Teaching Literacy across Content Areas

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Effective Strategies that Reach All K–12 Students in the Era of the Common Core State Standards

By

Lasisi Ajayi and Tamara Collins-Parks

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To classroom teachers who have dedicated their lives to preparing their students to acquire the knowledge and skills to participate effectively in the ever-changing world of the 21st century.

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PREFACE

An Overview of the Book

We start this preface with some vignettes from intern teachers who are currently teaching the Common Core State Standards (CCSSs) in their respective schools. We use pseudonyms because of the need to protect the confidentiality of the intern teachers. The vignettes allow the intern teachers to define their understandings of the CCSSs in terms of their perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, observation, and opinions. Their accounts provide insights to the experiences of pre-service and in-service teachers who are teaching the CCSSs:

> *The Common Core Standards are designed to prepare students for their secondary education while preparing them to become 21st century learners. There is a huge focus on students supporting their ideas with textual evidence after close reading [of] texts. The problem is that training and [material] resources have been limited for teachers to plan these experiences. There isn't enough information available about how students will be assessed. For example, not many samples of the Smarter Balanced Assessment are available for teachers to see & plan lessons around.*

—Julia Johnson (high school teacher)

> *I have had several workshops on what Common Core is and how it will affect instruction. So far, my general understanding of the Common Core is that it aims to develop student understanding which goes much more in depth in key concepts, rather than having students have general understanding of many concepts. Ultimately, the goal is to create instruction which promotes critical thinking in students. Hence, we want students to reach the upper levels of Bloom's Taxonomy. The aim will be to have them reach the analytical, creative, and application understandings of concepts. The Common Core will also promote more collaborative work and will be more project-oriented.*

—Jack Alexander (high school intern teacher)

There are four components of the Common Core State Standards: communication, creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration. Each of the 4Cs contains an important objective that helps target certain key aspects from the students. One interesting fact that connects to the Common Core is what is called Text Complexity. Text Complexity is when the instructor decides what the students will be reading for that year, whether the students are at the right level to read it, if it will be too much or too little of a challenge for students to read.

—Adriana Garcia (middle school teacher)

The short vignettes suggest that teacher educators and authors have some work to do to better prepare their students to teach the CCSSs. So our motivation for writing this book is to make the various aspects of the CCSSs simple and accessible to pre-service and in-service teachers. We start by discussing the theoretical framework that guides the writing of the book.

Constructivism: A Theoretical Framework

We use the constructive theory to guide our approach to writing this book. We define constructive theory as a theory of meaning making where "individuals create their own new understandings on the basis of an interaction between what they already know and believe and ideas and knowledge with which they come into contact" (Richardson, 2003, p.1623-1624). A constructivist theory is important as our goal in writing this book is to attempt to translate a theory of learning into a theory of teaching. We are interested in constructive theory because it recognizes (a) the active role of learners in meaning making or knowledge construction, (b) the social nature of knowledge construction, and (c) that knowledge is created within certain social, economic, political, and ideological forces (Richardson, 2003). Because of the crucial role of the socio-cultural context of students in learning, constructivism shifts emphasis from learning as an individual process to how learning can be facilitated in the classroom using the resources of others and the social context.

Vygotsky (1978) argues that higher mental functions are social in origin and imbedded in the interplay between individuals and the society:

> From the very first days of the child's development, his activities acquire meaning of their own in a system of social behavior and, being directed towards a definite purpose, are frequently refracted through the prism of the child's environment. The path from object to child and from child to

object passes through another person. This complex human structure is the product of a developmental process deeply rooted in the links between individual and social history (p. 30).

