

What I Use in My Classroom

Introduction

Looking for a new resource to excite and challenge your students this year? Have you been curious about professional development opportunities but aren't sure which are worth your time? While there are many free resources out there, it can be challenging to navigate the options and feel confident you're choosing the best ones.

Created by experienced educators in Student Achievement Partners' Core Advocate Network, this document contains personal recommendations for the tools and resources they've seen improve student and teacher performance. The summaries include teachers' reflections on the strengths and weaknesses of each tool as well as how they've used it effectively within their own local setting.

All resources are free to access and use and align to college- and career-ready standards.

Recommendations from:

Stephanie Barnett | Powell County Schools, 8th Grade Math Teacher

Erin Chavez | Frankfort Independent Schools, Mathematics Consultant

Mary Joal Clohisy | St. Anthony's School Milwaukee, 3rd Grade Teacher

Tiffany Gruen | Erlanger-Elsmere Schools, 2nd Grade Teacher

Lindsey James | Walla Walla Public Schools, High School English Teacher

LaWanda Jefferson | Milwaukee Public Schools, 4th Grade Teacher

Casey McCormick | Diocese of Sacramento, 5th-8th Math Teacher

Joanna Schimizzi | North Carolina Virtual Public High School, Biology Teacher

Char Shryock | Bay Village City Schools, Director of Curriculum and Instruction K-12

Amy Steelman | New Hanover County Schools, 8th Grade English Language Arts Teacher

Resource	How it Works	How I've Used This Tool	Caveats / Concerns
<p>Academic Word Finder www.achievethecore.org/academic-word-finder From Tiffany Gruen</p>	<p>Digital tool that allows teachers to upload any text in order to determine the valuable tier two academic words that are sometimes overlooked. This tool highlights the words throughout the text, provides the grade-level complexity of each identified word and various definitions.</p>	<p>I regularly use this tool when planning instruction around a complex text. The AWF Academic Word Finder does the work of identifying words that I might take for granted that are essential for student comprehension. I am then able to better predict the vocabulary needs of my students and build strategies into my lessons in order to make sure that all of my students are able to access the text.</p>	<p>While you can cut and paste any text into the Academic Word Finder, you are not able to scan and upload a PDF. So if you are unable to access a digital version of your text and only have a hard-back copy, then you will need to type in your selected sections or convert the PDF to a Word document.</p>
<p>Basal Alignment Project http://achievethecore.org/page/743/basal-alignment-project From Tiffany Gruen</p>	<p>The Basal Alignment Project took texts from popular basals and created lesson plans that allow students to dive deeply into the text through academic vocabulary, rich text-based questions and writing prompts. This tool is not only a time and resource saver, but allows teachers to see how the construction of an aligned lesson can develop.</p>	<p>I used this tool with my ELA intervention and enrichment groups. Coming from the social studies world, I feared that my Common Core ELA implementation would not be up to par. This resource provided me with supports to effectively teach using existing texts that were tucked away on my book shelves and helped me identify the true instructional Shifts of the Standards in a timely and effective manner.</p>	<p>My only concern is that the Basal Alignment Project only looks at series from grades 3-6. It would be wonderful to see this same alignment for the K-2 ELA basals, as well.</p>
