

Curriculum Engine (CE) Best Practices Guide



Curriculum**Engine**

Calendar Layers/Folder Include Your Name

While the lesson plans you write help you plan your thoughts for quality instruction and rigorous student outcomes, your plans also serve as a way to communicate and collaborate. Administrators, coaches, strategists, and colleagues are working in partnership with you to achieve your goals. In order to help the communication piece, it's a best practice to add your first initial and last name to each of your calendar layers and folders. This allows for a viewer of your calendar layers and calendar items to quickly see who "owns" the calendar layer.

Double click on a Calendar Layer to open the Calendar Layer Details where you can rename a Calendar Layer Title. Type the course or the subject area you teach, and then follow with a dash and your name. BONUS: Add the room number too.

The screenshot shows a user interface for managing calendar layers. At the top, there are several empty input fields. Below them are icons for editing (pencil), visibility (eye), and a trash can labeled 'Restore'. Two buttons are visible: 'Add a Layer' (highlighted with a red box) and 'Change User'. Below these is a list of calendar layers under the heading 'Holloway Lesson Plans'. A red arrow points to the 'Special - AHolloway (rm varied)' layer. The list includes:

- Holloway Lesson Plans
- Special - AHolloway (rm varied)
- Math - AHolloway (rm 71)
- Word Study - AHolloway (rm 71)
- Literature Text - AHolloway (rm 71)
- Lunch - AHolloway (mpr)
- Science Lab - AHolloway (rm 47)
- Informational Text - AHolloway (rm 71)
- Writing - AHolloway (rm 71)
- I/A Block - AHolloway (rm varied)
- Homework - AHolloway (home)

Collaborate, While Being Independent

One of CE's continuing goals is "Purposeful, Collaborative Planning". When we as teachers plan collaboratively together, we build our own knowledgebase and refine our craft, increasing student achievement.

However, as we know, classrooms are different from one another, with varying teaching styles, environments, and student learners. A great teacher not only plans with peers, keeping to the overall goals, but also makes changes formatively based on the current students in the seats. It's important for each teacher to have an opportunity to make his or her own lesson plans.

Here are a couple of ideas of how a grade level, department, or course content area can structure CE to meet all of those needs.

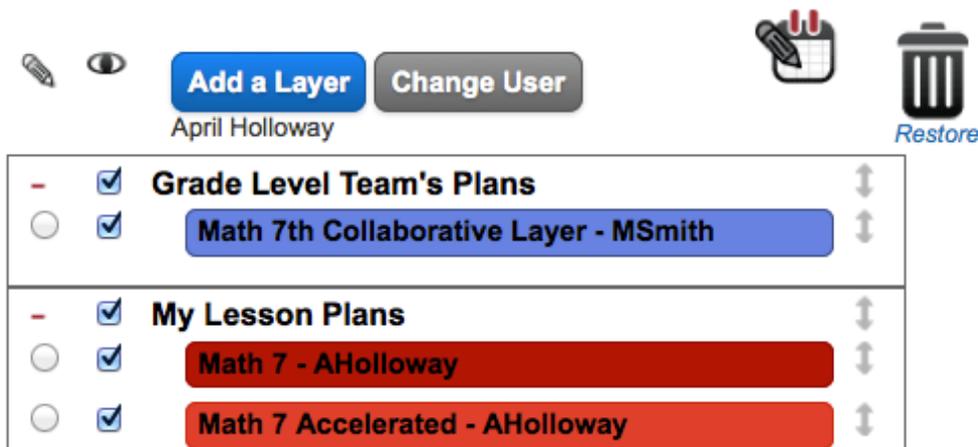
One Option

- A teacher leader creates one collaborative Calendar Layer and adds all appropriate teachers as Editors to that Calendar Layer. This is the Calendar Layer used to create Calendar Items where notes are taken and overall plans are made to support everyone as they write their own plans using their own Calendar Layers for Calendar Items/Lesson Plans.

Another Option

- A team of teachers uses the same Calendar Layers to collaboratively create Calendar Items that are general enough for the entire team. Then, each teacher modifies the Calendar Items to provide specificity of how the lesson will look in his or her classroom. This can be done with horizontal line breaks or varied colors (one color per teacher).

