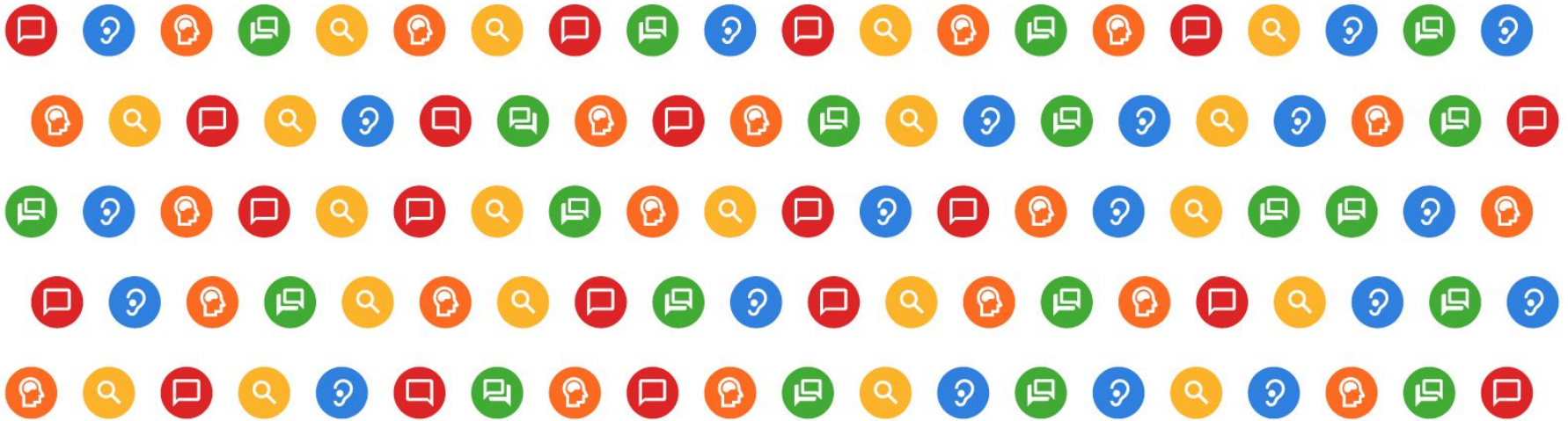
ThinkCERCA™

Tackling Spring Assessments Through Great Instruction Every Day



Agenda

- Great Instruction Every Day
- Four Effective Strategies
- ThinkCERCA Overview

ThinkCERCA Panel

Laura Guska
Senior Success Manager

- Former elementary school teacher

Danielle Perlstein
Director of Partnerships

- Former high school English teacher

Dr. Kavita Venkatesh
Director of Professional Learning and School Design

- Former district leader in Boston Public Schools


The Best Test Preparation Is
Great Instruction Every Day


Close Reading
Effective Writing
Collaboration
+ Communication
Critical Thinking

What We Do

We teach critical thinking through argumentative writing across subjects in grades 4-12.

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.

The World is Changing: We Need Thinkers

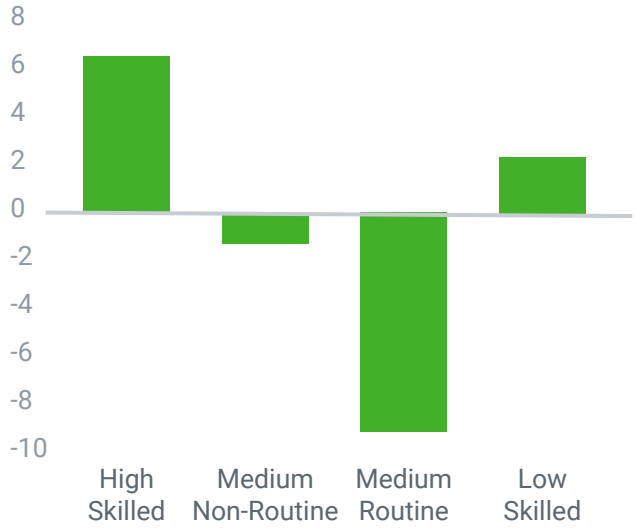
21st Century Jobs Require:

