

Bringing Research to Life: The Crucial Role of Librarians in
Meeting – and Exceeding – the Common Core Standards

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Description: The Common Core State Standards in English language arts and literacy present a great challenge for students and teachers. Librarians are crucial allies, uniquely able to take three essential steps. First, they can help disseminate the research on reading comprehension underlying the standards. This body of research, which will be fully explained in the presentation, boils down to this: reading comprehension depends chiefly on prior knowledge. Second, librarians can assist teachers in finding appropriate fictional and informational texts. Librarians can create sets of texts on a great variety of topics, and they can both share their text sets with teachers and create topic-focused reading areas throughout the youth sections of their libraries. University librarians will see this trend carried through on the college level with much more emphasis on broad reading in specific topics. Third, librarians can directly increase children’s knowledge, and love of books, by frequently reading aloud. Even after children can read - even up to, on average, 13 years old - children’s listening comprehension is greater than their reading comprehension. So, please schedule as many read-alouds as you can - even better, develop a series of read-alouds on a single topic.

Lisa Hansel is the director of communications for the Core Knowledge Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to the idea that every child should learn a core of content that spans language arts and literature, history and geography, mathematics, science, music, and the visual arts. Prior to joining the Foundation in 2013, she was the editor of *American Educator*, the quarterly journal of educational research and ideas published by the American Federation of Teachers. In that role, she often published articles by E. D. Hirsch, Jr. and Daniel T. Willingham that explained why reading comprehension, critical thinking, and problem solving depend on relevant prior knowledge - and why, as a result, all students need a rigorous, coherent, grade-by-grade curriculum that builds broad knowledge. Lisa has a BS in Psychology from Washington and Lee University and an EdD in Education Policy from George Washington University, where she was also an adjunct professor and the writer and editor for the National Clearinghouse for Comprehensive School Reform. To learn more about Core Knowledge, please see www.coreknowledge.org and blog.coreknowledge.org.