

Preparing for Common Core: Shifts in Writing

This is the third in a series of articles about how expectations will change when FWPS implements Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in Fall 2013. Teachers are being asked to make shifts in their classrooms to meet higher standards in English Language Arts and Math. Parents play an important role in helping their students make the adjustment to Common Core.

In addition to changes in reading, the CCS for English Language Arts includes a shift in student writing requirements at FWPS. Students will be expected to write about what they read using evidence from the text and to know more vocabulary words. These shifts are closely related to the shifts in reading nonfiction.

Students will be expected to:

- Make arguments in writing using evidence
- Make written comparison between multiple texts
- Learn to write well.
- Learn words they will need in college and career.
- Grow their ability to use language.

Here are some tips on how parents can help students succeed in writing.

- Encourage writing at home, especially about things they read or discover.
- Write books or essays together that use evidence and detail to support the information you write about.
- Ask your student's teacher for examples of excellent student writing at your student's grade level, and then review them with your student.
- Read multiple books on the same topic and discuss the differences including how different word choices provide the information in a different manner.
- Remember that readers make better writers, and you can encourage your younger student, preschoolers or toddlers by reading to them often.

And finally, talk to your students. Read to them. Listen to them. Make up rhymes and silly word games — for example you use a word and they have to tell you a word that means the opposite (off/on, positive/negative). This works for any age group by adjusting the vocabulary.

Your student's teacher is a good resource for information on how to help your particular student. Be sure and attend student-led conferences.