<p>Achieve the Core - ELA/Literacy Lessons http://achievethecore.org/category/411/ela-lit-eracy-lessons From Amy Steelman</p>	<p>This is a platform that offers a variety of comprehensive lessons for close reading of short texts or excerpts. Each lesson plan provides related standards, a detailed lesson outline, and additional resources such as vocabulary lists and writing tasks.</p>	<p>Because these lessons are challenging but well-scaffolded, I found that even my struggling students can be successful and meet grade level standards, which builds their confidence. In addition, the variation and depth in each lesson helps me meet a wide variety of standards with a single text. The high caliber of texts that are used in these lessons also allows for questioning that requires my students to go beyond the surface and creates a need for them to read a text multiple times to gain a full understanding.</p>	<p>Unfortunately, not all of the texts are of high interest to students and so getting students to engage in close reading with an uninteresting text provides challenges. In addition, some of the lessons do not provide the text to be studied and they are difficult to find digitally.</p>
<p>ELA Guidebook Units from the Louisiana Department of Education https://learnzillion.com/resources/81666-english-language-arts-guidebook-units From Amy Steelman</p>	<p>This resource provides a collection of unit plans that align with the Common Core. Each lesson plan within each unit provides the teacher with standards alignment, various literary, informational, and nonprint texts that align to the anchor text, and a detailed daily lesson plan that leads to a culminating assignment, which is provided.</p>	<p>It is extremely time consuming to create your own high-caliber text set. I often try to use lessons from this site because I know they are aligned and I know that they all use the text set approach. With such a long list of supplemental texts, I am also able to pick and choose what will best meet individual students' needs for that unit.</p>	<p>As a result of being so comprehensive, units often take several weeks to complete which can be a drawback in some situations. In addition, most of the units are on longer texts or books that the teacher would need to already have access to in order to use the unit.</p>
<p>Newsela https://newsela.com/ From Amy Steelman</p>	<p>This website provides articles on current events that can be filtered in various ways. For every article, teachers can alter the text to various Lexile levels to better meet the needs of their students. In addition, there is a writing assignment and quiz provided for every article.</p>	<p>This is a great website to use to introduce a topic or provide scaffolding when introducing a new topic where students may not have the background knowledge or vocabulary to access the grade-level text immediately.</p>	<p>One concern about this website is that it is so easy to adjust the Lexile that teachers may tend to always tier the Lexile level for students and neglect to expose all students to grade level texts. In addition, there are only a limited number of text sets provided.</p>