Classroom Application of Social Constructivist Views

a) *Tap into Students' Prior Knowledge*: Teachers must tap into implicit and explicit knowledge that students bring into the classroom. Resnick (1989) writes: "People do not come as empty vessels to learning. In almost any domain, even beginners carry with them ideas of how things work and frameworks for interpreting new information" (p. 5). Our book suggests ways for teachers to use their students' everyday experiences as a framework for instruction and for helping learners interpret what they learn.

b) *Emphasize the Social Nature of Learning*: Knowledge is socially constructed; it is not an individualistic, isolated and decontextualized activity (Resnick, 1989). Teachers must, therefore, use dialogue and teaching strategies that involve socially shared intellectual activities where students are able to work collaboratively to create shared understandings of a given topic. This book suggests such activities that involve organizing students around joint accomplishment of learning tasks.

c) *Use Explicit Modeling to Facilitate Student Learning*: Explicit modeling involves teachers using multi-sensory modalities such as visual, kinesthetic, auditory, and tactile to illustrate the important skills and concepts that students are expected to learn. In addition to modeling skills and concepts, the strategy allows teachers to make instruction clear and learnable as students observe and provide commentaries.

d) *Enhance Students' Intellectual Development*: Teachers can enhance intellectual development by providing opportunities for students to challenge, interrogate, change or add to existing knowledge and understandings (Richardson, 2003). Learning within the constructivist approach is based on the assumption that learning takes place as students are actively involved in the process of knowledge construction, rather than passively receiving information. This book provides steps that teachers can take to promote critical thinking and create motivated and independent learners.

Vygotsky (1978) contends that children are able to learn via interaction with more proficient others who support their thinking and take them beyond their own unaided capacity into the zone of proximal development. This is what Krashen calls i+1 or input just beyond the child's reach but still within the child's zone of proximal development, i.e. concepts or skills they can reach with support. Brunner (1984) introduces the idea of purposely providing such support through "Scaffolds." Scaffolds are supports that more proficient others provide to learners to help them accomplish a new task. In essence, learning depends on the interplay between the individual and others (Vygotsky, 1978) and that interplay can be strategically supported via scaffolds (Bruner, 1984).

Social constructivists apply the theory to educational settings by arguing that the process of learning has its root in social interactions and that human knowledge is mediated through interaction (via language) with others. The social constructivist views suggest that teachers should tap into students' knowledge and emphasize the social nature of learning. Combining these with explicit modeling and other strategies to enhance students' intellectual development provides meaningful learning experiences for students.

Purpose of the Book

About 45 states countrywide have recently adopted the CCSSs with the goal of providing a consistent and clear understanding of the knowledge and skills that K–12 students need to acquire to be able to meet the challenges and opportunities of the increasingly globalized, knowledge-based economy and college readiness. The adoption of the CCSSs has resulted in a myriad of questions from pre-service and in-service teachers who are apprehensive about how to implement the new Standards. They are asking questions such as how can they teach the Standards to make sure they are fully addressing them, how can they have the time to teach students to have deeper understandings of the skills and concepts addressed in the CCSSs, what they can do to meet the learning needs of English language learners and students with learning disabilities, whether teachers who are not teaching English are required to add reading instruction to their teaching responsibilities, whether the Standards tell teachers how to teach, and the ways teachers will implement the standards in the classroom. This book is designed to answer some of these questions and others. Each chapter contains instructional practices, examples, vignettes, and illustrations that are designed to connect the CCSSs to classroom practices and thereby provide pre-service and in-service

teachers meaningful, relevant, and practical teaching strategies to prepare culturally, academically, and linguistically diverse students in California and other states of the nation for careers and college.

Audience of the Book

This book is written primarily for teacher candidates, teachers, elementary and high school administrators, and graduate education students. These are people who have dedicated their lives to preparing K–12 students to maximize their potentials for learning across the disciplines and acquire the knowledge and skills to participate effectively in the college or career in the ever-changing world of the 21st century. We believe that most of the audience of this book believes, as we do, that the goal of literacy instruction in the contemporary social, economic, and global environment should go beyond decoding, and multiple-choice answers and standardized responses. In our view, it means teachers must prepare students to read, comprehend, analyze, and critique complex texts and apply knowledge to solve practical, real-life problems. In this regard, readers of this book will find that the authors have provided a pathway to better understand the CCSSs and use what they learn in the pages of this book to provide more effective instruction for their students across the disciplines.