BONUS IDEA: How about a team layer to keep PLC notes or a school master calendar?



Setup Your Template – Contents and Size

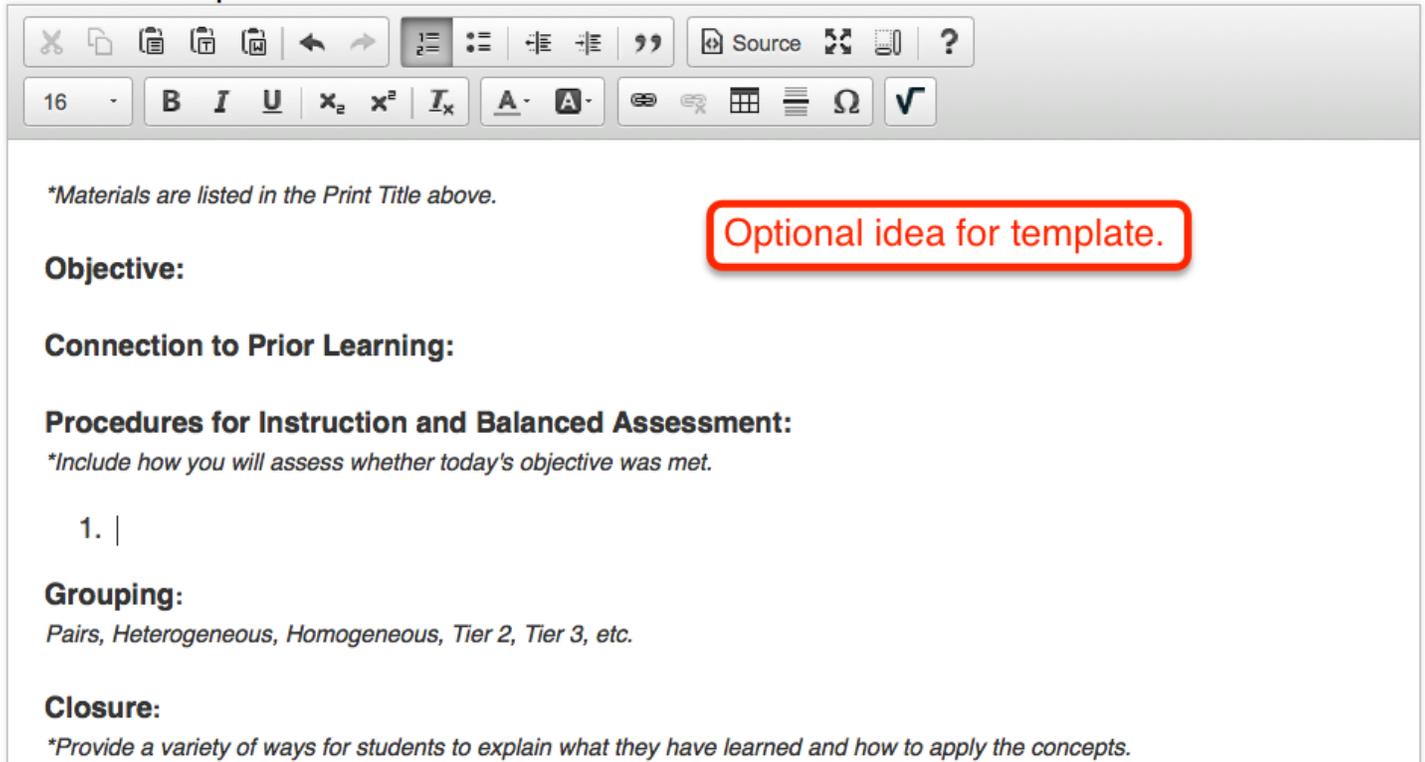
In the Calendar Layer Details, you have the opportunity to set up a template. There are a few things to consider when adding items to your template:

- What information do I type for every lesson or every subject?
 - This type of repeated text would be best set up in a template so it occurs on it's own for every calendar item/lesson plan.
- What “headings” and/or information would be appropriate to convey the brief details of a plan for instruction and assessment?
 - The CCSD regulation 6122 outlines some suggestions for instructional plans. Additionally, school sites may look at including components relevant increasing student achievement.
- Is what I've designed in the template clear, readable, and organized in a way that outlines a single lesson?

