

Tackling Spring Assessments

Great Instruction Every Day



Agenda

- Great Instruction Every Day
- Research
- Four Effective Strategies
- ThinkCERCA Demo

A young woman with dark braided hair is shown in profile, looking intently at a laptop screen. She has her hand near her chin, suggesting deep thought or concentration. The background is a blurred classroom with other people, creating a sense of a busy learning environment. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

**The Best Test Preparation Is
Great Instruction Every Day**



Close Reading
Effective Writing
Collaboration
+ Communication

Critical Thinking



A **personalized literacy platform** for teaching students in grades 4-12 close reading and academic writing skills across subjects



Claim



Evidence



Reasoning



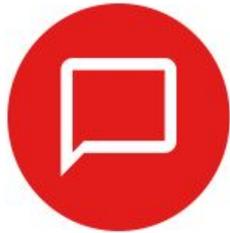
Counterargument



Audience

An **Academic Writing** Solution

The **CERCA Framework** encourages the development of critical thinking and literacy skills by breaking down critical reading and academic writing into five key components.



Claim



Evidence



Reasoning



Counterargument



Audience

Why **Argumentation**?

“The Standards put particular emphasis on the students’ **ability to write sound arguments** on substantive topics and issues, as the ability is critical to career and college readiness.”

– *CCSS Appendix A*

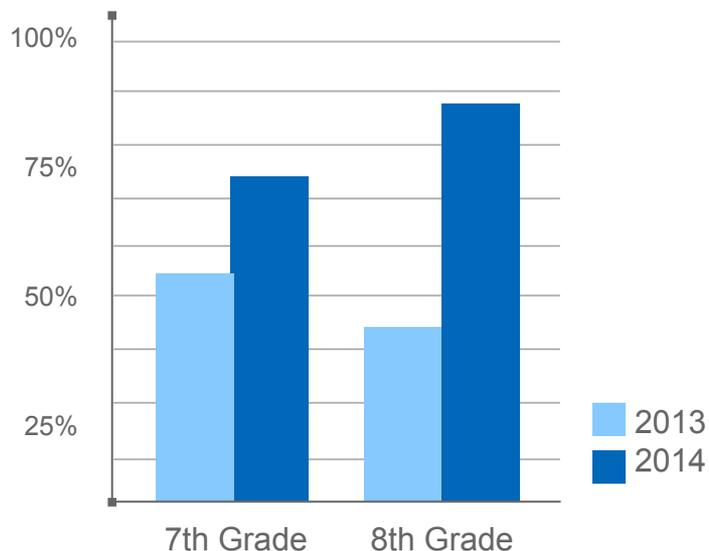




What kind of growth can schools expect?

Spring-to-Spring **Reading Growth**

Growth in Reading by Percentiles Rank
from 2013-2014
based on NWEA RiT band growth



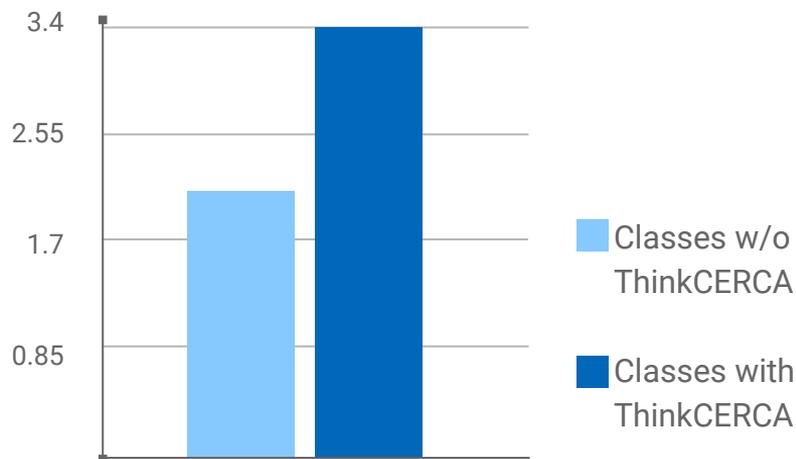
Outcomes

We **grew reading scores from the 41st percentile nationally to the 87th percentile** in one year of implementation by focusing on close reading strategies and academic writing across the curriculum.

