



JEI

EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

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What is Common Core?

There has been a lot of talk about the Common Core State Standards in the last couple of years, yet most parents don't seem to know exactly what it is or what it means for their children. As we know, there has not been much consistency in what students learn across the country as each state had its own standards. The Common Core is really an effort to provide consistency and clarity to what students need to learn in grades K-12 by clearly defining a set of standards in math and English language arts.

The goal of Common Core is to provide a consistent core curriculum to all students in the U.S. which would supply them with the skills and knowledge to succeed in colleges and careers. Since its inception in 2010, 45 of the 50 states have adopted the Common Core State Standards. At the moment, the standards have been established for math and English language arts only. Currently, there is no plan to develop standards for other subjects. So how does the Common Core change what kids are learning in school?

First of all, the bar has been raised with the Common Core because it was created to be competitive with the top performing states as well as top performing countries around the globe. The Common Core is more rigorous both in content and skills. And, yes, there will be assessments based on the Common Core, scheduled to be available in the 2014-2015 school year.

U.S. students have not performed as well as students in other leading countries for many years, particularly in math. The criticism has been that the U.S. math curriculum is too broad and scattered - students skim through many skills but do not perfect any skills. Thus, the Common Core focuses on fewer topics but delves deeper in each. Also, students will be introduced to various concepts in earlier grades. For example, fractions will be introduced in first grade, and variable equations will be introduced in third grade. However, not everyone agrees with the set of standards in the Common Core.

The National Council of Teachers
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JEI Essay Contest

To be held nationwide on Nov. 9!



2013 JEI Essay Contest

JEI's first-ever nationwide Essay Contest, a great opportunity for your children to test their writing skills!

Embracing the Digital World

By Gil Choi

The world is changing ever so quickly these days. I was born – it seems many ages ago – before there were computers, cell phones, iPads, and ebooks. Life was much different, simpler and slower. We used public phones, listened to cassette tapes, and borrowed books from the library. We went to school and learned mostly with books. It seems likely that children will now be learning with tablets, not books. In time, they may not even go to schools but study at home in virtual schools like many of the home-schooled kids. Yet change isn't necessarily bad, and some of the changes may be for the better. In the field of education, I believe that new technology may help us improve the effectiveness of education greatly.

We have been teaching children in traditional classrooms for hundreds of years, and not much has changed in that time. We have questioned the effectiveness of such education for many decades because many of our students simply did not learn as much as we thought they should have and weren't

prepared for colleges or careers. At the root of the persistent problem is the fact that all students in a classroom learn the same things at the same pace, and that they go up in grades whether they have learned necessary skills or not. That is why we often see a 12th grader with a 5th grade math ability. And this has been a problem that we haven't been able to solve for decades. We know of the solution – that is, each student studying at his or her own pace and progressing to the next level only when all the previously learned skills have been mastered.

New technology will finally enable us to individualize the study programs based on needs and ability, and assess the performance of each student objectively. In other words, it enables us to have a class of 25 students working individually based on their specific needs, ability, and pace. And they will only progress to the next set of skills when they have understood what they have learned. It is a simple concept, but not as easily implemented in real classroom settings. New technology allows us to build and implement effective online



*Gil Choi, Senior Vice President of
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curriculum that enables self-paced and self-directed learning. It also enables the evaluation tool which ensures every student has learned all of the skills and concepts. It is a great new world, the digital world.

Life wasn't as convenient or comfortable in the past although I would like to think there was more of the romantic quality to it. Whether we like it or not, we don't go back in life, only forward. So we, sooner or later, will need to embrace the digital age that is upon us, and hopefully, solve some old problems with new technology. There is a great potential for success in education.

JEI FACEBOOK FAN GIVEAWAY!

“Like” JEI Learning Center’s page at
<https://www.facebook.com/jeilearningcenter>
and share the post for a chance to win a
16GB white iPad mini when we reach...

1,000 



BRIEFS

Free Apple iPads for 720,000 Students



The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) will be giving out free iPads, pre-loaded with educational applications, by late 2014. As part of the \$1 billion project, LAUSD has started rolling out iPads in a limited pilot. Broadacres and Cimarron Elementary in Hawthorne became the first to receive the devices.

