Core State Standards Initiative
www.corestandards.org/about-the-standards/myths-vs-facts

WIDA's PERFORMANCE DEFINITIONS

The WIDA's CAN DO Descriptors describe how English language learners process and use language for each language domain and level of language proficiency by grade-level cluster.

In the next few months, my monthly articles will feature components of the WIDA's CAN DO Descriptors by grade-level cluster and different levels of English proficiency. This month's article introduces the Performance Definitions for the six levels of English language proficiency for grades K-12. As we transition to Common Core State Standards, integrating the WIDA's language function into content objectives is becoming a necessity for ELLs' language development. The Can Do Descriptors will serve as guidelines as teachers strive to differentiate instruction for English language learners while focusing on rigor and relevance.

Performance Definitions for the Levels of English Language Proficiency in Grades K-12

At the given level of English language proficiency, English language learners will process, understand, produce, or use:

6 **Reaching**	• specialized or technical language reflective of the content areas at grade level • a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral or written discourse as required by the specified grade level • oral or written communication in English comparable to English-proficient peers
5 **Bridging**	• specialized or technical language of the content areas • a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral or written discourse, including stories, essays, or reports • oral or written language approaching comparability to that of English-proficient peers when presented with grade-level material
4 **Expanding**	• specific and some technical language of the content areas • a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in oral discourse or multiple, related sentences, or paragraphs • oral or written language with minimal phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that do not impede the overall meaning of the communication when presented with oral or written connected discourse with sensory, graphic, or interactive support
3 **Developing**	• general and some specific language of the content areas • expanded sentences in oral interaction or written paragraphs • oral or written language with phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that may impede the communication, but retain much of its meaning, when presented with oral or written, narrative, or expository descriptions with sensory, graphic, or interactive support
2 **Emerging (formerly Beginning)**	• general language related to the content areas • phrases or short sentences • oral or written language with phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that often impede the meaning of the communication when presented with one- to multiple-step commands, directions, questions, or a series of statements with sensory, graphic, or interactive support
1 **Entering**	• pictorial or graphic representation of the language of the content areas • words, phrases, or chunks of language when presented with one-step commands, directions, WH-, choice, or yes/no questions, or statements with sensory, graphic, or interactive support • oral language with phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that often impede meaning when presented with basic oral commands, direct questions, or simple statements with sensory, graphic, or interactive support

Adapted from the WIDA Consortium (2009). The English Language Learner Can Do Booklet. Wisconsin: Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System.

PEAK - Brenda Chapman

Extension Menus

In his overview of guidelines for gifted students, Dr. Levande lists "flexibility in assignments" as a key component in a gifted classroom. One way to build flexibility into your classroom is through extension menus. Extension menus come in all different shapes and sizes (from tic-tac-toe boards to baseball-themed menu) but all offer students choices in how they demonstrate understanding. Menus can also give students a relevant, go-to assignment when they have independent time.

When To Offer Menus

• To students who have compacted or tested out of a unit or lesson.

• As independent activities for when students "have nothing to do."

• During universal access.

• As a required part of a unit in any subject.

• As a structured way to delve deeper into content.

What Makes An Extension Menu?

• Students select from a set of possible assignments (3 to 9 choices is common).

• Students may be required to select more than one choice.

• Choices offer differentiated objectives.

• Choices are often grouped by complexity of thinking skill.

• Activities are independent so students have freedom as well as responsibility.

• A variety of options enable students to work in the mode that most interests them.

Administrative Details

Establishing clear guidelines is essential in managing a program with extension menus:

• Set a due date (include it on the menu).

• Require the menu to be turned in with work (so you know what options were selected).

• Set a date when students must select their options (if menu is long term).

• Consider how you will handle missing menus.

• How will you grade work from menus?

Don't Forget!

• Always offer a variety of products – don't rely solely on what that you personally "like."

• Always offer assignments at all levels of thinking.

• Always make your directions clear – this is supposed to be independent work.

• Parents may be unfamiliar with menus, so introduce them at back to school or via a letter home.

http://www.byrdseed.com/offer-choice-with-extension-menus/

Social Studies - Brenda Chapman

Common Core and Social Studies Part 4

This is part four of our continuing series on Common Core and social studies. Before I talk about CC Reading Standard 4, let me once again debunk the myth that Common Core will replace social studies PASS. Social studies PASS, by law, will still be the content that you teach. Common Core standards will be added to the process skills portion of PASS, but the content in PASS is the content you will teach. PASS is being revised this year so the content in a subject may change some, but will not go away. Common Core standards will be how you teach your social studies content.