- Critical Reading
- Writing
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Curiosity

OECD

Job Polarization in the United States

Percentage-point change in employment shares by occupation category, 2002-2014



- OECD Policy Brief on the Future of Work: Automation and Independent Work in a Digital Economy, May 2016

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

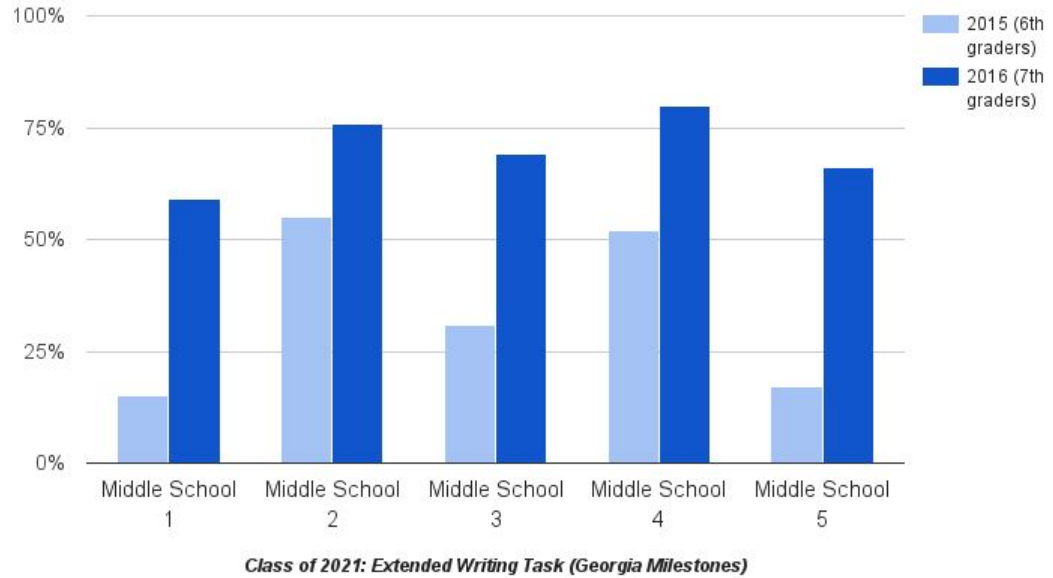
Argumentation and Writing Drive Growth

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

English Class Practice	Rise in English Subtest Score	Applied Using ThinkCERCA
Rewrote a paper or essay in response to comments	0.19	✓
Discussed how culture, time, or place affects an author's writing	0.27	✓
Explained how writers use tools like symbolism	0.35	✓
Improved a piece of **writing** through **collaboration** with a class or with partners	**0.38**	✓
Debated the meaning of reading	0.22	✓
Across all classes, the students **wrote** papers defending their point of view of ideas 5 or more times (compared to less than 5)	**0.39**	✓
Discussed how culture, time, or place affects an author's writing	0.19	✓
Math Class Practice	**Rise in Math Subtest Score**	**Applied Using ThinkCERCA**
Discussed possible solutions to problems with other students	0.29	✓
Used a graphing calculator to complete an assignment	0.31	
Science Class Practice	**Rise in Science Subtest Score**	**Applied Using ThinkCERCA**
Used laboratory equipment or specimens	0.16	
Wrote lab reports	0.12	✓
Generated their own hypothesis/**claim**	0.18	✓
Used evidence/data to support an argument or hypothesis	0.21	✓
Found information from graphs and tables	0.19	✓

What kind of growth can schools expect?

Growth on the Milestones



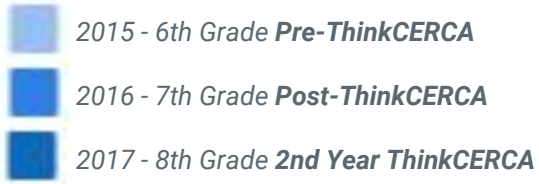
Class of 2021: Extended Writing Task (Georgia Milestones)