While you are in the Calendar Layer Details creating your template, adjust the font size to whatever you prefer your printed lesson plans to reflect. Once a template is altered (wording and/or font size), from that point forward, Calendar Layer Items created for that Calendar Layer would reflect that change.

Double click on a Calendar Layer to open the Calendar Layer Details where you can create/edit your template text and font size. Also, check out the other options on the text toolbar to customize things, as you prefer.

Lesson Plan Template:



**Materials are listed in the Print Title above.*

Objective:

Connection to Prior Learning:

Procedures for Instruction and Balanced Assessment:
**Include how you will assess whether today's objective was met.*

1. |

Grouping:
Pairs, Heterogeneous, Homogeneous, Tier 2, Tier 3, etc.

Closure:
**Provide a variety of ways for students to explain what they have learned and how to apply the concepts.*

Use Folders – 1 or More

Folders not only help you organize your information, but they also give you and the other people that you are partnering with the ability to quickly turn on or off the visibility of many Calendar Layers at one time.

At the very least, a best practice is to put all of your Calendar Layers into 1 folder. This way, the visibility of the Calendar Layers within that folder can be turned on or off with just one click. You can create a “Calendar Layer Folder” by clicking on the “Add a Layer” blue button.

An even better practice is to organize your folders into categories that make sense for your licensed position. Examples of such folders could include:

- Archived Lesson Plans 2012-1013 - AHolloway
- Mrs. Smith’s Lesson Plans/Calendar Layers
- English Department – Cadwallader MS
- CCSD Calendar Layers

Creating folders will also clean up your screen so that you can better manage multiple Calendar Layers. Each folder can be collapsed to hide or opened to reveal all the Calendar Layers you have access to.

Over time, it’s natural to accumulate calendar layers as things change. The instinct is to delete old calendar layers to “clean up” things. Remember that those calendar layers are the buckets for all of the associated calendar items/lesson plans. Deleting a calendar layer deletes all of those items/plans. Instead of deleting, think about organizing your folders by previous school sites, previous grade level assignments, or previous coarse content areas.



Be Selective When Dragging Over Standards

One convenient feature of CE is the ability to “drag and drop” standards from the left hand side onto the calendar to initiate the creation of a calendar item/lesson plan. When that calendar item/lesson plan is created, the standard(s) appear at the base of the plan, and the red circle counter next to the standard counts up one. The standard (most likely) will not be mastered by students that day, but by attaching a standard to the lesson plan, you are indicating an opportunity for students to work towards that goal. The objective you write in your lesson plan that day will explain the exact goal for the lesson that exact day (see example in the picture).

In any given lesson, teachers “tuck & weave” a number of standards and mention any number of concepts, which is great because standards should not be taught in isolation. However, the temptation is to “drag and drop” every standard that may be mentioned, touched-on, or worked with that lesson. Yet, these natural teachable moments may not be what the teacher will be assessing (formative or summative).

It is a best practice to choose to only drag over the standard(s) that are related to the objectives you will be directly looking at when you evaluate student work or student understanding.

Objective:

Students will compare a partial product model to a completed standard algorithm model to analyze how the standard algorithm works. Target problem: 38×12

* We'll also be working with the cluster of standards from **5.NBT.A** - Understanding Place Value.

body span

CCSD regulation 6122 outlines minimum expectations for lesson plans including the lesson objective, procedures, materials, grouping, and assessment. Please check with your site administration for lesson planning expectations specific to your school site.

Related Standards/Course Objectives:

x **5.NBT.B.5** - Fluently multiply multi-digit whole numbers using the standard algorithm.

Name Calendar Item Display Titles in Your Favor

By default, when you drag over a standard to create a calendar item/lesson plan, the “Display Title” and “Print Title” populate with the number and language from the standard. Since a standard is truly noted (and technically counted) at the bottom of the lesson plan, the “Display Title” and “Print Title” can – and should – be changed.

