

Keeping you up to date !

# Engaging English

Spring 2012

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## Middle School

Middle Bridge is now a 2nd semester homework program. The curriculum is on the [online webpage!](#)

## High School

Keri Mahoney of William and Mary is offering a workshop titled *21st Century Textual Analysis: Improving Literacy Skills via Technology in High School English*, featuring student-made videos, pictures, podcasts, and essays, on March 16 at the William and Mary Professional Development Center.

## Are you using your resources!

As we begin the second semester, it's time to reflect and make sure we are using the resources available. We get so "bogged down" with the act of teaching, that we forget that we have resources to pull from. So, before you go and re-create the wheel, make sure you browse the resources set-in place at the beginning of the school year on the [English webpage:](#)

-Under the Admin Tab check out the Achieve Reading Guide; Teens Read Guide; New SOL

PPT; and SAT Action Plan.

-Under the Core Resources Tab look at the Curriculum Guides; Literature PPTs (setting, genre, theme, characterization, point-of-view, conflict);



**Remember—Great teachers are learners—find resources to incorporate into your lessons!**

Writing PPTs (pre-writing, grammar, WOW factors, narrative, expository, technical, introductions, conclusions); and Research (12 steps).

-Or just refresh with the Levels of Learning: Basic Writing handbook; Annotations and Projects from Staff Development Day; English Handbook; and Quarterly newsletters (a writing reviser tool and adding films into lessons were featured in the first edition and plagiarism tools and interactive handouts were in the second edition).

## Sites to Investigate this Nine-Weeks

- ◆ Are your students ready for the Writing SOL and field tests: [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards\\_docs/english/2010/online\\_writing/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/english/2010/online_writing/index.shtml)
- ◆ Need some notes or quick review items: [http://www.internet4classrooms.com/eoc\\_english1.htm](http://www.internet4classrooms.com/eoc_english1.htm)
- ◆ Don't forget about the interactive tools on SAS Curriculum Pathways: <http://www.sascurriculumpathways.com/portal/#/search?searchString=&searchSubject=1&searchCategory=>
- ◆ Go interactive with Read Write Think: <http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/>

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## Engaging English

“Teachers must become facilitators in their classrooms because when students ask questions and find the answers for themselves, they get involved in their own learning.”

## Don't Teach in Isolation!

You spend the whole first nine-weeks teaching grammar every day and then get upset that students don't know anything come test time. Perhaps the reason students are not retaining the information is because you are teaching the concept in isolation.

Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning shows us that having students memorize the definition of noun and locate a noun in the sentence is on the lowest level of thinking. Thus, those items stay with us only in the short term. To get to the higher level thinking and learning, students must actively apply learning in context. Perhaps if we started teaching grammar in the context of the strange Poe story or some other text that the students

love, we would see that students “get it” come test time.

Don't believe me yet. Kathleen Cotton states in *Teaching Composition: Research on Effective Practices*, that "Perhaps the most widely ignored research finding is that the teaching of formal grammar, if divorced from the process of writing, has little or no effect on the writing ability of students" (Smith 1982) ... Moreover, Sealey (1987a) offers evidence that the traditional emphasis on grammar actually slows students' development as writers, because the insistence on "cosmetic correctness" inhibits them and reduces their willingness to experiment and invent. (<http://www.hawaii.edu/mauienglish/>)



Students are more apt to remember concepts when they are linked with something else.

department/pages/  
Teaching\_composition.pdf)

Let's create learning environments that incorporate all facets of English—let's make English active. Remember, when active learning strategies are used, students are reading, talking, writing, describing, listening and reflecting. This keeps students brains “moving” so that they remember the parts. This can't be achieved with an isolated lesson.

## Important English Dates

Jan 31-Feb 1	LTF Modules 5 & 6 (Glen Allen H.S.)—8:30-4:00 (Lunch on your own) —Room 411
February 7-10	Achieve Modeling session in your classroom
February 21-24	Achieve Modeling session in your classroom
February 14-15	LTF Modules 7 & 8 (Glen Allen H.S.)—8:30-4:00 (Lunch on your own) —Room 411
March SOLs	<p>March 5, 2012 Paper/Pencil SOL Multiple Choice Writing –</p> <p>March 6, 2012 Paper/Pencil SOL Multiple Choice Writing Make Ups</p> <p>March 7, 2012 Paper Pencil Short Paper Direct Writing Prompt</p> <p>March 8, 2012 Paper/Pencil Short Paper Direct Writing Prompt Make Ups</p> <p>March 13-14, 2012 <b>ONLINE</b> Multiple Choice Writing Field Test</p> <p>March 20-21, 2012 <b>ONLINE</b> Short Paper Direct Writing Prompt (<i>represents a change in date</i>)</p>
April 5	All Henrico Reads—Glen Allen H.S.—10 a.m.
April-May	NWEA Testing Window
Week of May 1 <sup>st</sup>	Achieve Data Review with principals and administrators