Growth on the ACT

Growth on ACT

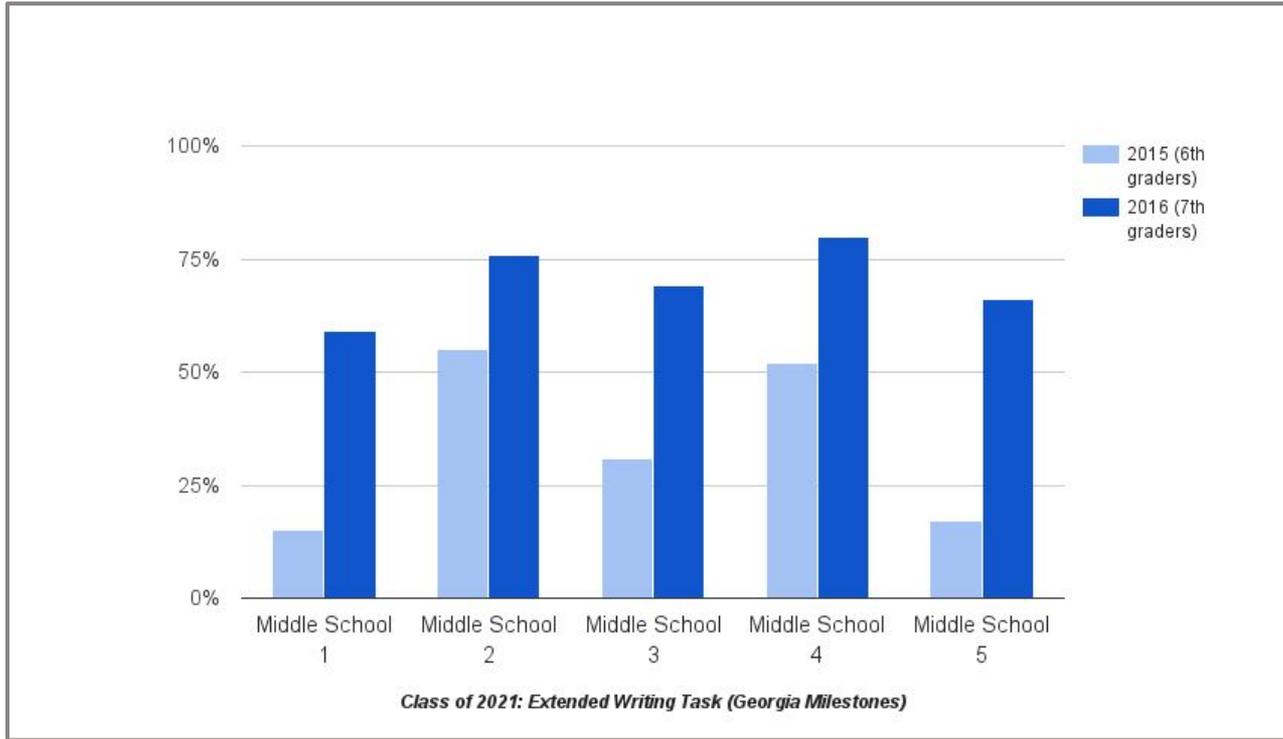
Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences



Outcomes

The English classes that regularly used ThinkCERCA saw **3.4 growth on the ACTs compared to 2.1 growth for the classes** that did not use it regularly.

Spring-to-Spring **Extended Writing Task Growth**



Outcomes

We **grew scores on an extended writing task across all middle schools in a district** in one year of implementation by focusing on integrating close reading and academic writing across the curriculum.

A photograph of a classroom scene. A male teacher in a white shirt and dark trousers is leaning over a desk, smiling as he helps a young boy in a grey hoodie with his schoolwork. The boy is holding a yellow pencil and writing on a piece of paper. On the desk, there is a laptop, a purple pencil case, and some papers. In the background, another student is working on a laptop at a desk. The classroom is filled with colorful storage bins and educational materials on shelves.