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<p>Coherence Map http://achievethecore.org/coherence-map/ From Erin Chavez</p>	<p>An interactive, digital map that shows the connections between the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.</p>	<p>I used the Coherence Map to access rich tasks tied to each standard and learn how to engage my students in solving problems that allow them to reason and make sense of mathematics. These tasks also provide commentaries on possible misconceptions students might have when solving the problem. This tool helps me identify where to focus my instruction on specific standards that represent prerequisite math skills and knowledge my students need to do on-grade-level mathematics.</p>	<p>Not all standards have Illustrative Mathematics tasks or mini assessments linked.</p>
<p>Mathematics Assessment Project - Summative Rich Math Tasks for High School and Middle School http://map.mathshell.org/tasks.php From Char Shryock</p>	<p>Developed as part of the Mathematics Assessment Resource Services, the rich math tasks available on this site are divided into novice, apprentice and expert levels based on the amount of structure built into the task. Expert level tasks have the least structure and are the most open-ended. Each task comes with exemplar student work and a scoring rubric.</p>	<p>These tasks can obviously be used to build a summative assessment, but have many other possibilities as well. Students could work through the tasks collaboratively as the basis for student led number talks. When used with teacher teams, the tasks become models for development of additional math tasks as well as start points for discussions on standards-based assessment items. The student work exemplars can help with finding connections to the mathematical practice standards or possible misconceptions. These tasks are a nice complement to the math tasks that are located on the Achievethecore.org website: http://achievethecore.org/category/416/mathematics-tasks</p>	<p>These tasks are designed for middle and high school instruction. While the standards alignment is generally accurate, teachers should be aware that some of the tasks are not aligned to the standards or grade-level listed. Teachers should review the task thoroughly themselves and compare it to what the Standards require of students.</p>
<p>Robert Kaplinsky Lessons http://robertkaplinsky.com/lessons/ From Casey McCormick</p>	<p>Website with free, engaging math lessons designed by Robert Kaplinsky. These lessons are mainly geared toward middle and high school students, though lessons are also available for elementary students. A narrative is provided along with lesson materials, photos/ videos, and suggestions for questions to incorporate in each lessons. Each lesson also explains how the material supports specific Common Core content and practice standards.</p>	<p>Robert's lessons provide an interesting context for engaging with the Standards. For example, a popular lesson presents information about In 'n Out cheeseburgers and has students use this information to determine the cost of a 100x100 cheeseburger. Through questioning, determining needed information, looking at patterns, developing an equation, and graphing the information, students develop a solid understanding of linear relationships incorporating multiple representations. When teaching this lesson, I focused mainly on highlighting examples of the practice standards as an introduction to my students at the beginning of the school year.</p>	<p>While Robert has a general problem solving framework handout available, teachers may want to develop a handout/ follow-up activity more specific to the lesson they are teaching. Additionally, the lessons are tagged to standards across many grade levels. Teachers should modify each task to match the appropriate grade level standard(s).</p>
<p>Visual Patterns http://www.visualpatterns.org From Casey McCormick</p>	<p>A collection of patterns presented in three steps. These patterns can be used with students beginning in grade 6 – teachers should adapt the prompts students are given to align to grade-level expectations. Students may be asked to discuss how it's growing or find an equation that describes the pattern.</p>	<p>Visual Patterns is used by many teachers as a warm-up in middle and high school classes. By analyzing and then having a class discussion about the different ways in which students see the patterns growing and the resulting equations, students are able to see the parts of an equation brought to life. Students can also start to see the similarities and differences between different types of equations (linear, quadratic, etc.). Many teachers have also tasked students to think deeply by developing their own patterns along with an analysis of that pattern.</p>	<p>One thing to know about the site is that there is no answer key. However, one is available by contacting the site's author. Additionally, while children in K-5 may be able to describe how the pattern grows, this does not align with what the Standards require of children in this grade-band.</p>
<p>Zearn www.zearn.org From LaWanda Jefferson and Mary Joal</p>	<p>Zearn is a free program that supports rigorous math instruction by combining small group teacher instruction and personalized digital lessons that allows students to move at their own pace. The content is aligned to EngageNY and Eureka Math.</p>	<p>With support from Zearn, it is easier to introduce each student to the grade-level CCSS, push students who are ready for more and provide extra support for the students that are behind. I use the Eureka math curriculum to guide my small group instruction. Using alerts within the Zearn program allows me to differentiate my groups based on their ability level. Zearn helps teachers quickly plan differentiated math lessons by giving a critical data point showing each student's progress and needs within the grade-level standards and beyond.</p>	<p>There needs to be a perfect balance between teacher instruction and computer aided instruction, which Zearn can help with. Zearn is more effective if at least half of your students can be on an electronic device because without enough time on the program, some students will not have enough time to progress through the grade level content.</p>