Organization of the Book

Chapter 1 introduces readers to the Common Core State Standards and the history of the CCSSs. Chapter 1 further provides a discussion of the shifting demography of California and the implications for literacy instruction for all students, including English language learners (ELLs), students with disabilities and GATE students. We also explore the implications of the CCSSs for the diverse student population of California and the nation, including ELLs and special education students. We further look at what the CCSSs mean for instruction in the content areas, particularly for the 4Cs: communication, creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration. In addition we explore the role of new technologies for instruction in the CCSSs. Finally, the chapter provides a critique of the CCSSs.

In Chapter 2, we explain the challenges of working with different text types. The Chapter provides rich examples of text types, purpose, structures, discourse patterns, text and discourse, and cohesive devices. In addition, the chapter suggests ways teachers can incorporate the principles of the CCSSs

into their teaching practices. Furthermore, we explain the notions of text complexity and vocabulary in complex texts across the disciplines. We also discuss the factors that teachers need to take into consideration in selecting appropriate reading texts that match students' reading levels, interests, and reading tasks. In Chapter 3, we review and provide an overview of the English language development Standards as described in the CCSSs and the California English Language Development Standards. We further define, explain, and illustrate important concepts such as goals and principles for developing English language; collaborative, interpretive and productive modes; and foundational skills in English language.

The CCSSs recognizes that vocabulary knowledge is a crucial foundation for literacy learning and a predictor of learning outcomes for students across disciplines. The CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.6 requires students to "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; [and] demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression" (CCSS1, 2012). Chapter 4 explains vocabulary types that students need to engage with in the classroom: **domain-specific vocabulary**, **general academic vocabulary**, and **conversational vocabulary**. Furthermore, these vocabulary types are illustrated using texts of different types across the disciplines and different teaching strategies such as multiple meaning words and context clues, Greek and Latin words, figures of speech, academic language, morphemic analysis, scaffolds and cognates.

Chapter 5 provides an overview of the CC Reading Standards (CCRSs). The chapter provides examples of how K–12 teachers can integrate the principles of the CCSSs into their classroom teaching practices in English language arts, mathematics, social science, science, and physical education. Furthermore, the CCSSs require students to, "Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience" (CCSS1, 2012). Hence, Chapter 6 focuses on how teachers can integrate writing development across the curriculum to teach students to (a) learn new ideas, concepts and information, (b) communicate information individually and in groups, (c) learn language conventions of specific disciplines, (d) learn discipline-specific formats, and (e) think critically and organize their ideas. Students' ability to develop fluency in English and formulate and present ideas effectively is crucially important for academic and social participation in the classroom. As a result, we focus in Chapter 7 on how teachers can incorporate listening and speaking skills across the

curriculum to help their students, "Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively" (ELA Standards, 2012).

Chapter 7 focuses on how teachers can prepare students for the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment (SBA) that California and several other states will use to assess students on the CCSSs. The computerized test consists of four types of items: **Selected-Response Items** (the traditional multiple—choice questions); **Constructed-Response Items** (constructed response to address specific prompts with suggested answer choices); **Technology-Enhanced Items** (where students use the computer to do the assignment tasks); and **Performance Tasks** (where students demonstrate the ability to integrate knowledge and skills across multiple tasks). Chapter 8 explains the skills that students will need to do well in the assessment and how teachers can use data from assessments to inform their teaching practice.

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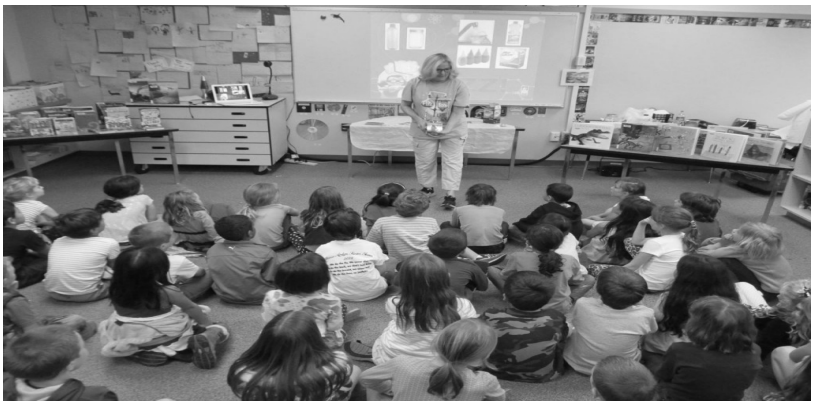
CHAPTER ONE

WHAT ARE THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS?