Over the years, many teachers and administrators have come up with systems of what to use as names. Many use subject names, or even just leave the standard numbers. However, with the addition of the “When did I teach this?” feature in 2013, it’s now more useful to change the names of those calendar items/lesson plans.

The “Display Title” – 25 characters or less – should be a name of a lesson that means something to you, the teacher. Meaning, when you look at that Display Title name, you should be able to identify and recall the specificity of that lesson. By comparing the pictures below, you can see that it would be much easier for a teacher to talk about, analyze, find, etc. a specific lesson plan with the names, rather than just the numbers. The “Print Title” can be used for whatever you prefer.

BONUS TIP: If this is a Summative Assessment opportunity, use the same name when adding assignments to your Infinite Campus grade book.

2013-2014 School Year

- Math - AHolloway (rm 71) (7)

09/24/2013 Wits to Work
09/25/2013 Dragon Math
11/21/2013 Reasoning Expressions
02/20/2014 Math Signs
02/21/2014 Compose Expressions
03/19/2014 Recording Situations
04/17/2014 Math Signs

2012-2013 School Year

- Math - AHolloway (rm 71) (6)

10/15/2012 5.OA.A.2
01/15/2013 5.OA.A.2
02/13/2013 5.OA.A.2
03/20/2013 5.OA.A.2
04/18/2013 5.OA.A.2
05/14/2013 5.OA.A.2

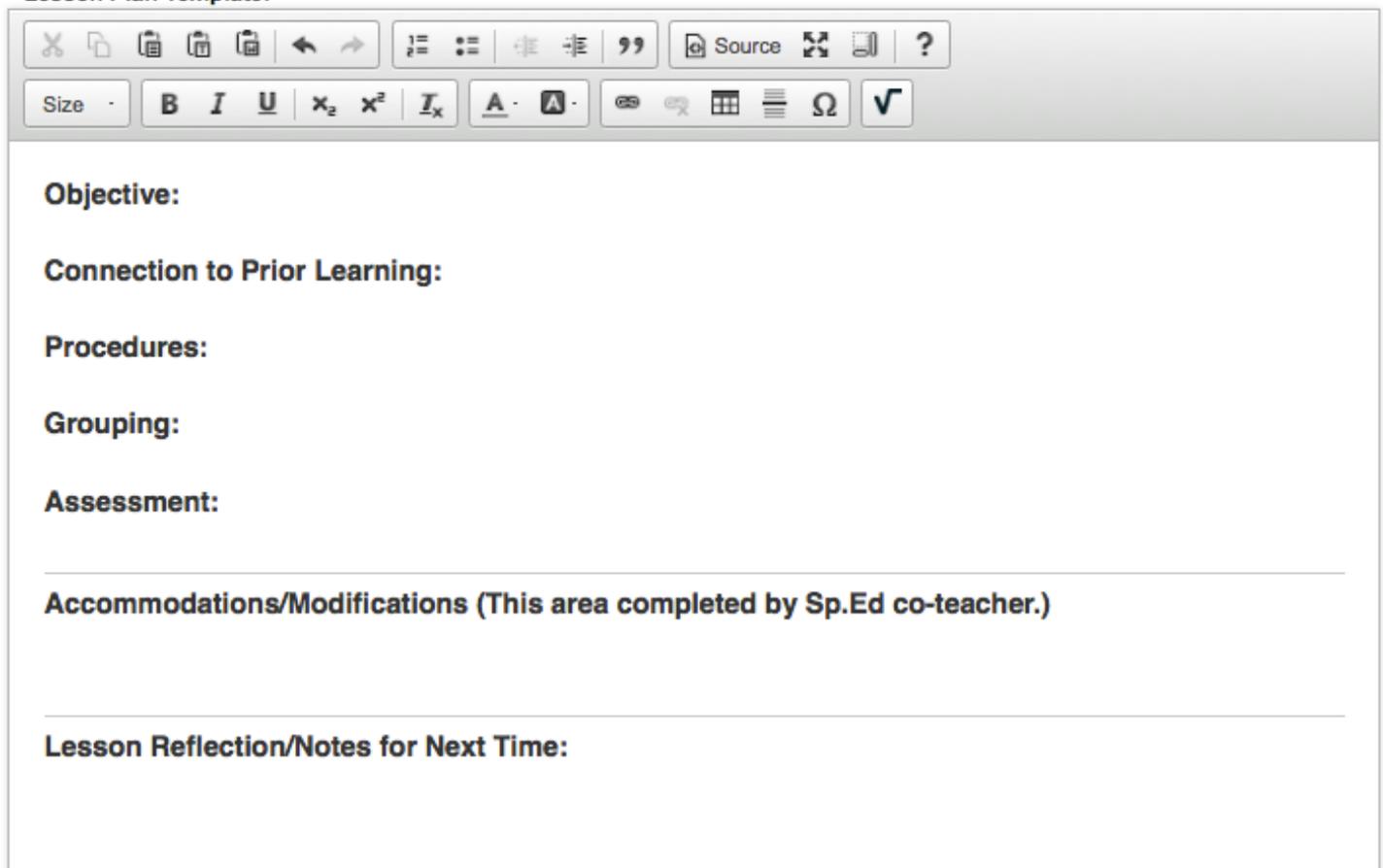
Write “Reflection” Notes About Your Lessons

