

Engaging English

Spring 2013

Volume 2, Issue 3

Benchmarks are Done! What to do now?

Benchmarks are completed. What did we learn?

(1) One passage on the reading tests was from an old released tests with half the questions containing new or more rigorous stems. Teachers need to use stems on the blog site to prepare students.

(2) The second passage on the reading tests was from Achieve 3000 database. Teachers need to



regularly expose students to nonfiction items and questions on the site.

(3) Students are struggling with vocabulary in context and roots. Teachers need to teach vocab and roots in context of what is read—not separately.

(4) Students are struggling with new stems, especially eighth grade writing questions. Teachers need to use stems on the blog site to prepare students and practice items on the state site.

(5) Schools that are using the new stems and doing consistent cold passage reads (i.e. Deep Run, Henrico, Varina) have better results—all still need to focus on non-fiction and use Achieve.

Things to Do this Nine-Weeks

-Use question stems on the blog for all exercises and assessments:

<http://blogs.henrico.k12.va.us/hcpsenglish-staff/english-sol-question-stems/>

-Use online state practice questions and guides:

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/practice_items/index.shtml

-Use Achieve 3000 articles and questions:

<https://login.achieve3000.com/>

-Use different vocabulary strategies for attacking words while reading:

<http://blogs.henrico.k12.va.us/hcpsenglish-staff/reading-strategies-for-all-contents/>

-Have students keep some type of Roots journal/do activities to build root knowledge:

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“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.”

Setting up Tutoring and Saturday Sessions? Need material for remediation?

Here are some items you need to check out as you set up your remediation groups. Start with the starred items!

Virginia DOE practice and study items:

*http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/practice_items/index.shtml#writing

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/english/index.shtml

Bonus Lessons from the Achieve 3000:

<http://portal.achieve3000.com/home.php>

Non-fiction and paired passages from news:

<http://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/>



Texas practice and study guide items:

<http://www.shsu.edu/~txcae/readingless.html>

*http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index3.aspx?id=60&menu_id=793

Keep in mind the instructional focus of the classroom as you set up remediation in the classroom setting:

- Teach Nonfiction
- Pair Passages
- Teach Roots and Affixes
- Teach Composing Online
- Integrate All Strands

YES! It's Testing Season! Calendar of Events for English

March 11-22	Writing SOL Testing Window
April 8-19	M.S. NWEA Testing Window
April 8-19	H.S. SOL Simulation Testing Window
April 22-May 3	M.S. SOL Simulation Testing Window
April 22-May 3	HSHS NWEA Testing Window
May 9 (8am)	AP Literature and Composition Exam
May 10 (8am)	AP Language and Composition Exam
May 20-June 7	SOL Testing Window