Elementary school reading lesson
Source: Microsoft Online Pictures

Guiding Questions

As many states have just adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSSs), pre-service and in-service teachers are still grappling with the new Standards and what they mean in their daily teaching strategies and classroom practices. In this chapter, we focus on the questions below to provide background for pre-service and in-service teachers to better understand the CCSSs:

Guiding Questions

1. What are the Common Core State Standards (CCSSs)?
2. What is the history of the CCSSs?
3. What challenges and opportunities do student shifting demographics present for teachers in California and the nation?
4. What are the connections between the CCSSs, students and learning?
5. What are the links between the CCSSs and content areas?
6. What is the role of technology in the CCSSs?
7. What do critics say about the CCSSs?

The Common Core State Standards

The Common Core State Standards (CCSSs) are a set of shared goals and expectations of what knowledge and skills K–12 grades should have and be able to use in English language arts, mathematics, history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. The CCSSs replace the former standards that vary from state to state. Advocates of the CCSSs argue that teaching the Standards across the U.S. will help ensure that all students receive a high-quality education consistently, from state to state and from school district to school district. The Standards establish goals and benchmarks to ensure that all students achieve specific literacy and mathematics knowledge and skills by the end of each year. For example, the CCSSs set grade-specific reading and mathematics learning standards which students need to master from K–12 grades. The main purpose of the common core of knowledge (the Standards) is to make sure that all high school graduates are adequately prepared to join the workforce or gain admission into a two- or four-year college.

Supporters of CCSSs argue that the Standards will provide all students, including English language learners (ELLs) a high-quality education. In addition, the advocates contend that the Standards provide all stakeholders, including students, teachers, parents, and K–12 school administrators a clear and concise understanding of what knowledge and skills students need to master in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, language and mathematics in school (Common Core State Standards Initiative, CCSSI, 2010). Many CEOs, politicians, policymakers and educators praise the creation of CCSSs as crucial to improving student achievement, closing the achievement gap in schools, and maintaining the U.S. global leadership in education, innovation, and technology. For example, the Executive Vice President of the Policy Center for American Progress, Carmel Martin (2014, p. 1) states:

. . . this is the biggest educational reform in decades . . . it will lead to dramatic improvements in educational opportunities.

The Center for American Progress believes that this is the biggest educational reform in decades. If done well, it will lead to dramatic improvements in educational opportunities. These opportunities, we believe, are essential to building a strong middle class and creating an economy that works for all, not just those at the top.

However, critics suggest that setting standards for schools will "erode local control over education, thereby limiting the important connection between communities and their schools" (Gibbs & Howley, 2001, p. 51).

A Brief History of Common Core State Standards

How It All Started

Response Journal

How do you think the CA CCSSs are different from the previous standards?

The roots of CCSSs can be traced to the "Accountability Movement" of the 1990s when almost all states in the United States introduced mandatory tests of students' achievement. The standards-based tests were designed to test students' learning of a common core of knowledge that all citizens were expected to acquire (Gibbs & Howley, 2001). The core argument of the accountability movement was that schools should teach students the knowledge and skills to become effective workers in an increasingly globalized economy.

In 1996, some state governors and business Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) created Achieve, an independent, non-profit education reform organization based in Washington, DC, with the goal of helping states "raise academic standards and graduation requirements, improve assessments, and strengthening accountability" (Achieve, 2009, p. i).