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<p>Inquiries from C3 Teachers</p> <p>http://www.c3teachers.org/inquiries/</p> <p>From Erin Chavez</p>	<p>Free social studies lessons based on student inquiry. The Inquiry Design Model (IDM) is an instructional research-based framework including: questions to help students frame their inquiry, summative and formative performance tasks, and subject-matter-specific texts.</p>	<p>The IDM's are a great tool for building well-rounded citizens in classrooms. Students are able to analyze and articulate how their ideas and perspectives change as their inquiry unfolds. I've used this tool as a formative assessment to help me understand my students' progress toward meeting our state's (Kentucky's) draft social studies standards.</p>	<p>Differentiated reading supports may be needed, since some students will have trouble accessing these complex texts and won't be able to use the resource as-is. Also, teachers should be aware that although the website is based on the New York State Standards, the resources can be used with any set of educational standards based on the Common Core.</p>
<p>The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History</p> <p>https://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era</p> <p>From Tiffany Gruen</p>	<p>This tool provides a wealth of historical information broken down by era. From timelines, to scholarly essays, to rich primary sources and lesson plans created by master teachers; this resource is a treasure chest for every teacher of American history.</p>	<p>I used the elementary lessons to engage my students through rich, complex texts and essential questions to compare various viewpoints within a given topic. By engaging with the provided primary source texts, my students had an authentic access point to draw conclusions from the makers of our history, versus my own interpretation of the past. Students also analyze perspectives and engage in inquiry and debate.</p>	<p>The texts might need to be excerpted for elementary readers, which takes pre-work on the teacher's part. This may take time, but the knowledge building and academic vocabulary output far exceeds the input.</p>
<p>Reading and Writing Like A Historian</p> <p>https://sheg.stanford.edu/rh and http://beyondthebubble.stanford.edu/</p> <p>From Char Shryock</p>	<p>This should be a first stop for teachers looking for model lessons, strategies for teaching reading/writing in a social studies context, or developing high-quality assessments based on the Library of Congress resources.</p>	<p>The historical thinking and close reading posters are a good classroom reminder of specific strategies for approaching primary and secondary sources. The inquiry lessons are designed to help students learn the skill of posing a historical question, evaluating evidence and stating a historical claim. Lessons also include documents that reflect multiple perspectives on an event, allowing students to engage with the content and establish a clear understanding of the context of an event. The Beyond The Bubble assessment tools incorporate primary documents as the base for asking rich, evidence based questions that help student move beyond rote memorization to analysis and synthesis of historical events.</p>	<p>A free account is required to download the full set of resources on both of the partner sites. This is an instructional planning tool not a tool designed for student use. My only suggestion is that teachers should have the option of using more of the original primary sources for close reading. Many of these primary sources are written by the likes of Jefferson, Lincoln, Adams, and Hamilton.</p>
<p>Zooniverse</p> <p>https://www.zooniverse.org/</p> <p>From Char Shryock</p>	<p>A crowdsourced citizen science website that takes advantage of the combined efforts of 1000s of people across the world to analyze and find patterns in large amounts of data. From exploring lunar craters to transcribing Shakespearean era journals, this site can spark interest in a wide range of science, literature, fine arts, and history projects.</p>	<p>This is an opportunity for students to contribute to authentic research while learning about scientific concepts or historical events. Most recently, the site's participants helped to process hundreds of pictures from the Ecuadorian earthquake to identify areas that may contain potential survivors. Families can also participate, involving the entire school community in doing authentic work that will make a difference in our world.</p>	<p>This is a complex program and while the resources are high-quality, teachers should allow ample planning time to become familiar with the site and determine how to incorporate the materials into their curriculum. Teachers should be aware that many of the projects also contain chat boards that allow participants to share comments or ask questions.</p>
<p>WordSift from Stanford University</p> <p>http://wordsift.org/</p> <p>From Char Shryock</p>	<p>WordSift generates a word cloud, shows selected words in context, and shows related images.</p>	<p>I've used this tool as a complement to the Achievethecore.org Academic Word Finder. I use the word cloud as a pre-reading tool to identify keywords that may need to be part of the pre-reading instruction. The wordlist tool can highlight academic words or content area words. Pasting the same text into the Academic Word Finder Tool will help to identify what words are below, at and above the targeted grade level.</p>	<p>There is a related visual thesaurus tool, but it is available only by purchasing a subscription. For teachers who want to save the word cloud to use as part of the class lesson or put it in a PowerPoint presentation, it will be necessary to take a screenshot because there is no "save" feature within the program.</p>