Common Core Reading Standard 4 deals with vocabulary. The standard for grades 6-8 is: determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies. The standard for grades 9-10 is: determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social studies. The standard for grades 11-12 is: determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text.

Good vocabulary instruction focuses on important words necessary to fully understand the content of social studies and usually involves teaching conceptually related words rather than individual words unrelated to one another. The maxim to "relate the new to the known" is highly applicable in vocabulary instruction, students must make connections between words they already know and words they are learning. The research and theory on vocabulary development does point to some generalizations that provide strong guidance.

Vocabulary in the content areas has been broken into Tier One, Tier Two, and Tier Three words in research by Beck, McKeown, and Kucan. Tier One words consist of basic words commonly used in a social studies classroom, but which rarely require instructional attention in school because they are frequently used outside of the classroom

in normal life. (examples: budget, progress, settle, independent, debate, leader, unite, religion, etc.) Tier Two words are frequently used by mature language users and found across a variety of knowledge domains, but struggling readers or students with limited vocabulary may require support or direct instruction. (examples: legacy, prosperous, industrious, financial, society, political, commercial, diversity, ethnic, and etc.) Tier Three words are known as academic vocabulary words. They have low frequency use and are very specific to a particular social studies subject or discipline. They may take the form of a single term or phrase. (examples: capitalism, dictatorship, monarchy, civilization, imperialism, market economy, "Iron Curtain", and etc.) Word knowledge is essential for comprehension and learning new terminology requires active involvement rather than passive definition memorization. Writing definitions from dictionaries or glossaries is not a recommended practice. A teacher must relate new words to students' prior knowledge and to other related words when possible. Multiple exposures to a word are necessary to learn it well –conceptual, as well as, contextual. Students need to develop the ability to learn new words from multiple contexts of reading. A teacher would use direct instruction to teach "Tier Two" words and predicting and verifying strategies, plus direct instruction and note-taking techniques, to learn "Tier Three" words and phrases.

Robert Marzano has developed the six steps to teaching vocabulary. Step One: The teacher

presents the term in student friendly language by describing the term and giving an example of the term. A teacher could use a video or computer images as the stimulus for information or tell a story that integrates the term. Students could create or locate pictures of examples of the term. A teacher could also build on direct experiences, such as a field trip or a guest speaker, to provide examples of the term. A teacher could use current events to help make the term applicable to something familiar to the students. Groups of students could do an investigation of the term and present to the class in form of a skit or video. Step Two: The students restate and give an example of the term in their own words. Students will use their experiences and background knowledge to form links between the new word and words they already know. Graphic organizers would be a good way to help the students make connections. Step Three: Students represent term using a graph or picture. This allows students to process information in a new modality and reinforces and deepens meaning. Step Four: Students use the term in other contexts. This is the step where the teacher would put the word on a word wall, encourage students to use the term in conversations and writings to make the term more familiar to student, use analogies, use graphic organizers, and have the students keep an academic notebook. Step Five: Students discuss the term with peers adding to their understanding of the word. Think, Pair, Share is a good strategy for this step. Step Six: Vocabulary games that give students more exposure to the term as you review over time.

Tips for Teachers: When introducing a new term or phrase, it is useful to avoid a formal definition – at least at the start. This is because formal definitions are typically not very "learner friendly." They make sense after we have a general understanding of a term or phrase, but not in the initial stages of learning. Instead of beginning with a definition, it is advisable to provide students with a description, explanation, or example much like what one would provide a friend who asked what a term or a phrase meant. Once a description, explanation, or example has been provided to students, they should be asked to restate that information in their own words. It is important that students do not copy exactly what the teacher has offered. Student descriptions, explanations, and examples should be their own constructions using their own background knowledge and experiences to forge linkages between the new term or phrase and what they already know. To facilitate the cumulative effect it is highly advisable for students to keep an "academic vocabulary" notebook that contains the terms and phrases that have been taught. Enough space should be provided for students to record their initial descriptions, explanations, and examples of the terms and phrases as well as their graphic representations, pictures, and pictographs. Prior to reading, it is effective to expose students to academic vocabulary which will be revealed in the reading. Allow students to predict what they believe the term means, discussing their previous knowledge of the term or related terms. As students read, they will confirm or clarify their predictions in an active manner of learning.