However, by 2004, it became increasingly clear to the states that most high schools were not graduating college- and career-ready students. In the same year, Achieve conducted nationwide studies of the knowledge and skills that graduating high school students needed to succeed at workplace and college. In a scathing report, Achieve concluded that there was a gap between what most high schools students' knowledge and skills were, and what they needed to know and be able to do to successfully cope with the

demands of the workplace or college. The organization argued that: "No state requires its graduates to take the courses that reflect the real-world demands of work and postsecondary education" (Achieve, 2004, p. 3). Achieve recommended, among others, that states should "require all students to take a common college- and work-preparatory curriculum in math and English" and "align academic standards in high school with the knowledge and skills required for college and workplace success" (Achieve, 2004, p. 3). We will provide a critique of the configuration of literacy practices into two sets of practices (e.g. career literacy and schooled literacy) in the last sub-section in this chapter.

In 2005, Achieve sponsored the National Educational Summit, which was attended by CEOs, 45 governors, and leaders from K–12 and higher education sectors. The leaders discussed the issues of low high school graduation rates, poor performance in public tests, and students' lack of readiness for career and college. For example, in 2004, the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) ranked U.S. 15-year-old students 28th out of 40 countries in mathematics18th in reading, and 22nd in science (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2004). At the summit, 13 state governors adopted the following college- and career-ready policies: In 2007, the American Diploma Project Network organized a summit which was attended by a panel of state and local government officials, K–12 and college leaders, and CEOs for the purpose of developing a common core curriculum for students. In 2009, the literacy and mathematics Standards were written by a panel of experts convened by the National Governors Association and state superintendents. The CCSSI sets the goal of providing "a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them" (Pearson, 2013, p. 1). The mission statement states: "The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers. With American students fully prepared for the future, our communities will be best positioned to compete successfully in the global economy" (Pearson, 2003,

College- and Career-Ready Policies

- Aligning high school academic content standards in English and mathematics with the demands of college and careers;
- Establishing graduation requirements that require all students to complete a college- and career-ready curriculum;
- Developing statewide high school assessment systems anchored to college- and career-ready expectations; and
- Creating comprehensive accountability and reporting systems that promote college and career readiness for all students (Achieve, 2011).

p.1). As at 2013, 45 states and the District of Columbia have adopted the Common Core State Standards.

Goal of Common Core State Standards

The CCSSI adopted the definition of college- and career-ready by ACT (2008): "acquisition of the knowledge and skills a student needs to enroll and succeed in credit-bearing, first-year courses at a postsecondary institution, such as a two-year or four-year college, trade school, or technical school [and] not needing to take remedial courses in college" (p. 1). The argument is that there is an urgent need to prepare all high school students for common core academic goals and expectations, those that educate them for workplace and college. The proponents of the CCSSs argue that the Standards will provide students with the necessary foundation of academic knowledge and skills which they can build upon by learning additional skills in the rapidly changing job market. For example, CA Department of Education (2013) states:

"This has been born from a realization that, in an ever-changing world, our students need better knowledge and tools to prepare them to compete in the global economy."

> For decades, we've been debating how to improve schools in the United States. This has been born from a realization that, in an ever-changing world, our students need better knowledge and tools to prepare them to compete in the global economy.

Furthermore, the advocates argue that the CCSSs emphasize critical thinking, analysis, and practical application of knowledge unlike the previous standards that focus on memorization and formulas. The CCSSI (2010) states that implementation of the Standards will provide consistent academic benchmarks for all students.

Academic Benchmarks for Students

Implementation must ensure that the Standards:

- Are aligned with college and work expectations;
- Are clear, understandable and consistent;
- Include rigorous content and application of knowledge through high-order skills;
- Build upon strengths and lessons of current state standards;
- Are informed by other top-performing countries, so that all students are prepared to succeed in our global economy and society; and
- Are evidence-based (paragraph 4).

Characteristics of College- and Career-Ready Students

- 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.

(NGA Center & CCSSO, 2010, p. 7).

The CCSS document identifies the characteristics of students who are college- and career-ready:

The Changing Demographics of California

Diverse students in the classroom
Source: Microsoft Online Pictures

Response Journal

Look at the children in this photo. What does this photo tell you about the population of pupils in our schools? What are the implications of your observations for you as teachers?

