**Common Core Areas of Focus**

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| **Areas of Focus in ELA/Literacy** |
|  | **Focus Area** | **Explanation**  | **Reflection Question?** |
| Focus Area 1 | **Text Complexity and Range** | Students should read a range of appropriately complex texts. During the school year at least 50% of what elementary students read should be informational text. At the secondary level students should spend at least 70% of their time with informational text. This percentage is based on what students read across all disciplines, not just in their ELA class. In ELA, students read literature and literary nonfiction. They read historical, scientific, and technical texts across the other content areas and disciplines.  | What percentage of my texts are complex enough to help prepare students for college and careers? What percentage of my texts are literary (stories, drama, poetry)? What percentage of my texts are informational (literary nonfiction, historical, scientific, and technical texts)?  |
| Focus Area 2 | **Read Closely and Critically to Analyze, Infer, Provide Evidence, Synthesize, and Apply** | Classroom conversations and assignments are deeply connected to the text on the page. Teachers ask text-dependent, close and critical reading questions. Students comprehend as well as critique. | What percentage of classroom time do we spend closely examining text? What percentage of our higher order questions are dependent on close and critical reading? How do we ask students to apply what they have read to solve real-world problems? |
| Focus Area 3 | **Write to Sources** | Students spend time examining text and putting their thoughts about it into writing. Students write in response to the texts they read. | How often do students write about what they read?  |
| Focus Area 4 | **Short, Focused Research**  | Students should have opportunities to take part in short, focused research projects throughout the year.  | What opportunities do my students have to participate in short-focused research projects?  |
| Focus Area 5 | **Written and Spoken Argument** | Students should be able to establish and support an opinion (K-5) or claim (6-12) with clear textual evidence.  | What percentage of student writing is spent on the written argument?  |
| Focus Area 6 | **Academic Vocabulary**  | Academic vocabulary words cut across disciplines and are often undefined. Words such as *contrast*, *theory*, *synthesize*, are essential for students in all courses.  | What strategies are being used to help students build their academic vocabulary?  |
| Focus Area 7 | **Shared Responsibility for Literacy Development Among All Teachers** | Content area teachers help students read and write about sufficiently complex texts in their disciplines. Time is spent closely and critically studying text to build knowledge about the particular discipline.  | Are literacy experiences emphasized in my content area classroom? To what degree?  |