

Keeping you up to date !

Engaging English

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Benchmarks are Done! What to do now?

-Hit narrative poetry often—focus on inference and having students complete story charts for the poems—they need to understand what is happening in the poem and why

-Make sure all your 8th and 10th graders (and you) are signed into No Red Ink for TEI grammar practice!

<https://www.noredink.com/>

-Make sure you are regularly visiting the Texas site for student tutoring packets and practice that is most in-line with our new test

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/taks/study-guides/>

-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:

<http://blogs.henrico.k12.va.us/hcpsenglish-staff/latin-and-greek-roots-for-sol-success/>



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.”

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

Don't forget about Writing Camps

Writing Camps are a great way to focus in on testing strategies and weaknesses. They are meant to hit key areas and reinforce skills and ideas. They are not an alternative to tutoring for weak students.

How to Set them Up:

Full or Half Day Camps—This model requires you to pull students out of other core and elective classrooms. You will need at least 4-5 teachers for each day of camp. Set up 4-5 rotating sessions. Each teacher is responsible for a topic. Each session should be around 45 min-60 min. Groups of 10-15 students will rotate through sessions. Don't forget to allow time for lunch.

Class Period Camps—If you can't pull students out of other core and elective classes, spend a week of school doing camps during your normal class times. You will need twice the number of teachers for this type of camp to keep student numbers low. Students need to be grouped in sizes of 10-15 (splitting the regular class in half). During Monday classes, students will rotate through two-20 minute sessions on grammar (choose your top two need areas). On Tuesday and Wednesday, students will rotate through three-25 minute sessions that focus on testing strategies, like prompt analysis and multiple choice stems. On Thursday and Friday, students will rotate through two-40 minute sessions on process, like lively writing and examining sample papers.

What to Focus On:

Grammar—Use Jeopardy type game and DOL type questions to focus on commas, verb tense and agreement and other areas of weakness for your students

Prompt Analysis—Have students find and define key words in the released prompts. For added practice, have students write a thesis for each prompt

Lively Writing—Have students expand sentences, use more vivid verbs and use synonyms to enhance writing

Sample Papers—Have students color code the elements (thesis, topic sentences, details/examples) of sample papers off the Pearson site and grade them to the state rubric—discuss what students need to do to get a 3 or 4 on papers

Multiple Choice Stems—Have students find and define key words in m.c. stems. Discuss what each question is asking for and review basic testing strategies.