For many reasons such as immigration, international labor migration, transnationalism,[1] and globalization,[2] the population of California is becoming more pluralistic. The 2010 U.S. Census shows that California is changing rapidly and increasingly becoming a multiracial, multilingual and multicultural society (see Figure 1). From different countries around the world, people continue to migrate to California and the U.S. for a

[1] Transnationalism is used to refer to the phenomenon where people settle and become embedded in the local economy, social structure, and politics of a country in which they reside while at the same time they are deeply connected to institutions, transactions and politics of their native countries.
[2] Globalization means the movement of people, businesses, products, services, ideas and cultural resources across national borders.

better life for themselves and their families. People of different nationalities migrate to the U.S. as the land of opportunity. People come for better employment opportunities and political/religious freedoms. It is not a surprise that 27% of the people living in the U.S. are "foreign born persons" (2010 U.S. Census Bureau).

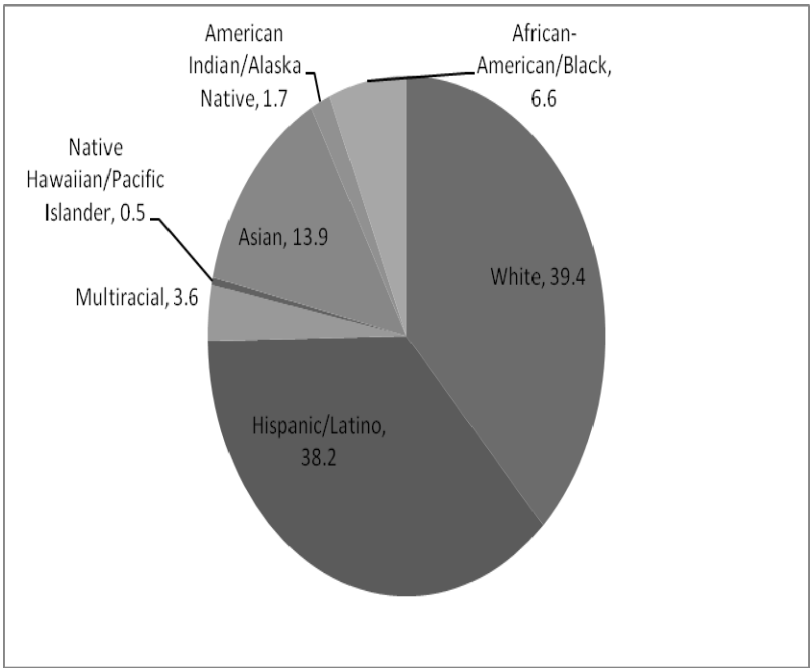


Figure 1: Demographic Profile of California (2010 U.S. Census)

More importantly, the demographics of California are even projected to change more in the future. According to the latest project, the population of California in 2049 will increase to 52.7 million (CA Depart of Finance, 2013). The document projects that by 2060, Hispanics will account for nearly half (48%) of Californians. In addition, the Asian population is projected to grow to over 14%, while the White (currently 39.4%) and Black (now 6.6%) populations will decline to 30% and 4%, respectively.