Lesson Ideas:

1. Use the "Pre-Learning Concept Check" strategy to encourage active investigations of new vocabulary within a given text following a brief measurement of knowledge that students already have.

2. For a hands-on approach to learning vocabulary, ask students to actively engage in a classification, also known as a "word sort" or "history unfolding" activity prior to reading a textual passage. Working in pairs or groups of three, students are encouraged to interact with one another, sharing their prior knowledge of terminology, discussing similarities and differences between vocabulary terms as they develop classifications for the given terms, then verifying their predictions with actual textual evidence.

3. For home study and review of academic vocabulary, students may find the creation of "Triangle

Clue" cards helpful. This strategy can also be a challenging, yet engaging classroom experience, as students share their "triangle clues", discovering different levels of perspectives and understandings of academic terms or phrases among peers.

4. Use for a preview or review of academic terms the "word splash" (also known as Concept Connections) strategy which requires students to identify relationships between given sets of academic vocabulary, then develop written statements explaining the relationship. This type of graphic organizer is an effective measurement of student understanding and one in which peers learn much from one another's "connection" statements.

5. High schools students should be able to trace the development of a vocabulary term (idea/concept) through an author's multiple use of the term in one document. Using the Declaration of Independence, model the though process necessary to describe how Jefferson develops the term/concept of "unalienable rights" through several identified passages. Ask students to write a brief "ticket out the door" explaining why many historians consider Jefferson to be an exceptional and effective writer.

Science- Bob Melton

Remember when summer break was made up of days playing outside until mom called you in for dinner? Today's kids probably won't. In the last two decades, childhood has moved indoors. The average American child spends more than seven hours a day in front of an electronic screen. This shift inside profoundly impacts the wellness of our kids. They are out of shape, tuned out and stressed out, because they're missing something essential to their health and development: connection to the natural world. Outdoor learning programs and outdoor play time can help students become high-performance learners with skill sets that will be with them throughout their lives. Outdoor education and play time also helps students perform better on standardized tests.

Join us at the 2012 Oklahoma Environmental Education Expo (EE Expo) for ideas on how to get your students outside.

Keynote speaker for this year's Oklahoma EE Expo is Jenifer Reynolds, host ofDiscover Oklahoma television series. Ms. Reynolds will be sharing her knowledge and enthusiasm for a wealth of places in our state where Oklahoma can Get Outside!

Jenifer is a third generation Oklahoman, born in Miami. She is a graduate of Oklahoma State University, where she was awarded the DuPont-Columbia Award, the broadcast equivalent to the Pulitzer Prize. She's the only college student ever to receive this honor. Her 14 years at NEWS 9, were spent reporting on various topics including government and children's issues.

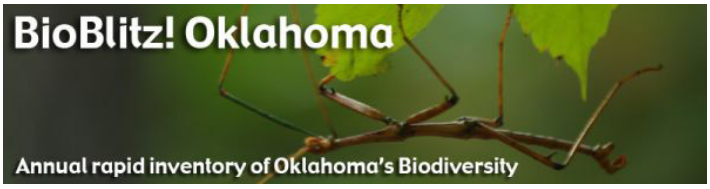
A lover of the outdoors and proud mother of three children, Jenifer is the host of Discover Oklahoma and Mind Games, a new show on KSBI that features Oklahoma college students competing for Scholarship money in a weekly "Battle of the Brains".

Jenifer, her husband Chris, and their 3 children now reside in Jones, Oklahoma where they have chosen to live the agricultural lifestyle. This 45 acre farm is also the home of Sandbur Productions. Sandbur is a full service production company that produces the Telly Award Winning TV show "Inside Reining".

The Oklahoma Environmental Education Expo is sponsored by the Oklahoma Association of Environmental Education (OKAEE) and Oklahoma State University (OSU). Our goal is to promote environmental education opportunities by gathering experts, teachers, and community members together to share ideas and resources available through our state agencies and universities.