Lesson planning is a flexible, on-going process that teachers engage with in order to help make connections between what the students have learned and what they need to learn next. (Not just what was taught already and what to teach next.) While lesson plans are written for the teacher, they also serve as tool for communication and collaboration with fellow educators.

Teachers engage in lesson planning in advance of learning (thus the word plan), however, it is the teacher’s role to anticipate students needs and create a plan for instruction that connects those needs to the daily objectives and overall goals of mastering standards. But what is written out on paper may not represent what exactly happened with student learning that day.

In order to help improve teaching practice over time and to affect higher student outcomes, think about the opportunity to write informal lesson reflections. This practice allows for honest self-analysis, real conversation, and opportunity for growth in a safe environment. Additionally, if the lesson plan is used in the future (hello duplicate feature), then ideas from the moment are included in context for you to use when you complete necessary revisions for new students and improved instruction.

Lesson Plan Template:



The image shows a screenshot of a lesson plan template form. At the top, there is a rich text editor toolbar with various icons for editing text, including bold, italic, underline, strikethrough, subscript, superscript, text color, background color, bulleted list, numbered list, link, unlink, table, table of contents, and a checkmark. Below the toolbar, the form is divided into several sections, each with a label and a horizontal line for input:

- Objective:**
- Connection to Prior Learning:**
- Procedures:**
- Grouping:**
- Assessment:**
- Accommodations/Modifications (This area completed by Sp.Ed co-teacher.)**
- Lesson Reflection/Notes for Next Time:**

Duplicate with a Purpose

As the saying goes, “Why recreate the wheel?” But what does that saying really mean?

reinvent the wheel

Fig. to make unnecessary or redundant preparations.

Did some caveman make a wheel out a wood or stone long ago, and we all have been using that same wheel ever since? Not at all. So the concept of the wheel - the intent of the wheel is pure, while the wheel itself constantly changes (i.e., size, style, type, material, etc.)

Courses change...

Standards change...

Timelines change...

Instructional strategies change...

Teachers change...

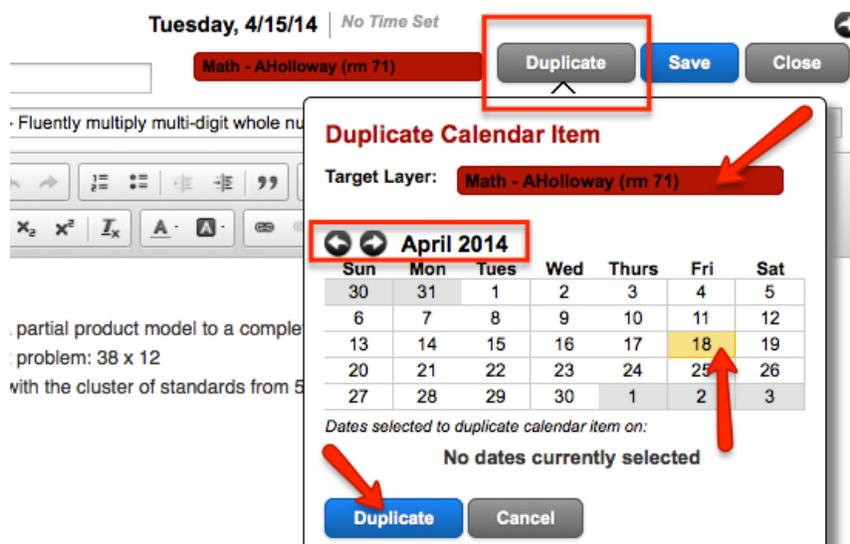
and students change...

