



**February 2015**

### **Professional Learning Community (PLC) Activity**

**Purpose:** *To provide review of strategies students have been practicing in their Standards Plus lessons, increasing the likelihood that they will be used when students are involved in state testing.*

Your students have been learning content, skills, and knowledge in their Common Core Standards Plus lesson all year. They have also been learning strategies that they can use during assessments.

- This month's PLC offers an opportunity for you to review the Reading, Writing, Vocabulary, and Math Problem Solving strategies that have been embedded throughout your Standards Plus instruction.
- There are four cards (pages) to review.
- Determine how you will use these in the weeks remaining before state testing.
- Determine how you will use these throughout the remainder of the school year:
  - Send home to support homework.
  - Post for student reference.
  - Copy for student reference.





## Strategies for Reading Comprehension

**Strategy 1:** Read the title and subtitles. Predict what you will learn in the passage.

**Strategy 2:** Carefully study any graphs, charts, illustrations, or diagrams.

**Strategy 3:** Number the paragraphs.

**Strategy 4:** Read the questions carefully, circling the key words. **MAKE SURE YOU KNOW WHAT THE QUESTION IS ASKING!**

**Strategy 5:** Beginning with the title, read the passage thoroughly at least two times. Make a mental picture of what you read.

**Strategy 6:** Return to the first question to see if your reading provided the answer or clues to the answer.

**Strategy 7:** Return to the passage and identify the answer or clues that support your answer.

**Strategy 8:** Return to the question and construct your answer.

**Strategy 9:** Repeat steps six through eight for the remainder of the questions.

**Strategy 10:** Check to make sure all questions are answered reasonably.





## Test Taking Strategies for Writing to a Prompt

1. Read the prompt two times, highlighting key words.
2. Determine the expected product as the outcome of the writing (essay, story, web page, poster, brochure, etc.).
3. Determine the genre of the writing.
4. Deconstruct the prompt, listing each of the required steps or elements in the writing task.
5. Complete a graphic organizer to plan the writing.
6. Read the highest score elements of the rubric. Highlight the elements you must include in your final product.
7. Write the first draft, using the prompt, graphic organizer, and rubric to guide the writing.
8. Work with a partner to analyze and score the first draft.
9. Use the analysis and score of the first draft to write the final draft.
10. Score your final draft, and be prepared to defend your score.



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## Vocabulary Strategies

1. **Use context:** Read before and after the unknown word or phrase. Is there enough information to figure out the meaning of the unknown word or phrase?
2. **Use word parts:** Is there a prefix, suffix, inflectional ending, or root that you know?
3. **Use parts of speech:** Sometimes knowing the function of the unknown word or phrase can help you determine its meaning. Is the unknown word or phrase the verb in the sentence? Is it the subject or object?
4. **Use a dictionary or glossary:** A dictionary or glossary will usually offer a pronunciation key that tells you how the word sounds. Electronic (online) dictionaries often have a feature that will say the word for you. A dictionary or glossary will also offer the definition(s) for the word.
5. **Use synonyms:** A thesaurus will list words that have similar meanings to the unknown word or phrase. If you know the meaning of one of the synonyms, you can often determine the meaning of the unknown word or phrase.
6. **Use antonyms:** Most thesauruses will also list antonyms (words with opposite meanings) for the unknown word or phrase. Sometimes knowing the antonym helps you understand the meaning of a word or phrase.
7. **Use an expert:** If all else fails, ask someone. Your teacher, parents, older brothers and sisters, or even your friends might know what the word means.
8. **Use it again:** Now that you have an idea of the meaning of the word or phrase, use it in a new sentence or context to make sure you really understand it.

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## Strategies for Math Problem Solving

- Strategy 1:** Read the problem at least three times. Make a mental picture of what is being read.
- Strategy 2:** Locate key words in the question. **MAKE SURE YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT THE QUESTION IS ASKING!**
- Strategy 3:** Identify key numbers and labels.
- Strategy 4:** Eliminate unnecessary data.
- Strategy 5:** Thoroughly study any graphs, charts, or diagrams.
- Strategy 6:** Determine the operations/strategies needed to solve the problem.
- Strategy 7:** Solve. **SHOW YOUR WORK!** (On scrap paper, draw a picture, label charts & graphs according to the key, fill in place value chart, draw a number line, etc.)
- Strategy 8:** Evaluate the solution. **DOES THE SOLUTION ANSWER THE QUESTION? DOES THE SOLUTION MAKE SENSE?**
- Strategy 9:** Write your answer.
- Strategy 10:** Re-read the problem and your answer to be certain that your answer is reasonable.

