

Content Coaching: Unbound

A Tool to Deepen Understanding of Standards, Shifts and Content

So what do you do when you see that students aren't "getting it"? These content-specific questions are intended to be used by teachers, leaders and coaches for job-embedded development of Math and ELA content knowledge, post-lesson debriefing, coaching and lesson planning. The questions should be used to probe and push the thinking behind instructional practices, and to guide informed and actionable decisions on the changes needed for students to engage in grade-level, standards-aligned learning.

This tool is to be used in conjunction with the Instructional Practice Guide suite of tools from Student Achievement Partners. The [Instructional Practice Guides](#) are an important first step for diagnosing where and when Common Core instruction is taking place. Because every Core Action and every Shift cannot be observable in every lesson, [Beyond the Lesson Discussion Guides](#) offer questions for teachers and coaches to consider in order to ensure effective CCSS implementation over the course of the year. *Content Coaching: UnboundEd* provides an even more granular layer of instructional analysis and recommended next steps focused on application of content related to standards in the classroom.

MATH

Shift	Questions that Develop Understanding of Math Standards, Shifts and Content	
Leading the Conversation:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the knowledge and skills required to be successful on this task? • To what grade and standard is the task aligned? 		
Focus	<p>If not grade-level standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why was instruction not addressing grade-level standards? • What data or other work supports the decision to teach non-grade-level standards? • Is this part of the major work of that grade? <p>If not major work of the grade:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will this chosen standard authentically lead students back to working with math content that is emphasized in this grade? • How does this task connect to the major work in the grades above and below? 	
Coherence	<p>Across Grade Coherence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the instruction carefully connect learning across grades so that students can build new understanding onto foundations 	<p>Within Grade Coherence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the instruction leveraging how the standards within a grade were built to reinforce a major topic by utilizing supporting,

	<p>built in previous years?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the students who get it making connections to previous learning? • For students who are not getting it, is the teacher leading students to make connections to previous learning? • What prerequisite knowledge is a student lacking to be able to make those connections? <p>If students are still not making connections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask: What prerequisite knowledge is a student lacking to be able to make those connections? • Consider: share time studying the wiring diagram, studying linking standards, with next steps being digging into curriculum for additional lessons on knowledge gaps. 	<p>complementary topics?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the non-major work standards being taught supporting priority content? • If supporting standards are not linking to major work of the grade: What do the standards say? • How can this chosen standard authentically lead students back to working with math content that is to be emphasized in this grade? <p>If supporting standards are not linking to major work of the grade:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do the standards say? • Same question as before: How can this chosen standard authentically lead students back to working with math content that is to be emphasized in this grade? 	
<p>Rigor</p>	<p>Procedural Skill and Fluency</p> <p>If fluency opportunities are not present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where is/will fluency practice be built in upcoming lessons? <p>If students show fluency as a limiter in their math work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will students' lack of fluency be addressed? • Consider curriculum: fluency activities from high-quality lessons for the area that is limiting students 	<p>Conceptual Understanding</p> <p>If conceptual understanding opportunities are not present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can more opportunities be worked into what the students are thinking when working with math concepts? <p>If students show conceptual understanding as a limiter in their math work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider gaps: re-ask questions in Coherence activities • Consider curriculum: study 	<p>Modeling/Application</p> <p>If application opportunities are not present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can more application opportunities be folded into the student math experience? <p>If students are provided external prompts to complete application problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can the teacher adapt opportunities so that students can apply math they know without the prompting? • Consider

		high-quality lessons aligned to the standard of Focus	curriculum: study high-quality tasks aligned to the standard of Focus
Want more from UnboundEd? Check out our Math Content Guides: Unbound and other resources to help enhance instruction.			

ELA

Shift	Questions that Develop Understanding of ELA Standards, Shifts and Content
	<p>Leading the Conversation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the knowledge and skills required to be successful on this task? • To what grade and standard is the task aligned? • How are texts selected for units/lessons? How are texts selected for a sequence across the school year? How are texts selected for independent/guided reading? • (FOR P-3 ONLY) Is there a systematic phonics program as part of the literacy block? • (FOR SECONDARY ONLY) Is there collaboration between ELA and other content-area teachers around coherently building knowledge and sharing responsibility for students' literacy development and improvement?
Regular practice with complex text and its academic language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is a grade-level complex text at the center of instruction? • IF NOT – is the focus of the lesson to build knowledge and vocabulary related to a high-leverage topic? • IF NOT – are there opportunities for students to engage in rich evidence-based conversations about complex texts and topics that were experienced in previous lessons or via independent/group work? • IF NOT – is the focus of the instructional time to build fluency, a volume of reading and/or stamina? Or is the focus on small-group instruction with homogenous groups by reading level? <p style="text-align: center;">**If the above is true, WHEN and HOW OFTEN do students experience complex text at the center of instruction?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are students engaging in regular practice with complex texts and academic language? • Does instruction focus on students reading grade-level complex texts closely, discerning deep meaning? • Do questions and tasks address the text and help build knowledge by attending to its particular structures, concepts, ideas, and details? • Does instruction focus on building students' academic vocabulary in context throughout instruction?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do questions and tasks attend to the words, phrases, and sentences within the text?
Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are students' reading, writing, and/or speaking grounded in evidence from text? Are text-dependent questions sending students back into the text to answer them? Are they connected to the intended standard(s) of the lesson? If NOT – In cases where the teacher is asking questions that can be answered from students' personal experience, is this happening AFTER and IN ADDITION TO text-based analysis? Are lessons and tasks designed so that students cite specific evidence from text(s) to support analysis, inferences, and claims, both orally and in writing? Are students using evidence to build on each other's observations or insights during discussion or collaboration? Does the teacher expect evidence and precision from students and probe responses accordingly?
Intentionally building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do questions and tasks address the text and help build knowledge by attending to its particular concepts, ideas, and details? Do students read a significant amount of nonfiction? When the anchor text of a unit is fiction, is nonfiction used to supplement the text and help build understanding and knowledge about historical periods, topics and issues explored in the fiction text? Is instruction designed so that nonfiction is systematically used to build domain-specific knowledge and vocabulary on topics?
<p>Want more from UnboundEd? Check out our ELA Content Guides: Unbound and other resources to help enhance instruction.</p>	