When using the Duplicate feature in Curriculum Engine, ask yourself these questions:

- Does this lesson reflect current specific standards for my course?
- What this lesson worth it? Was it worth the *students'* time?
- How will I revise this lesson to meet the needs of the students I have now?

A great way to think about using the duplicate feature is that it's there to help your efficiency and save time when appropriate, but it should never replace the process of lesson planning.

Students deserve “customized instruction”, rather than “off the rack” lessons. ☺



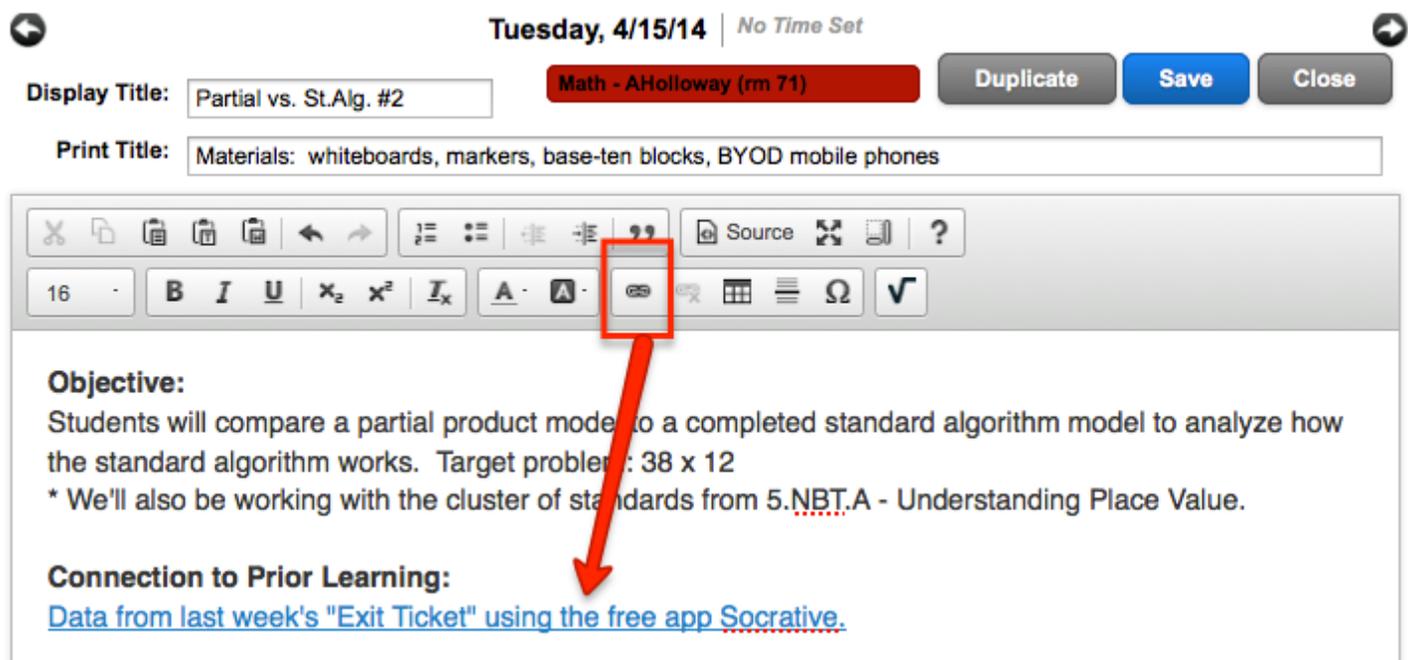
Use Hyperlinks in Your Lesson Plan Text

A common question asked through the Curriculum Engine support box (lives in the bottom right corner) is, “Why can’t I attach a file to my lesson plans?”