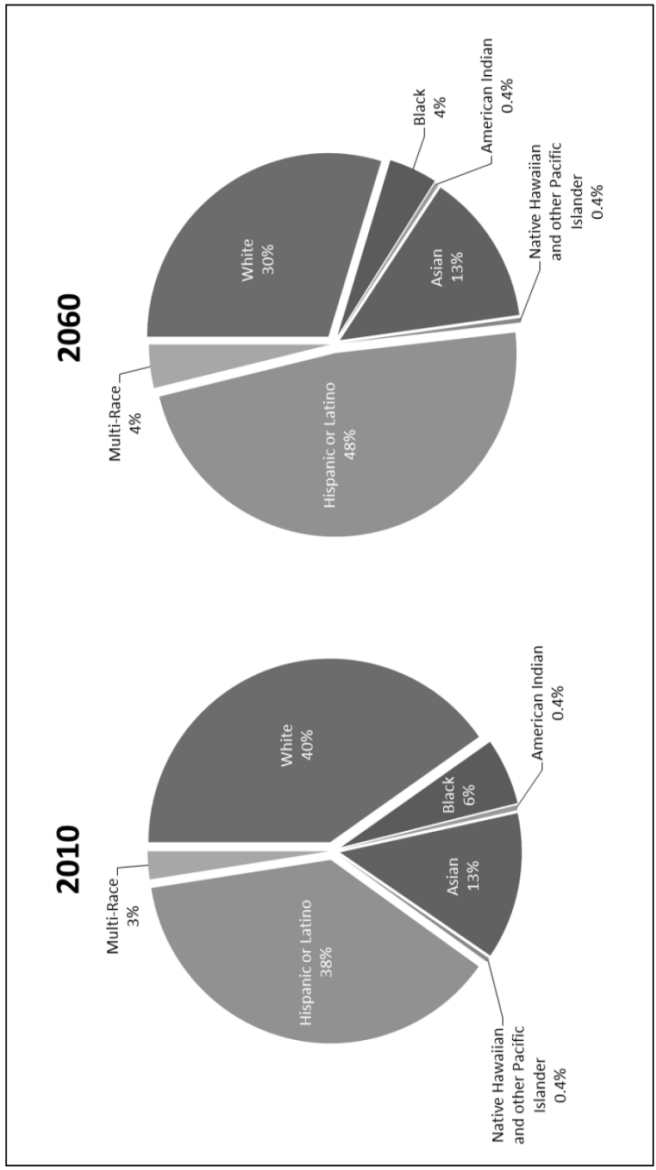


Figure 2: Population Projections for California by the Year 2060
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census and California Department of Finance, Population Projections for California, 2010 Baseline Series.

The populations of students in schools are also changing dramatically. The 2010 U.S. Census data indicates that the numbers of ELLs are fast growing in many states across the nation, including California, Nevada, Texas, Florida, Arizona, and Washington. The data for the 2011/2012 academic year shows that Hispanic/Latino children account for 51% of K–12 students in California as in Figure 3. The diversity in the school-age population (age 5 to 19) is projected to continue in California. For example, about 50.9% of school-age children are projected to be Hispanic/Latino in 2020 while 28.5% are expected to be White. Furthermore, in 2020, 56.2% of the K–12 student population in California is projected to be of minority ethnic groups such as Hispanic/Latino or Black. In addition, a large percentage of the students are expected to be English language learners and multilingual.

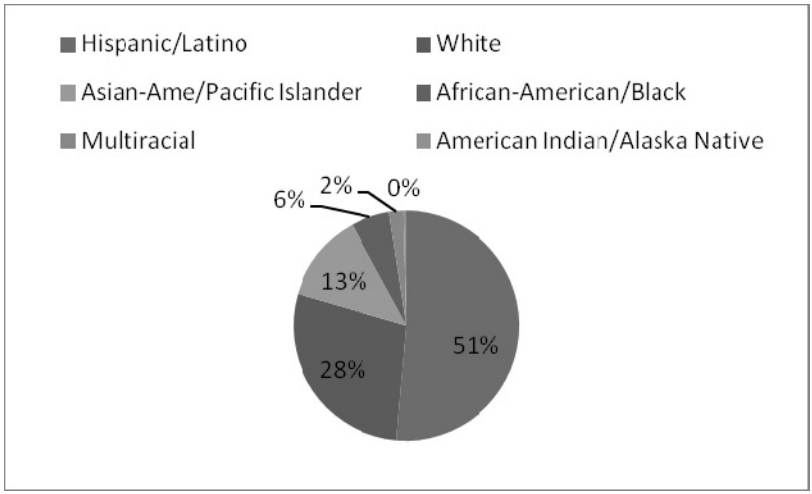


Figure 3: Student Populations in California

More than 43.2% of children (aged five years and over) in the state speak a language other than English at home (2010 U.S. Census). The census data reported that the number of school-age children (ages 5–17) who speak a language other than English at home increased to 11.2 million in 2009. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2010), students in California speak more than 150 languages, including Spanish (66.0%), Chinese (6.8%), Korean (2.5%), Tagalog (5.1%), Vietnamese (3.3%), Russian (1.0%), Armenian (1.2), Persian (1.2%), and others (12.9%) as in Figure 4.