Four Strategies to Tackle Spring Assessments

Planning: **Student-Centered Instruction**

PEOPLE

PROCESSES

PLACES

PRODUCTS

TIME

Five variables instructional leaders have at their disposal to help **set teachers, students, and families up for success.**

It Takes a Team (People) and Time (Processes)



+



Classroom: **Differentiation & Coverage**

What are we as instructional leaders doing to create the conditions for success for learning?

PEOPLE

As a team, have you determined the underlying skills and concepts and the smaller chunks?

PROCESSES

Have you designed the appropriate active learning strategy to match the learning task?

PLACES

Have you created spaces for active learning, self-pacing, additional help?

PRODUCTS

Do you have products that can support this work?

TIME

As a team, are providing enough time to go deep and differentiate appropriately?

Planning: Operationalizing Teams for Learning

What are we as instructional leaders doing to create the conditions for success for learning?

PEOPLE

As a team, how are you determining what students should know and be able to do and helping each other to create it?

PROCESSES

As a team, have you determined a good way to help students capture data and established a good routine for using it?

PLACES

As a team, are you celebrating success?

PRODUCTS

As a team, do you have a common resource that can support this work?

TIME

As a team, are you allocating the necessary time to the looking at student work samples as one of the keys to monitoring progress?

Strategies

- Error Analysis
- Prediction
- Annotation
- Classroom Layout

Error Analysis

Why analyze errors?



Error analysis helps train students to identify the distractors in answer choices.

Error Analysis

- requires that students reflect upon their work.
- encourages students to go back to the text and review *distractors* purpose.
- allows students to engage in a productive struggle.
- provides a structure for students to check their work when they are mid-assessment.

Error Analysis

1 Which of these statements best describes the main purpose of the slideshow?

A. to praise the voting system in the United States

B. to encourage students to vote in their next election

Your answer was incorrect.

C. to show why the Electoral College should be disbanded

D. to explain how the Electoral College works

This is the correct answer.

Step by Step

- 1) Select a question you answered incorrectly.
- 2) Write down why your answer was incorrect.
 - a) Was your answer connected to the question but not answering the exact question asked?
 - b) Was your answer disconnected from the question being asked altogether?
- 3) Write down why the correct answer was correct.

Prediction

Why predict answers?



Prediction strategies help students approach the questions as opportunities to read a text more carefully.

Prediction

- requires students go back to the text to find an answer before tackling the multiple choice options presented.
- encourages students to check their work as a consistent strategy.
- allows students to eliminate wrong answers immediately.
- is not only for multiple choice questions but can be used with any topic students are learning, in any instructional environment.

Prediction

1 Which of these statements best describes the main purpose of the slideshow?

A.

B.

C.

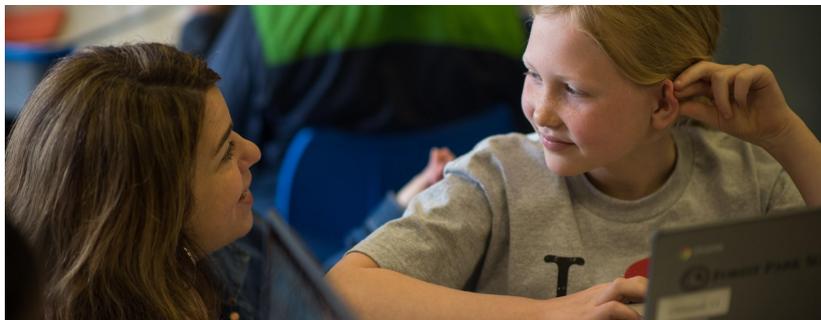
D.

Step by Step

- 1) Read the question carefully.
- 2) Cover the answer choices.
- 3) Predict the answer.
- 4) Jot down the answer in your own words.
- 5) Find text to support your answer.
- 6) Select the multiple choice answer that matches your answer **or** use an error analysis for remaining distractors.

