



National Center and State Collaborative

# Tips for Using the NCSC Wiki to Support Your Child's Education: Curriculum Resource Guides

The NCSC Curriculum and Instructional Resources are publicly available for free on the NCSC wiki at <https://wiki.ncscpartners.org>. They were designed to be used together to help educators teach grade-level aligned mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA) content to students with significant cognitive disabilities. The resources are based on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). However, they can also be used in states that are not using the CCSS. Much of the content that is covered on the wiki will also appear in other mathematics and ELA state standards. If you need help navigating the NCSC wiki, you can access a one page navigation tool and a more detailed navigation guide, designed for parents, from the main page of the wiki.

This document is about the NCSC Curriculum Resource (CR) Guides and how they can be used by parents to support your child's education. It is part of a series of documents based on seven of the NCSC curriculum and instructional resources. Using the NCSC curriculum and instructional resources at home and talking about the wiki with your child's teacher(s) are great starting points for increased parent-teacher collaboration.

CR Guides offer examples of how the content is taught in general education lessons, ideas for real life use, examples of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and ways to promote college and career readiness, in addition to other important information and links to resources. CR Guides are available for a variety of topics in mathematics and ELA, and provide a model for resources to be developed on other topics. Most headings listed in the table of contents for each mathematics and ELA CR Guide use the same wording. These CR Guide headings are listed in the paragraphs below with examples of some of the content you would find in the Fractions and Decimals CR Guide.

## The Essential Knowledge in this Content Area

This section of each CR Guide describes the key concepts and skills in the content area and how they are taught in general education settings. Parents need this information to get the context for their child's school work and homework.

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## **Common Misunderstandings in this Content Area**

This section of each CR Guide can help you explain information to your child in a way that avoids some common misunderstandings. For example, one of the common misunderstandings that students face when learning fractions is that when students see  $\frac{1}{6}$  and  $\frac{1}{5}$ , they may assume that  $\frac{1}{6}$  is the larger fraction because 6 is greater than 5.

## **Prior Skills/Knowledge Needed**

This section describes the prior knowledge and skills needed for the content area. This information can help parents determine which skills or knowledge their child may be missing. Any missing prior skills or knowledge (e.g. sequencing numbers) can be taught at the same time as the grade-level aligned instruction (e.g. fractions).

## **Activities from General Education Resources**

The activities from this section of each CR Guide provide ideas that you can use to reinforce learning at home. For example, have your child make a paper quilt by gluing 16 squares of three different colors onto a piece of paper, and ask him/her to describe the quilt in fractions ("Use a fraction to tell me how much of the quilt is purple").

## **Links across Content Areas**

This section of each CR Guide contains examples of how students can use the content in other subjects. This information can make lessons more meaningful for students. For example, a link between the study of fractions and science occurs when the student uses measurement (e.g.  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup) in a science experiment. Using fractions learned in mathematics for measurement in science class teaches the same skill used for cooking. This is an example of a functional skill being taught in the context of academics.

## **What Connectors to the Common Core Standards are Addressed?**

This section lists some of the skills covered in the topic by grade level. Core Content Connectors (CCCs) express the core content, knowledge, and skills needed at each grade to promote success at the next, and help identify priorities to guide instruction and assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. CCCs are the starting point for instruction toward the standards and do not limit what a student can or should learn. For a comprehensive list of all the CCCs for content areas and grade levels, see the resource on the wiki called "Core Content Connectors."

## **Performance Examples**

This section in each CR Guide provides examples of tasks that could be used to determine whether the student understands a number of essential concepts ("essential understandings").

## **Additional Activities that Can Promote Use of this Concept in the Real World**

This section of each CR Guide helps parents talk to their child about the ways in which the concepts being taught will help them in their daily lives. This connection helps students become more engaged in learning. An example for fractions is counting money (e.g., four quarters or  $\frac{4}{4}$  equal one whole dollar).

## Promoting College and Career Readiness

Each CR Guide contains a section that explains how to work on college and career ready skills during lessons on that topic. Students are more engaged in the academics when they see how it relates to their lives and goals. Most of the college and career ready skills needed by any student are related to college, career, and community readiness for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The key skills focused on by NCSC are: communicative competence; fluency in reading, writing, and mathematics (the ability to do the tasks accurately and at an appropriate speed); age-appropriate social skills; independent work behaviors; and skills for getting help when it is needed.

## How Do I Make Instruction Accessible to All Students I Teach?

In this section of each CR Guide, there are examples of basic skills that can be taught in the context of grade-level aligned lessons if the student has not mastered them yet. For example, basic numeracy skills can be worked on as part of a lesson relating to fractions and decimals.

## Incorporate Universal Design for Learning (UDL) [www.udlcenter.org](http://www.udlcenter.org)

In this section of each CR Guide, there is a UDL table that provides possible adaptations and modifications to address a variety of student needs. In the writing CR Guide this information is presented in the UDL table, as well as in a section that describes how to provide additional differentiated instruction when teaching written expression. The tables have sections for the three UDL principles: multiple ways of presenting information (“Representation”), multiple ways to gain and demonstrate knowledge (“Expression”), and multiple ways to get your child motivated to learn (“Engagement”). In addition to the tables in each CR Guide, there are UDL tables for other topics in the Content Modules (discussed in another paper in this series). This is part of the UDL table on fractions/decimals.

	<b>Visual Impairment or Deaf/Blind</b>	<b>Physical impairment: Little/no hand use</b>	<b>Lacks basic numeracy concepts</b>	<b>Motivational/attention issues</b>
<b>Representation</b>	Use a talking calculator when solving equations or converting fractions to decimals and vice versa; use objects to represent fractions and decimals (e.g., Cuisenaire rods®); use raised lines to represent portions of the whole object. Create fraction models using cardboard	Count the parts of fractions or decimals using a step by step process which progresses through numbers; student scans an array of possible options and uses a switch to select the number to identify the numerator; use computer representation of fractions that can be	Use fraction and decimal manipulatives that can be separated and placed on a number line. Use real world objects that have been partitioned to represent fractions (e.g., graham cracker, candy bar). Students can use one to one correspondence to match equal number of parts on	Find fractions of motivating objects (e.g., pizza, coloring markers in a box, pieces of a Lego set). Incorporate technology including computer representations, videos, animations, and talking calculators. Use token economy