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<p>PhET Simulations for Math and Science https://phet.colorado.edu/ From Char Shryock</p>	<p>Searchable by topic and grade level, these interactive math and science student controlled simulations can be used by individual students or as a class on an interactive board.</p>	<p>Simulations can be used as an inquiry activity at the beginning of a unit to help students build their own definitions or understanding of a concept. This is a good chance to facilitate discussions and listen for possible misconceptions. Simulations can also be used through a unit as a way for students to model their thinking, and explain their thinking to others. This strategy helps all students to be successful by building their own knowledge off of the experience and thinking of others. All simulations can be played in explore mode, which is good for building understanding, and game mode, which is good for formative assessment of skills.</p>	<p>No login is required for this site, but the simulations need to be downloaded to the device or embedded in another website to run them. There are no related teacher lesson plans, but there are many teachers who have shared their lessons and resources through the site.</p>
<p>Journey North - Annenberg Learner A Global Study of Wildlife Migration and Seasonal Change http://learner.org/jnorth/ From Char Shryock</p>	<p>A citizen science site that enables any student or class to contribute observational data on plant and animal seasonal activity or migration. This longitudinal data can then be used by students to look for patterns or make predictions.</p>	<p>Elementary students could participate in the seasonal tulip garden to compare growing seasons locally and nationally. Kindergarten students can track daily sunlight and seasonal changes at their own location and compare their data to other locations around the world. Students can track robins, hummingbirds, monarchs and whales and also use the live cams to provide students with opportunities to make observations of wildlife behavior. Another use is to participate in a mystery class project and connect with other classrooms across the globe.</p>	<p>The website requires a login that can be created by a class or an individual. It's sometimes easier for students to use the app version on a smartphone than the web version.</p>
<p>Exploratorium - Institute of Inquiry Facilitator Guide http://www.exploratorium.edu/education/ifi/workshops/facilitators-guides From Char Shryock</p>	<p>A series of hands-on workshops that will help teachers from kindergarten to high school build an understanding of the inquiry process by actually working through the stages of inquiry.</p>	<p>Use this workshop series to help all science teachers grades K-12 develop a common understanding of the inquiry process. It can also be used with a mix of content area teachers since inquiry is also a part of social studies, math and English Language Arts. The first workshop in the series would also work well as a team building activity. It works best with mixed grade level groups or even teachers from across different districts</p>	<p>It is helpful to have a teacher who is comfortable acting as a process facilitator lead these activities. Be prepared for questions about how inquiry differs from the scientific method. Plan on spending some time on building common vocabulary around inquiry.</p>
<p>Using Data to Predict Life Choices https://www.oercommons.org/authoring/7874-using-data-to-predict-life-choices/view From Joanna Schimizzi</p>	<p>A set of cross-content lesson plans where students use a literature review and associated primary sources to evaluate if data can predict future life choices. Students learn content in Math, Biology and Language Arts during these literacy-based lessons while using textual evidence to develop and support claims.</p>	<p>This set of lessons was collaboratively designed by a math, language arts and biology teacher. I was the Biology teacher on the team, and we grew in our understanding of both the Common Core Standards and collaboration through our work together. We focused clearly on choosing complex and aligned texts and on using a series of questions to scaffold students as they learned the content from a text. Using a single anchor text encouraged us to seek cross-content connections and pay attention to the multiple meanings of a text.</p>	<p>The lesson plans are very integrated. This is great if you choose to use the lesson in collaboration with other teachers. Otherwise, you'll need to use the individual links to access the resources for each content. You will want to consider your own students and "remix" or make slight changes based on your students' needs.</p>
<p>Unit Template for Text Based Reading in STEM Inquiry https://www.oercommons.org/authoring/13650-unit-template-text-based-reading-in-stem-inquiry/view From Joanna Schimizzi</p>	<p>A unit template designed to incorporate text-based inquiry into STEM classes.</p>	<p>This template has been used by teacher/media specialist teams in New Hampshire as they collaboratively design lessons. It helps teachers focus on the goal of having students dig deeply into a complex text that teaches content. The template focuses on the ideas of the ELA shifts (choosing a complex text, using evidence from the text, and learning content through the text) to help media specialists become an integral part of literacy lessons.</p>	<p>The unit template is designed to be covered over a period of collaboration, with both co-design, co-implementation and co-assessment. You will want to already have background knowledge for how to select a complex text and how to write text-dependent questions.</p>

