Librarians and the Common Core

A large portion of the Common Core Learning Standards revolves around the importance of nonfiction in a person’s life. We encounter nonfiction every day when we follow recipes, glean facts from news articles, follow directions in an instruction manual, or research information to make a decision. Reading and research activities help build lifelong learners. A strong library program fosters lifelong learning skills.

Two independent studies in New York State conclusively found that students in schools with a certified librarian score higher on tests:


The word “information” is mentioned 243 times in the Common Core Learning Standards. Reading is mentioned 388. Both of these words appear more than “complex text,” “evidence,” “technology,” “vocabulary,” “literacy” and “nonfiction.”

(Word prominence based on word frequency/appearance in the CCSS ELA standards and Appendix A)

Library Integration

- Information Fluency Skills
- Selection of Quality and Rigorous Informational Text
- Reading
- Vocabulary
- Research Resources and Skills
- Evidence-Based Writing from Sources
- Selection of Literary Text
- Inquiry-Based Curriculum Skills
- 21st Century Technology
- Cross-Curricular Lessons

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“Your school librarian is likely an under-tapped resource with many library catalogs searchable by Lexile. Your librarian can lead you to a plethora of appropriate materials for learning centers, online access of articles, complexity tools and more.”

From engageny: Selection of Authentic Texts for Common Core Instruction: Guidance and a List of Resources for Text Selection
Information Fluency Continuum

In 2012-2013, all School Library System Councils across New York State adopted the Empire State Information Fluency Continuum. This document identifies information literacy standards, indicators for each standard, benchmark skills that students should develop, and assessments and graphic organizers. All of these are aligned directly to the ELA Common Core Standards, and skills are scaffolded Grades K-12.

Professional Development opportunities on using the Empire State IFC are available for your librarians and teachers through the Capital Region BOCES School Library System.

Your Library IS the Common Core!

Librarians Teach:

- Informational and Literary Text: Choice and variety in reading; access to texts on topics of interest across a range of complexity that is both engaging and challenging; locating fiction and nonfiction titles for independent reading and research (both print and online)
- Knowledge in the Disciplines: Reading (and writing) for information to build and present knowledge; link texts across curricular areas to increase understanding of interconnectedness of subjects
- Research and Writing from Sources: Short and long projects to extend learning and move students toward creating their own questions and investigation topics for higher-level thinking
- Information Skills: Accessing print and digital sources to connect to research topics; how to investigate more deeply; means to create and express knowledge products; reflection on both the process and the product
- Academic Vocabulary: Identifying keywords to improve search strategies; broaden or narrow topics through use of subject-specific terminology
- Digital Literacy: Database access to quality resources; product creation, communication and collaboration tools; digital ethics and citizenship; evaluation of websites for credibility, accuracy and reliability

Librarians Collaborate:

- On Reading:
  - Locate quality nonfiction books and informational text articles for teachers to use for close reading across all curricular areas
  - Provide access to a wider variety of literature and non-fiction books through interlibrary loans with other libraries and institutions
- On Research:
  - Align research with the Common Core objectives to “build and present knowledge”
  - Craft authentic inquiry-based research projects which move beyond merely seeking information to synthesizing for deep understanding
  - Develop essential questions that can be researched and investigated
- On Curriculum Development:
  - Guide teachers in the selection of text with appropriate Lexile® levels in both print and digital resources as a measure of reading difficulty
  - Integrate information fluency skills
  - Connect standards to essential resources
  - Locate and provide multiple sources of information in diverse formats and media, including primary sources, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive
  - Create subject guides and resource lists of print and online sources
- On Technology
  - Locate digital resources to support Common Core Learning Standards
  - Provide a variety of software tools and applications for knowledge products