Annotation

Why annotate the text?



Annotation helps students locate information quickly and determine key elements.

Annotation

- requires students engage in active reading.
- encourages students to ask questions and read actively to find answers.
- allows readers to quickly return to key parts of the passage to locate answer to questions about universal aspects of the text and key details.

Annotation

What if every **eligible** voter in the country had to vote by law? **Mandatory voting would give lawmakers a better understanding of what the people want and how lawmakers could best govern.** It could also give people more **incentive** to educate themselves on issues and political players in the government. Mandatory voting might even give citizens more reason to become more involved in politics, to not just sit back and let the politicians have all the power in deciding the country's destiny. To quote Abraham Lincoln, the United States government was created "of the people, by the people, for the people," so it is the people who need to step up and share their honest opinion on how the country should be run.

On the other hand, requiring citizens to vote could hurt the government as well. In countries where voting is mandatory, such as Australia, **disinterested** **some voters have made their decision based on what order the candidates are listed in. This is a trend called "donkey voting."** Without any cause or reason to care for voting, citizens have used donkey voting to **protest** the mandatory vote or the government in general. The effect is much like not voting at all: the government receives an unclear or dishonest opinion from the people, and politicians won't know truly if laws or political actions they **enact** will meet the country's approval. Punishing people who don't vote will also hurt people's attitudes towards the government. Sitting in jail for not checking a ballot box is just plain ridiculous. People have as

Reread the article.

AQUA Use aqua to highlight benefits of mandatory voting. Add notes about how you think this would affect American politics.

PINK Use pink to highlight issues with mandatory voting. Add notes about how you think this would affect American politics.

Step by Step: During Reading

- 1) Highlight or underline relevant details.
- 2) Write notes, summarize, make predictions, or ask questions.
- 3) Write reflections, reactions, and comments.

Classroom **Layout**

Why would you restructure your classroom layout?

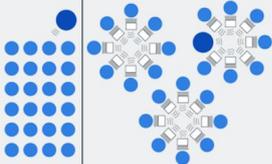
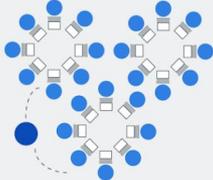
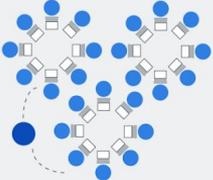


Classroom layout options allow students to leverage the most valuable research in their classroom: the other human beings!