As of 2014, there are over 10 million calendar items/lesson plans living in Curriculum Engine (Wow!), and so imagine that if each of those items had 1 or more files attached to them. There just simply isn’t the file storage space to support that many files for our more than 25,000 users.

However, a great work-around that allows you to still maintain the ownership of your files is to use a cloud storage service such as Dropbox, Google Drive, SkyDrive, etc. Those sites are like having your own “S Drive” in the sky, anywhere you go, and when you store files there, those files get their own URL addresses (web links). You can use the Hyperlink button in the Curriculum Engine text box area to link to your files. In many cases, you can make changes to those files, and the changes will automatically be present from the hyperlinks.

Hyperlinks can be files needed for a particular lesson, data related to differentiated instructional choices, and resources. Everything needed for any instruction, lesson, and/or assessment can be included all together in the text box.



Tuesday, 4/15/14 | No Time Set

Display Title: Partial vs. St.Alg. #2 Math - AHolloway (rm 71) Duplicate Save Close

Print Title: Materials: whiteboards, markers, base-ten blocks, BYOD mobile phones

16 · B I U x_2 x^2 I_x A · □ · **Hyperlink**     

Objective:
Students will compare a partial product model to a completed standard algorithm model to analyze how the standard algorithm works. Target problem: 38 x 12
* We'll also be working with the cluster of standards from 5.NBT.A - Understanding Place Value.

Connection to Prior Learning:
[Data from last week's "Exit Ticket" using the free app Socrative.](#)

When Did I Teach This & the NEPF Connection

The Nevada Performance Educator Framework (NEPF) is a way for teachers to think about their practice, how it impacts students, and to grow and improve as a professional.

One of the NEPF Teacher High Leverage Instructional Standards and Indicators outlines:

- Standard 2 – Learning Tasks have High Cognitive Demand for Diverse Learners
- Indicator 3 – Tasks progressively develop all students' cognitive abilities & skills

Curriculum Engine offers a unique way to look at your instruction design over time, evaluate that design, and how it affects student outcomes. The “When did I teach this?” feature is often thought of as a counter that keeps track of the number of times you drag a standard over to your calendar for a lesson plan. While that is true, the feature has much more potential.

After clicking on the red circle that is located with a standard, you can click down further within multiple years, to open up layers and see the titles and dates of each of your lessons. If you have followed the best practice of naming your lessons with names familiar to you, you'll be able to look at the list and think on each time the students worked with that standard. You can ask yourself questions such as:

- Did each of these student tasks get more challenging and demanding over time?
- What kind of student tasks was each of these experiences? Worksheets? Projects? Group work? Were all of these student tasks the same or different than one another?
- How can I lesson plan differently to be sure that each time a student works with standards, that the tasks I'm asking of them get more cognitively demanding?

Curriculum Engine Clark County School District

Quick Links: Mathematics 5 (2013-2014) Mathematics 5 (2013-2014)

Mathematics 5 (2013-2014) Select Course

List View

OA - Operations and Algebraic Thinking

Operations and Algebraic Thinking (OA)

5.OA.A Write and interpret numerical expressions.

5.OA.A.1 Use parentheses, brackets, or braces in numerical expressions, and evaluate expressions with these symbols. 2

5.OA.A.2 Write simple expressions that record calculations with numbers, and interpret numerical expressions without evaluating them. For example, express the calculation "add 8 and 7, then multiply by 2" as $2 \times (8 + 7)$. Recognize that $3 \times (18932 + 921)$ is three times as large as $18932 + 921$, without having to calculate the indicated sum or product. 0

When did I teach this?

5.OA.A.2 - Write simple expressions that record calculations with numbers, and interpret numerical expressions without evaluating them. For example, express the calculation "add 8 and 7, then multiply by 2" as $2 \times (8 + 7)$. Recognize that $3 \times (18932 + 921)$ is three times as large as $18932 + 921$, without having to calculate the indicated sum or product.

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2012-2013 School Year

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