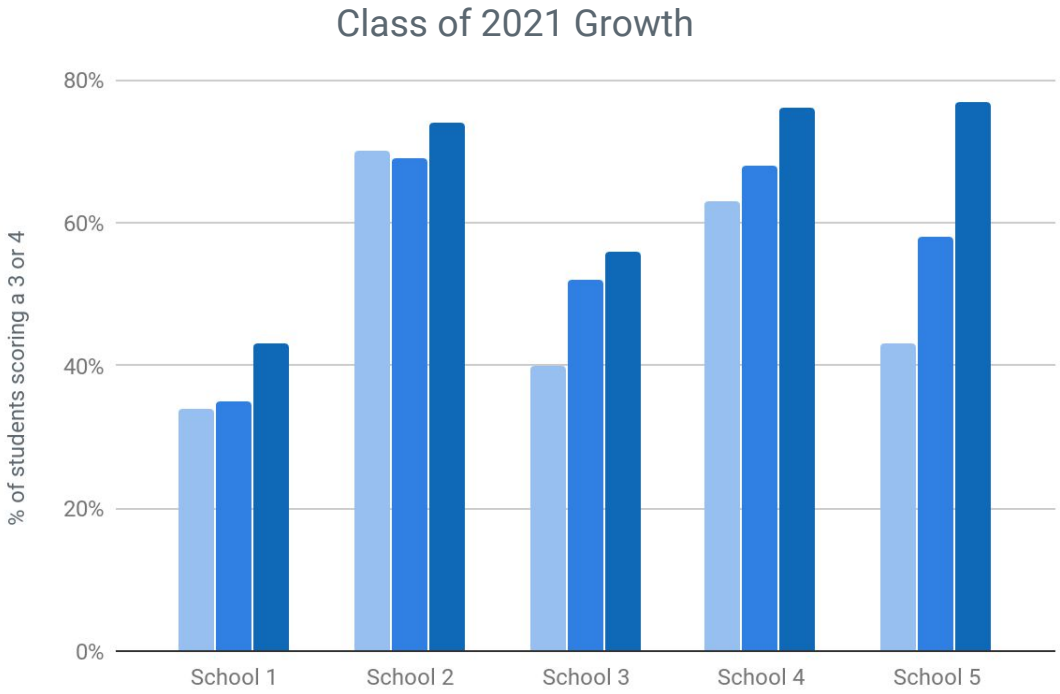
Outcomes

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.

Georgia Milestones: ELA Assessment

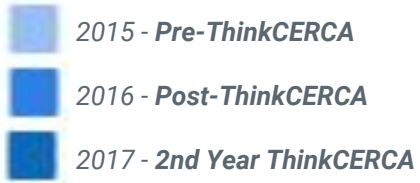
Over the last three years, 15% of students in the Class of 2021 have grown from scoring a 1 or 2 to scoring a 3 or 4.