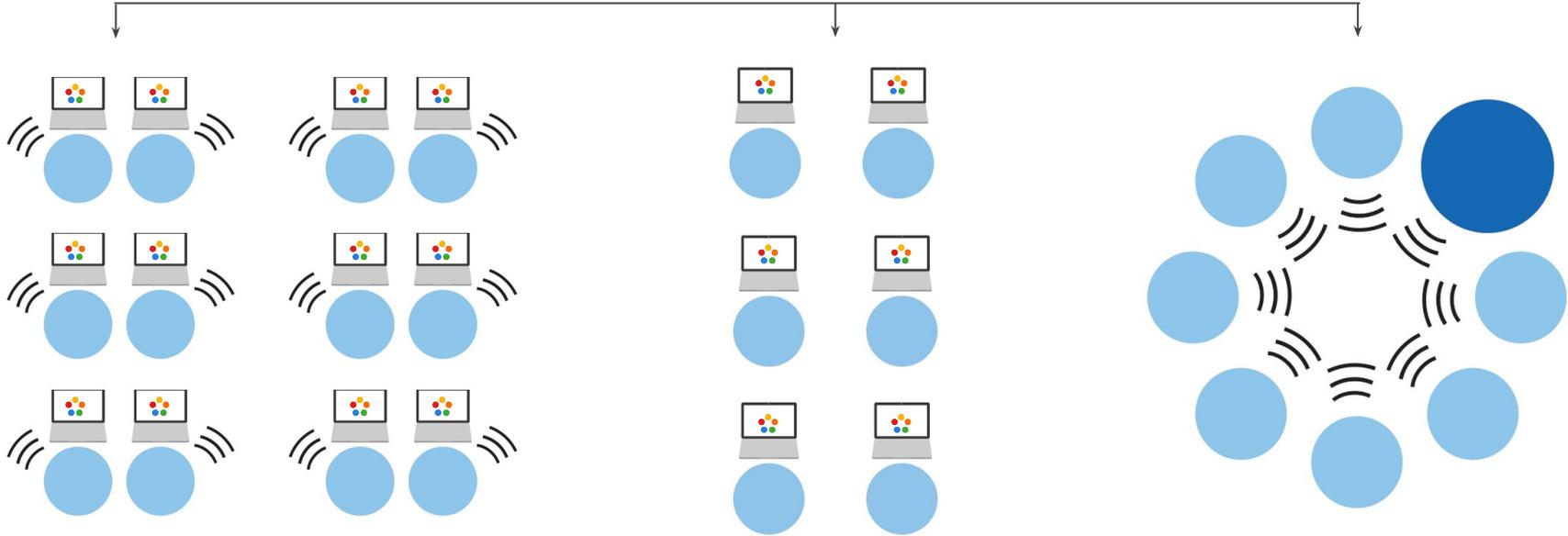
Classroom Layout

A classroom layout that uses technology, space, and grouping effectively allows students to move fluidly between independent, self-paced, collaborative, and direct instruction options.

Classroom **Layout**

Suggested Weekly Schedule			
	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Student Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop initial understanding of a key concept and discuss understanding with peers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the text for comprehension, and then again for a close reading. Build an initial argument pre-write draft. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a formal argument and have independent or small group conferences with the teacher during the writing process.
ThinkCERCA Lesson Tasks	45 min: Teacher-led Direct Instruction Lesson, Small Group Discussion of Comprehension Checks	45 min: Personal Connection, Reading and Comprehension Check, Engage with the Text, and Interactive Argument Builder. Teacher rotates between groups, spending extra time with the students reading below grade level.	45 min: Completion of Final Writing; Feedback from Peers and/or Teacher
Blended Learning Model	 <p>Teacher leads direct instruction followed by small group work.</p>	 <p>Students work independently while teacher rotates.</p>	 <p>Students work independently and then conference with teacher about writing.</p>