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!!

http://oklahomaenvironmentaleducationexpo.com/



BioBlitz! Year-Round

You don't need to wait until October to start recording your observations of Oklahoma's biodiversity. With the Project Noah website http://www.projectnoah.org/ and mobile app, anyone with a digital camera and the internet can start uploading your observations of organisms. Project Noah is a tool that nature lovers can use to explore and document wildlife and a platform research groups can use to harness the power of citizen scientists. The purpose of the project is to mobilize and inspire a new generation of naturalists. It began as an experiment to see if an app could be built for people to share their nature sightings and it has evolved into a powerful global movement for both amateurs and experts. The name "Noah" is an acronym that stands for **N**etworked **O**rganisms **A**nd **H**abitats.

You can set up an account in no time and begin uploading your pictures! Get started setting up your Project Noah profile. **After you set up your account, sign up for the BioBlitz! Oklahoma Mission and be sure to select this Mission for your Oklahoma observations.**

The plan of the Olahoma Biological Survey is to utilize Project Noah at the annual BioBlitz! Oklahoma event in October. Instead of collecting specimens, Citizen Scientists will be able to submit photos of organisms to Project Noah during the event. If the species is unknown to the observer, the spotting can be flagged as unknown and an Expert Biologist at Base Camp can identify it.

Oklahoma Biological Survey

Oklahoma's NCLB Waiver Request "Needs More Detail"

From Ed. Week: Mass., Tenn. Praised in New Report on NCLB Waiver Plans

By Michele McNeil on December 20, 2011

A new report from the Center for American Progress identifies the two states that are stand outs among a field of 11 that submitted applications for the first round of waivers under No Child Left Behind. But there are questions—sometimes big questions—surrounding key parts of the remaining nine states' plans.

The new report, out this morning, identifies potentially significant weaknesses in some states' plans, including: a lack of attention to individual subgroups, and a lack of information about the capacity to actually implement new teacher-evaluation systems.

Some of these findings—such as a new emphasis on "super subgroups"—were covered in EdWeek's extensive package of stories about the waivers.

So the report adds to the growing body of research into the promises, and pitfalls, of these new state-led accountability systems. (The report has a number of really handy charts that examine different issues, such as state approaches to teacher evaluations, on a state-by-state basis.)

The Center's Jeremy Ayers, a senior education policy analyst, evaluated states on how clear their goals and school ratings were, how they treated subgroups in their accountability systems, and how ready they were to implement new evaluation systems, among other things.

Along those lines, two states turned in "stand out" applications: Massachusetts and Tennessee, which were praised for clear and challenging goals, ready-to-implement evaluation systems, and solid data infrastructures. The report, however, does still raise concerns about Massachusetts' attention to subgroups, and raises red flags about problems Tennessee has had in implementing its new teacher-evaluation system.

Five states were classified as "middle of the pack": Colorado, Florida, Indiana, Minnesota, and New Mexico, which had some positives and negatives. Among the problems in these states: Colorado's data system can't link student data to individual or multiple teachers, Florida's plan makes it unclear whether schools would be held accountable for subgroup performance, and Indiana didn't specify what factors would be used in new teacher evaluations. In Minnesota's plan, student achievement goals were not clearly ambitious, and New Mexico needs legislation to enact its teacher-evaluation plans.

The remaining four states fell in the "needs more detail" category: Georgia, Kentucky, New Jersey, and **Oklahoma**. Among Georgia's problems are its lack of a growth model, and Kentucky is dinged for setting confusing goals (which involve things like "standard deviations"). New Jersey doesn't provide much detail at all on its new accountability system, while **Oklahoma's rating system seems a bit confusing, the report found**.

What's more, the Center has some good advice for the Education Department: Don't rush to approve every application, demand more information (especially about subgroups, teacher-evaluation reforms, and reducing burden on districts, and schools), and carefully scrutinize how each state deals with subgroups.

Before-, during-, and after-reading strategies (from NSTA Science Scope, March, 2005)

Think back over what have you read in the last 24 hours. Chances are you have read primarily informational text or nonfiction. The same holds true for our students while they are at school, but most reading instruction they receive in language arts classes focuses on fiction. Reading nonfiction requires students to use different techniques to

• navigate multiple starting and stopping points;

• decipher charts, tables, and other graphic elements; and

• be comfortable skipping about and scanning through text.