(By "Los Angeles Times", 06/2013)

Microsoft Gives Out Free Tablets

The new "Bing for Schools" initiative delivers schools with free Surface tablets that are free from ads and adult content. Microsoft aims for an image boost in the education technology market, competing with the giants Apple and Google. The new Bing experience will be brought to over 800,000 students.

(By "PC World", 08/2013)

Education Sector Worth \$4.4 Trillion

A new report by the London-based investment bank IBIS Capital states the global education market is now worth \$4.4 trillion and is set to grow immensely over the next five years. The fastest-growing sector, not surprisingly, is e-learning, which is expected to grow about 23 percent by 2017.

(By "Education Week", 02/2013)

States Spend Less Per Student

A September 2013 study, released by the U.S. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, discovered that schools in 34 states will deliver less funding per student than in 2008, a lingering effect of the recession. Education is still struggling to return to pre-recession levels, having faced cuts of up to \$900 per student. In an effort to cope, 54% of school districts have increased class sizes, with administrators predicting more class size increases in years to come.

(By "Time", 09/2013)

"A Better Life Through Better Education"

Fast Facts



Out of 1.4 billion students on Earth, 5.3% are in the U.S. which is 74.1 MILLION.

5.3%

47%

Out of those 74.1 million students, 47% are in pre-k to 8th grade.

With 3.7 MILLION full-time elementary and secondary school teachers, the student-teacher ratio in the U.S. is 20:1.

20:1

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of Mathematics (NCTM), which has been publishing its own standards for many years, disagrees with the Common Core's heavy focus on fractions, suggesting that competence in using decimals is equally important.

Just like in math, English language arts curriculum will be more focused and in depth. Students are asked to read more complex materials that include classic myths, stories from around the world, foundational U.S. documents, American literature, and Shakespeare. In lower grades, equal importance is placed on literature and informational text. However, as grades go up, the emphasis is more on informational text. In reading, students will need to demonstrate their understanding based on textual evidence and analysis. They will need to write opinions and arguments based on text as well as narratives and research pieces. The Common Core also calls for literacy in history, social studies, science, and technical subjects because students will need to write, speak, and use language effectively in a variety of contexts to prepare for colleges and careers.

The Common Core does present a shift in education for students in grades K-12. The curricula in both math and English language arts will be more focused and in depth. It will be more challenging for most students. The Common Core may not be perfect, and it still needs to be implemented by the states and teachers in the classrooms. Nonetheless, it may be a step in the right direction as students in the U.S. try to compete with those in different countries and become the global leaders of tomorrow.

JEI Essay Contest in November

JEI is proud to announce

its first-ever essay contest, held on Saturday, November 9, 2013. The contest will provide JEI members and non-members alike a chance to hone their essay-writing skills for standardized tests. The contest will be held onsite at one of four major locations and at some local centers as well. Students will have one hour to write an essay about a given topic, which will be similar to

those found on the SATs and/or college preparatory exams. There will be two topics—one for lower grades and one for upper grades. While students are competing, parents are welcome to attend our JEI parent seminar.

Prizes include an Apple iPad, Samsung Galaxy Tabs, and Barnes & Noble gift cards. All winners will receive custom plaques and gift bags will be

given out to all participants just for signing up and joining the event.

Please contact your local JEI Center for more details. Interested students should register by Nov. 2, 2013. Spaces are limited for the contest, so be sure to sign up soon!

For more information, please email lahq@jeilearning.com or visit us at www.jeilearning.com.

Essay Contest Information

Date & Time

Saturday, November 9, 2013 at 9:30AM

Entry Fee

\$20 for JEI members, \$30 for non-JEI members Grades 2-7

Competition Venues

4 locations to be announced at www.jeilearning.com

Registration Deadline

Saturday, November 2, 2013

To Register

Please contact your local JEI Learning Center

Parent Seminar

Scheduled during the competition

Prizes

Grand Prize: Apple iPad (1)

1st Place: Samsung Galaxy Tab (6)

2nd Place: \$100 Barnes & Noble Giftcard (6)

3rd Place: \$50 Barnes & Noble Giftcard (6)

Winners to be announced on Dec. 9, 2013 at www.jeilearning.com

Award plaques for all winners!

Gift bags for all participants!



www.jeilearning.com

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