Low-Tech Labs or Carts

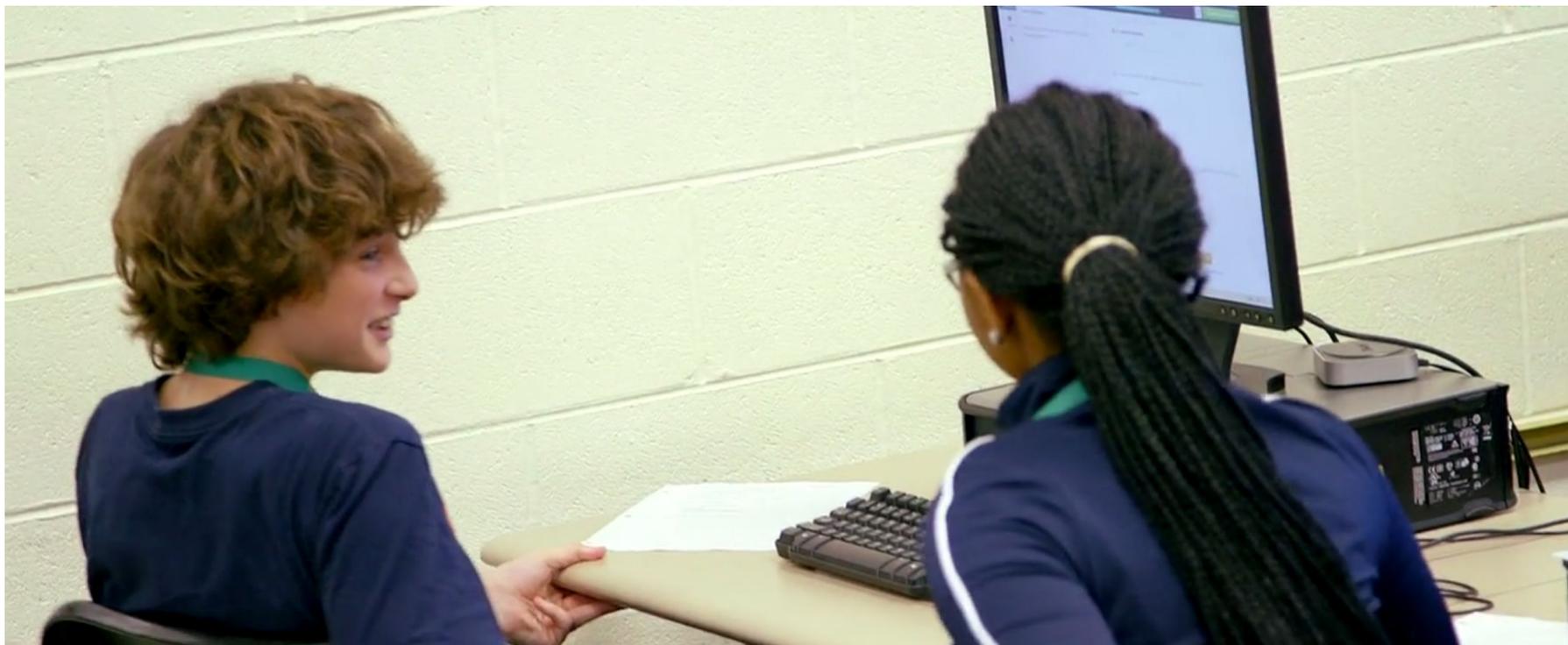


Paired Discussion

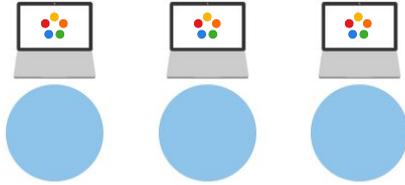
**Self-Paced, Leveled
Reading and Writing**

Teacher/Student Interaction

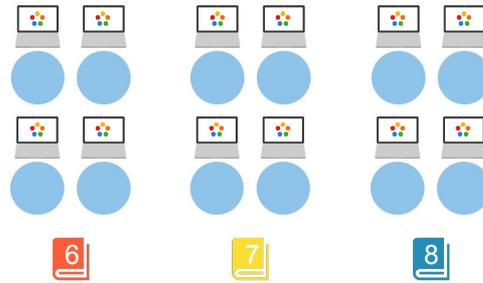
Low-Tech Lab or Carts: **Peer Collaboration**



Low-Tech Centers



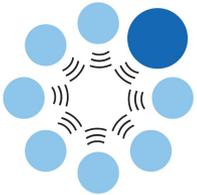
Online Drafting



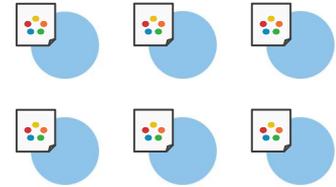
Independent Online Reading
Grouped by Reading Level



Peer Editing



Small-Group Socratic Dialogue



Vocabulary

Low-Tech Centers: **Vocabulary Station**

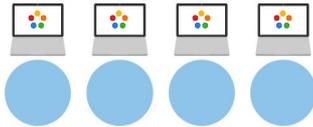


Leveled Groups

NGSS Disciplinary Core Ideas:

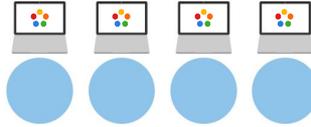
How can we prepare to farm in a world with a changing climate?

Robots in the Dairy



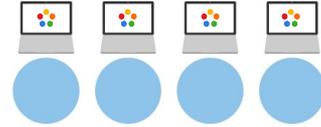
Reading Level 

A Bird, a Plane, a Garden?