The following simple and effective strategies can facilitate successful reading in science.

Anticipatory strategy

Word scavenger hunt—Assign students a specific part of the text (a chapter or a couple of pages, depending on the reading level of your class and the complexity of the text). Students, working in pairs, have two minutes to search through the assigned text to find the greatest number of words related to a topic, such as layers of the Earth. One partner scans for related words and calls them out to the other partner, who records them in a notebook. To keep up the pace, and make it less onerous for the partner who might not be an efficient reader, ring a bell every 30 seconds and have students exchange tasks. Give students a warning of 10 seconds remaining, and then another warning to finish the word they are recording. To provide a challenge, before starting the activity tell them that the previous school record was x number of words (it helps if you have done some preparatory work and have an idea of approximately how many words there might be). To do this activity effectively, students have to know the technique of scanning: Moving your eyes quickly down a page looking for specific words, rather than finding meaning.

During-reading strategy

Paired read-aloud—Have students work in pairs to read to each other from an assigned passage in the text. Use a bell to signal when to change readers. This works best in smaller classes, or larger rooms so that students can spread out and hear each other. When students have finished reading, they should take turns sharing what they have read. A variation that we use is to have the student who is the listener paraphrase what is read, and then take a turn as the reader while the partner listens and paraphrases. Finish this activity by having the groups come together and share their understanding of the key concepts. Our students refer to this as the popcorn activity because the reading pops back and forth between students!

After-reading strategy

5-4-3-2-1 organizer—This five-stage organizer is used to help students focus their reading (Figure 1). To use this strategy, ask students to read through the text and identify

• 5 key ideas,

• 4 facts related to the main idea (remind students that "words" on their own are not facts, and review the difference between facts and opinions),

• 3 new words and their meanings (discuss the use of context in finding definitions),

• 2 facts that they already know (highlights their previous knowledge), and

• 1 question they have not answered by the reading. (The answer to this question should require more than a yes or no answer. The teacher can use the questions to check student comprehension, as extensions, and to identify areas that the teacher may need to revisit.)

Reading is everyone's responsibility

As classroom teachers, we are sometimes hesitant to add to our already full program by including instruction to help students read science information. We make the assumption that teaching them to read is the language arts teacher's job. But reading in the science classroom requires a good understanding of new and often complex vocabulary, as well as an understanding of how to read different text forms (graphs, charts, and tables). The inability to read well impairs the student's ability to understand scientific principles. Finally, consider this: As our focus on literacy in the science classroom took hold, we observed a reduction in the number of behavioral issues with which we were dealing. A classroom with effective readers has many benefits.

Joanne Harris and Gerrie Storr are both members of the Elementary Curriculum Committee of the Science Teachers' Association of Canada in Ontario, Canada.

FIGURE 1 The 5–4–3–2–1 organizer

Five key ideas
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
Four facts related to the main idea
1.
2.
3.
4.
Three new words and their meanings
1.
2.
3.
Two facts you already knew
1.
2.
One question you still have
1.

Putnam City Schools

Office of
Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment

Foundations of Literacy Spring 2012

The Write Ideas:
Strategies for Effective Writing Instruction

The purpose of this module is to help teachers with the knowledge and tools necessary to provide effective writing instruction. This three-hour module will promote knowledge and understanding of the writing process, writing traits and provide strategies for effective writing instruction.

March 8, 2012 4:00-7:00
March 9, 2012 8:00-11:00 or 12:30-3:30

Sounds in Action:
Teaching Phonological Awareness

Phonological Awareness is the ability to notice, think about and manipulate individual sounds in words. This three-hour session will provide teachers with the understanding that spoken language is a series of individual sounds or phonemes and will provide teachers with the background knowledge and strategies necessary to effectively teach phonological awareness.

January 30, 2012 8:00-11:00 or 12:30-3:30
February 9, 2012 4:00-7:-00

Part to Whole:
Teaching Phonics & Word Study

This session will provide participants with the understanding that phonics is the systematic instruction of the relationship between letters and sounds that are fundamental to the reading process. This three-hour module will promote teacher's knowledge and understanding of phonics and word study as it applies to effective reading instruction.