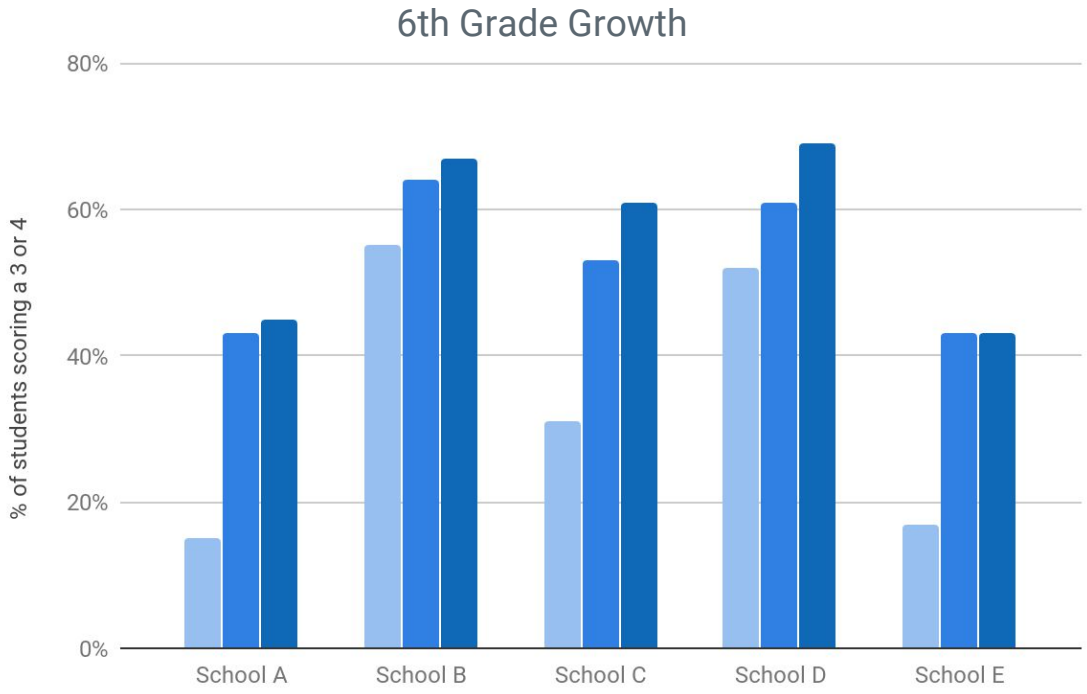




Georgia Milestones: Extended Writing Task

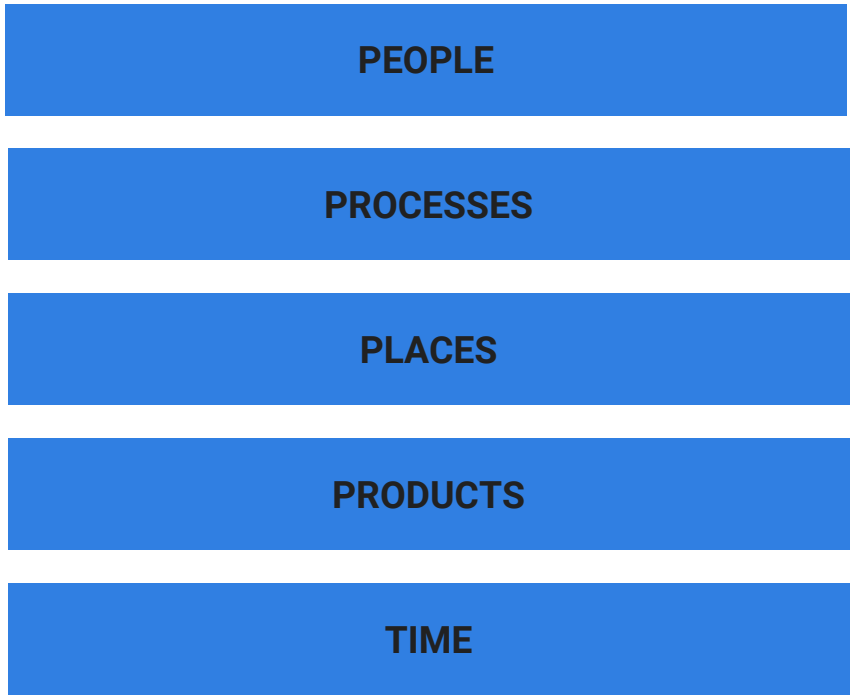
Over the last three years, 24% of sixth graders have grown from scoring a 1 or 2 to scoring a 3 or 4.





Four Strategies to Tackle Spring Assessments

Planning: Student-Centered Instruction



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?