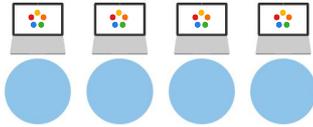
Reading Level 

Diggin' Dirt



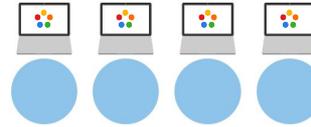
Reading Level 

Earth's Soil Is Getting Too Salty



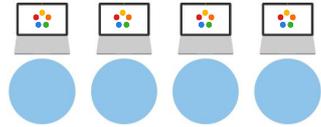
Reading Levels   

Testing Future Conditions for the Food Chain



Reading Levels  

The Quest for Everlasting Agriculture



Reading Levels  



Robots in the dairy

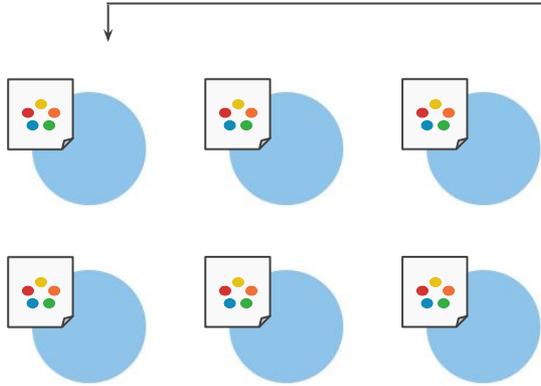
A bird, a plane, or a garden?