February 10, 2012 8:00-11:00 Grades 3-5
February 10, 2012 12:30-3:30 Grades K-2
February 23, 2012 4:00-7:00 Grades 3-5

The Mighty Word:
Building Vocabulary and Oral Language

Without an understanding of words, comprehension cannot occur. The Might Word provides three hours of professional development to promote knowledge and understanding of effective vocabulary instruction in the classroom.

March 28, 2012 8:00-11:00 or 12:30-3:30
March 29, 2012 4:00-7:00

Digging for Meaning:
Teaching Text Comprehension

Effective comprehension instruction is more than asking students to answer questions after reading. Rather, it is teaching students to interact with text and to take over their own reading and thinking. This three-hour module will promote knowledge and understanding of effective comprehension instruction.

April 25, 2012 8:00-11:00 or 12:30-3:30
May 3, 2012 4:00-7:00

Getting Up to Speed:
Developing Reading Fluency

Reading Fluency training is a three-hour module designed to promote knowledge and understanding of the different levels of fluency. These levels range from fluent recognition of letter/sounds, to words, then phrases, and passages. This module will increase teacher's knowledge of fluency instruction and provide them with tools necessary to provide effective instruction.

April 5, 2012 4:00-7:00
April 26, 2012 8:00-11:00 or 12:30-3:30

For more information contact
Kristi Kretchmar, Elementary Language Arts Coordinator
kkretchmar@putnamcityschools.org 495-5200 Ext. 1217

Times and locations will be posted on .PC and LA Learning Community.

Oklahoma Curriculum Improvement Commission (OCIC) presents

Jan K. Hoegh January 24, 2012 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Embassy Suites 1815 S. Meridian Ave. Oklahoma City, OK 73108

Currently, a transition to Common Core Standards is prevalent in the educational environment. This session will overview key steps in successful Common Core implementation. A focus of the presentation will be resources the Marzano Research Laboratory has developed to support teachers and administrators in this transition from state standards to Common Core Standards.

Jan K. Hoegh is assistant director of statewide assessment for the Nebraska Department of Education. She works with educators, school districts, service units, and colleges throughout the state. Her primary focus is Nebraska State Accountability test development. Jan has been a classroom teacher, building-level leader, professional development specialist, principal, and curriculum coordinator. She has presented at multiple state and national conferences, and has facilitated many meetings throughout Nebraska and in other states.

Registration is free for Putnam City teachers, check with your administrator for funding for substitutes.

To register, contact Ms. Martha Stewart

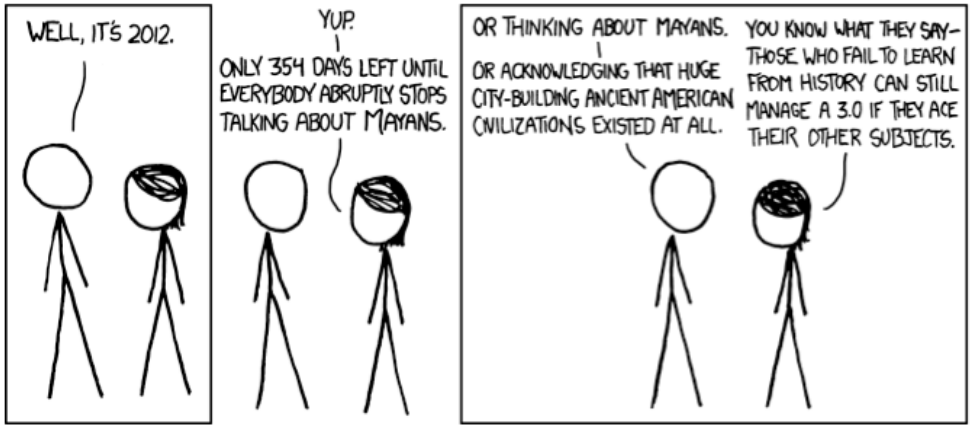
by email: marthas@ossba.org

or by phone at (405) 528-3571.

Please give your name and school or organizational affiliation.

To register online, visit http://www.ossba.org/Default.aspx?shortcut=ocic-workshop-registration.

2012 by www.xkcd.com



BENCHMARK ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE

Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies

Benchmark #2 - Jan 9 - Jan 27

Benchmark #3 - March 5 - March 30

(all dates subject to change, check with your coordinator/specialist)