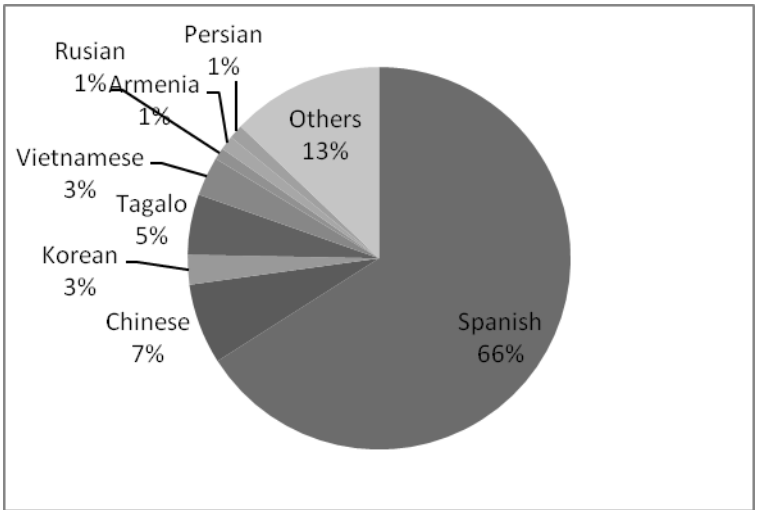


Figure 4: Major Languages Other than English Spoken at Home in California (languages with a population of 1% & above)

In particular, more than 3.6 million ELLs who enrolled nationwide in schools in 2008-2009 spoke Spanish (2010 U.S. Census). In California, more than 1.5 million students speak Spanish at home. In most schools across California (and the U.S.), significant numbers of students are classified as English language learners (ELLs), while a lot of those re-designated as English proficient (EP) may still require English language support throughout high school (Bean & Harper, 2011). The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (2002) legislation defines ELLs (or limited English proficient students) as students who are enrolled in "secondary education, often born outside the United States or speak a language other than English at home, and not having sufficient mastery of English to meet state standards and excel in an English-language classroom" (as cited in Batalova, 2006). Contrary to popular assumptions that ELLs are immigrants, significant numbers of such students are American citizens. For example, in California, there are about 1.5 million ELLs who are U.S. citizens. More importantly, ELLs come to the school with a broad range of linguistic resources in their native languages and a wide range of proficiencies in English (Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders & Christian, 2006).

Clearly, the changing demographic profiles of K–12 students in California and the nation present enormous challenges and opportunities to

teachers, school administrators, curriculum developers, and policymakers in terms of program planning, teaching, and assessments of students in English and across content areas. Examples include students' personal, educational, and social-cultural factors (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2008; Duff, 2001). Some of the challenges and opportunities teachers encounter in the classroom may include the following:

Challenges and Opportunities for Teachers

- Different levels of English proficiency.
- Different levels of proficiency in the first language.
- Cultural differences (e.g. American pop culture vs. Chinese pop culture).
- Subject matter knowledge difference (e.g. American history vs. Hispanic or Vietnamese history).
- Different expectations of schooling.
- Diverse socioeconomic statuses (e.g. poverty vs. middle class).
- Diverse personal and vicarious experiences of life.
- Diverse parental levels of competence and use of English language.
- Diverse level of parental formal education.
- Diverse schooling experiences.
- Immigration statuses (e.g. legal vs. illegal immigrants).
- Personalities.
- Interests and priorities.
- Different understanding and practices of classroom norms.

The Common Core State Standards, Instruction and Student Learning

Response Journal

a. In groups of 4, brainstorm on how each of these issues can hinder or facilitate literacy learning of your students.
b. How does mismatch between students' background and instruction affect learners?
c. Share your answer with the class.

The CCSSs begin with the assumption that the Standards are internationally benchmarked and that mastery of them will prepare students "to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce-training programs" (CCSSI, 2010). Supporters of the CCSSs argue that the Standards are designed to provide all students the same opportunity to learn the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the