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<p>Doctopus and Goobric https://chrome.google.com/webstore/category/apps From Lindsey James</p>	<p>A pair of Google add-ons that allow teachers to organize and evaluate student work digitally. Used in tandem, they take assignments that have been turned in through Google Classroom, organize them into a Google Sheets spreadsheet, embed a teacher-created rubric, and notify students of updates to their assignment. Both add-ons can be downloaded from the Chrome Web Store.</p>	<p>Doctopus and Goobric are tools that allow me to create custom rubrics that target key aspects of each mode of writing, to comment directly on assignments, and to organize assignments so that I can read and respond to every student's writing more quickly. It helps me better support my students as they become more confident and proficient writers.</p>	<p>Installing Doctopus and Goobric is a multi-step process, so you may want to use an online tutorial to guide the initial setup. These add-ons are also only fully functional when used with Google Classroom, so it would be optimal for a classroom that is already using Google Apps for Education.</p>
<p>PicMonkey https://www.picmonkey.com/ From Char Shryock</p>	<p>PicMonkey is a free, web based photo editing and graphic creation tool.</p>	<p>Students and teachers can use this tool to create memes, visuals to support evidence based presentations or discussions, emphasize key quotes from literature, model mathematically or annotate historical images. It is a powerful photo editor for fine arts projects. The combination of text and image also is useful to create graphics to use with social media.</p>	<p>No login is required, but a login feature is available. Some of the tools are only available if the Royale package is purchased. The free version does include scrolling ads at the bottom and along the right side.</p>
<p>Thinglink https://www.thinglink.com From Joanna Schimizzi</p>	<p>This website allows you to upload pictures or videos and add tags. This allows students to take an image to the next level by adding new facts, analysis or evaluation.</p>	<p>When I am asking students to analyze a diagram or picture as part of a complex text, it can be really helpful to have them annotate directly on the image. Since this allows it to be electronic, students are able to make connections to other resources and enrich their understanding of the text. This allows the work to be driven by the student and allow for collaboration as students give feedback digitally to their peers.</p>	<p>Students do need an email address to make an account. Students must be made aware of copyright and fair use explanations.</p>
<p>Teacher Desmos https://teacher.desmos.com/ From Stephanie Barnett and Casey McCormick</p>	<p>Classroom activities available on Teacher Desmos are interactive lessons developed by the Desmos teaching faculty and classroom teachers. Students tend to think of these activities as "games," rather than actual lessons. The nature of the activities allows for trial and error, as well as a great deal of reflection on learning.</p>	<p>Activities in Desmos allow students to work through a series of "pages," each designed with an interactive prompt. The prompts could be things such as: move a point on a graph, analyze another students' work or advise them in improving their work, create a graph or equation, provide an explanation about a method of solving, etc. Many of the Mathematical Practice Standards arise naturally in these activities, while students are working hard on interesting content, typically presented as a challenge of some kind. There is a bank of activities that has been curated by the Desmos teaching faculty, but teachers have the ability to design their own lessons as well.</p>	<p>While each student can work individually, many teachers recommend a 2:1 ratio (two students to one tablet or laptop) for work on the activities to encourage more conversation and collaboration. Some teachers have also suggested incorporating "stop signs" into activities to allow for whole classroom discussion at particular points in the activity.</p>
<p>Plickers https://www.plickers.com/ From Stephanie Barnett</p>	<p>Plickers is a digital tool that provides teachers with real time feedback on student assessment. Teachers place a multiple choice question on their board and provide students with an individual card that is unique to the student. The student answers the question by turning the card so that the correct response is at the top and the teacher scans the responses using a mobile device.</p>	<p>This tool is amazing for formative assessments and collecting real time data. I have used this tool as a bell ringer or exit ticket to see if my students mastered the concept.. It provides me with data that I can use to make adjustments to my lesson plans. I group my students according to how they performed on their questions and provide support for those that struggled. Students who may have guessed or didn't feel they had adequate time to answer are provided with activities to help them develop their problem solving skills.</p>	<p>Each card is assigned to a different student. In order for a teacher to collect data, a student must be assigned a card number and teachers must type their students into the website. If students lose or rip their card they will need an extra copy.</p>