Earth's Soil is Getting too Salty

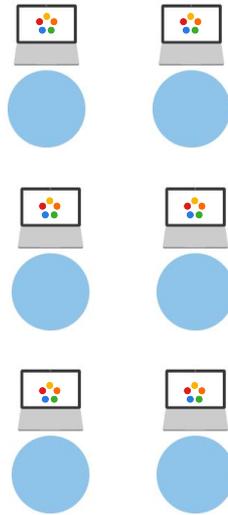
Diggin' Dirt

The Quest for Everlasting Agriculture

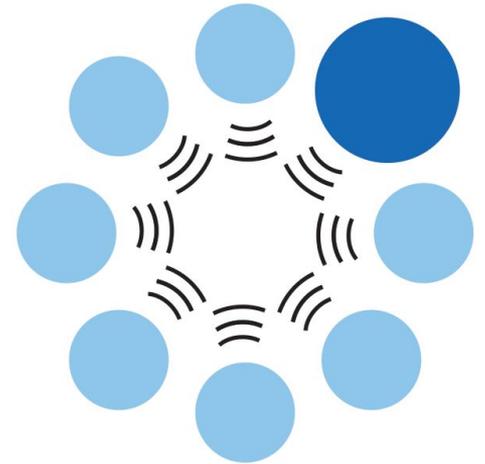
Flex Groups



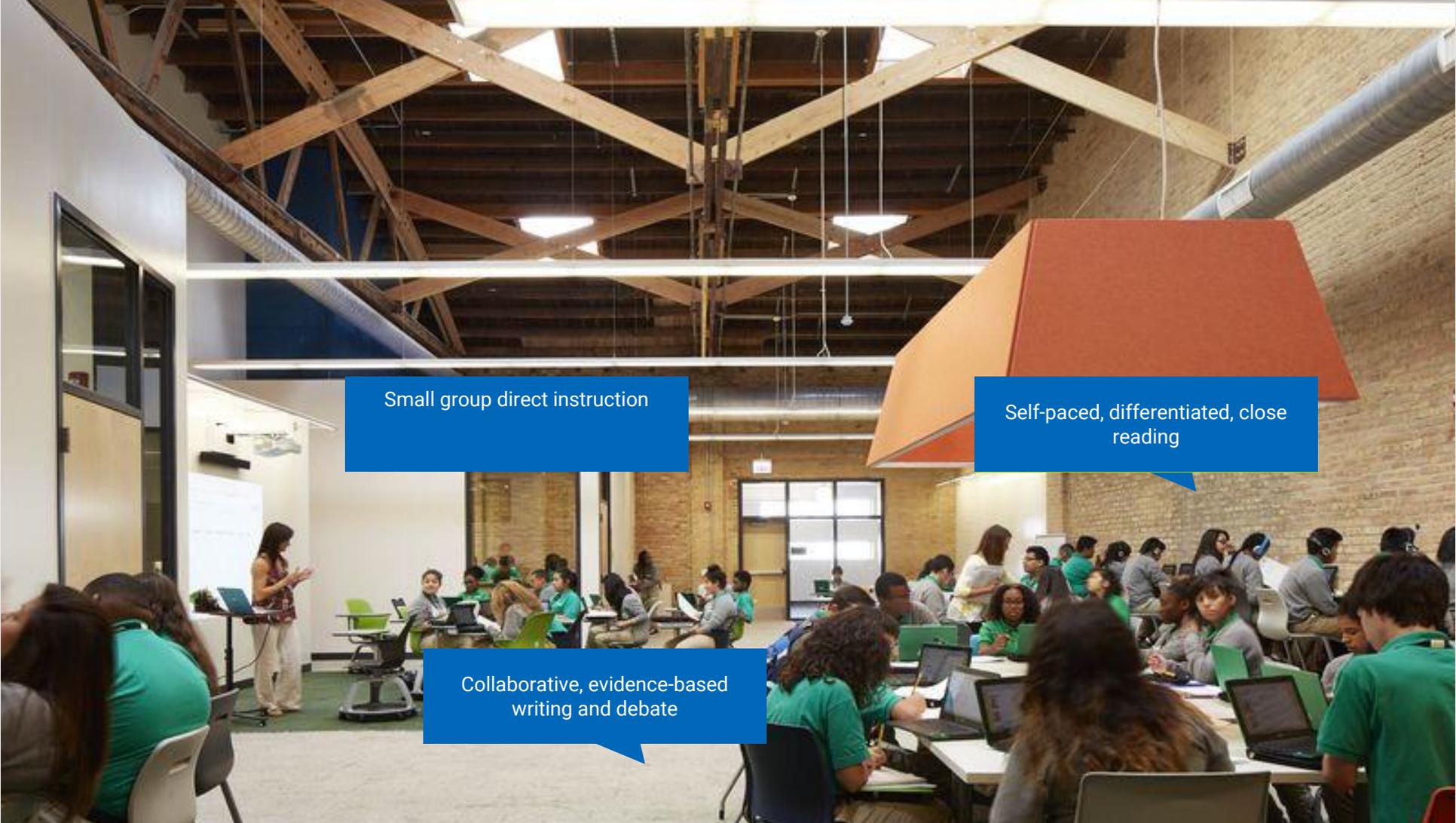
**Collaborative Discussion, Debate,
and Drafting**



Self-Paced Learning
*Review, reading,
drafting, revision*



**Small-Group
Socratic Dialogue**



Small group direct instruction

Self-paced, differentiated, close reading

Collaborative, evidence-based writing and debate

Great Instruction Every Day



Great Instruction **Every Day**



Great Instruction Every Day

- [GIED Homepage](#)
- [GIED 1: 3 Ways to Boost Spring Scores](#)
- [GIED 2: Suggested Test Prep Schedules and Lessons](#)
- [GIED 3: Classroom Layouts to Support Test Prep Strategies](#)
- [GIED 4: Timed Practice Strategies](#)
- [GIED 5: Pacing Practice](#)
- [GIED 6: Annotating](#)
- [GIED 7: Prediction Practice](#)

Welcome to ThinkCERCA

We believe that the best test prep is great instruction every day. Reading critically, collaborating with others, solving problems, and writing effectively are the keys to success on new assessments and empowerment in our lives. Providing guided practice in these skills is the best way to help students reach their potential.

[DOWNLOAD OUR JUMP START GUIDE](#)

Great Instruction Every Day

5-Minute GIEDs to Integrated Test Prep

In these pages, teachers will find resources that will help them provide great instruction every day. In addition to great instructional practices for every day use, we also developed resources that will help students learn how to use the standardized test preparation strategies found in

Thank You



Spark Courageous Thinking in Every Subject

Personalized Literacy Platform for Grades 4-12