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<p>Coherence Card Activity</p> <p>http://achievethecore.org/page/400/deep-dive-into-the-math-shifts</p> <p>From Erin Chavez</p>	<p>An activity to engage educators in uncovering the Math Progressions woven into the Standards and illustrate the concept of coherence across grades and within a grade.</p>	<p>The Coherence Card Activity is a resource that I used when delivering professional learning on the Shifts required by the Common Core State Standards. This resource gives educators the opportunity to dive deeply into the Standards and engage in purposeful conversations about the coherence of the standards. Although there is an answer key, I encourage educators to refer to the Standards to find the answers.</p>	<p>It is essential to have discussions about the Mathematical Progressions and how they are integrated into the Standards. If the activity is only left as a card sort without any discussion, it loses its impact.</p>
<p>Webinar “What is text complexity and why does it matter?”</p> <p>http://achievethecore.org/page/2793/what-is-text-complexity-and-why-does-it-matter-2016-feb-webinar</p> <p>From Lindsey James</p>	<p>This webinar focuses on the central role that complex texts play for students and for teachers. Using a qualitative text analysis rubric and an exemplar text, ELA specialist Silas Kulkarni leads teachers through the process of effectively planning scaffolds that enable students to interact successfully with rich, engaging texts.</p>	<p>Prior to this webinar, I recognized the necessity of teaching complex texts, but I was struggling to help my students successfully engage with these texts. This resource helped me plan more thoughtfully. Most importantly, this webinar helped me develop questions and tasks that will guide my students around potential pitfalls and draw their attention to important ideas so they are able to discover the richness and meaning of the text for themselves.</p>	<p>This webinar would be best for teachers who already have a solid understanding of the Shifts and of text complexity. It also uses Abraham Lincoln’s second inaugural address as an exemplar text, and I would recommend reading it through once or twice ahead of time.</p>
<p>Lesson Planning Tool</p> <p>http://achievethecore.org/lesson-planning-tool/</p> <p>From Lindsey James</p>	<p>An interactive guide for creating close reading lessons. It provides questions, examples, and support as it leads teachers through each step of the process, from determining a text’s quantitative and qualitative complexity to designing the culminating task and appropriate scaffolds for a rigorous, standards-aligned lesson.</p>	<p>Taking a key text through the process of planning a close reading lesson helped me to be able to clearly identify and address the shortcomings in weakly-aligned curriculum as well as understand exactly why strong lessons are effective. This understanding gave me the vocabulary and confidence to be able to articulate the weaknesses in our current textbook and collaborate with my grade-level team as we work to supplement our existing curriculum and get closer to standards-based instruction.</p>	<p>To use the Lesson Planning Tool, teachers will need to create and login for a free account at Achieve the Core. The Lesson Planning Tool is a time-intensive process, so it is best used with only the most essential texts or as a professional learning module.</p>
<p>Stanford University Understanding Language Project</p> <p>http://ell.stanford.edu/teaching_resources</p> <p>From Char Shryock</p>	<p>Don’t let the ELL in the website fool you, the resources for educators on this site are appropriate for closing the literacy gap for all students. The tools are designed to build language skills in all content areas.</p>	<p>The math tools include annotated math tasks at for K-12 students with a focus on building math language skills. The best resource on the science tool pages is the color practices Venn Diagram pdf located at the very bottom of the page. It shows overlapping math practice standards, literacy standards and science standards. Use this with all of your content area teachers to emphasize the focus on evidence based speaking and writing, perseverance and modeling. The English Language Arts tools include a set of guidelines for developing ELA materials with ELL students in mind.</p>	<p>These are instructional planning tools and not designed for student use.</p>
<p>SAS Curriculum Pathways Writing Reviser Add-On for Google Docs</p> <p>http://blogs.sas.com/content/sas-cp/2015/08/11/how-to-get-started-with-the-writing-navigator-add-on-for-google-docs/</p> <p>From Char Shryock</p>	<p>Once this Writing Reviser Add-on has been installed in Google Docs, students can use the tool (which opens as a sidebar) to find ways to make their writing more interesting or more clear and concise.</p>	<p>It has stretch, so students within a wide range of grade levels can access the tool, focusing on basic sentence structure to understanding parallelism. Diverse learners can also benefit from using this tool. By pasting text into a Google Doc, the students can then use the tool to find examples of jargon or cliches. It will also find simple sentences and sentence fragments, and provide guiding questions to students who might want to revise their work.</p>	<p>The tool works best in Google Docs as an Add-on, but can also be accessed directly for free by creating an account at the SAS Curriculum Pathways website and searching for “Writing Reviser.” https://www.sascurriculumpathways.com/portal/</p>