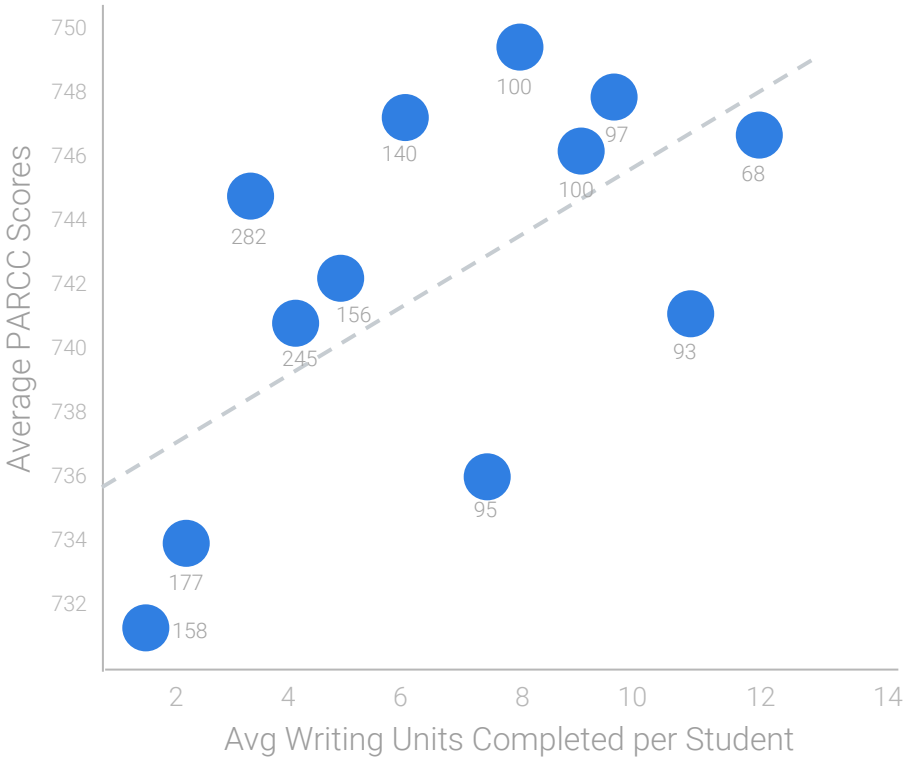
PEOPLE	As a team, have you determined the underlying skills and concepts and the smaller chunks?
PROCESSES	Have you designed the appropriate active learning strategy to match the learning task?
PLACES	Have you created spaces for active learning, self-pacing, additional help?
PRODUCTS	Do you have products 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?

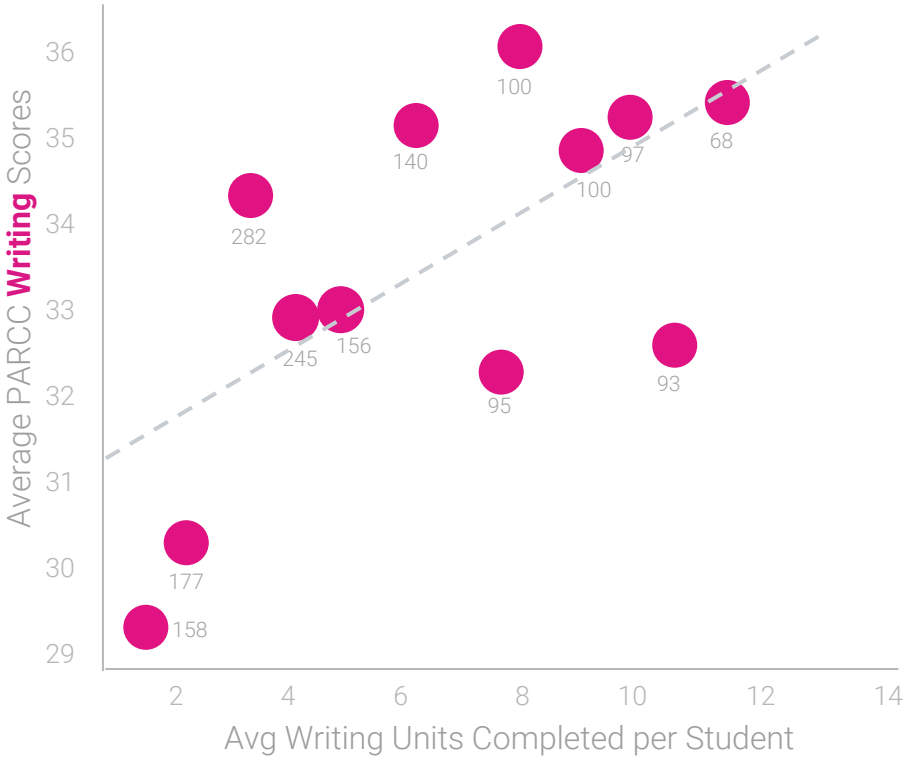
PEOPLE	As a team, how are you determining what students should know and be able to do and helping each other to create it?
PROCESSES	As a team, have you determined a good way to help students capture data and established a good routine for using it?
PLACES	As a team, are you celebrating success?
PRODUCTS	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?

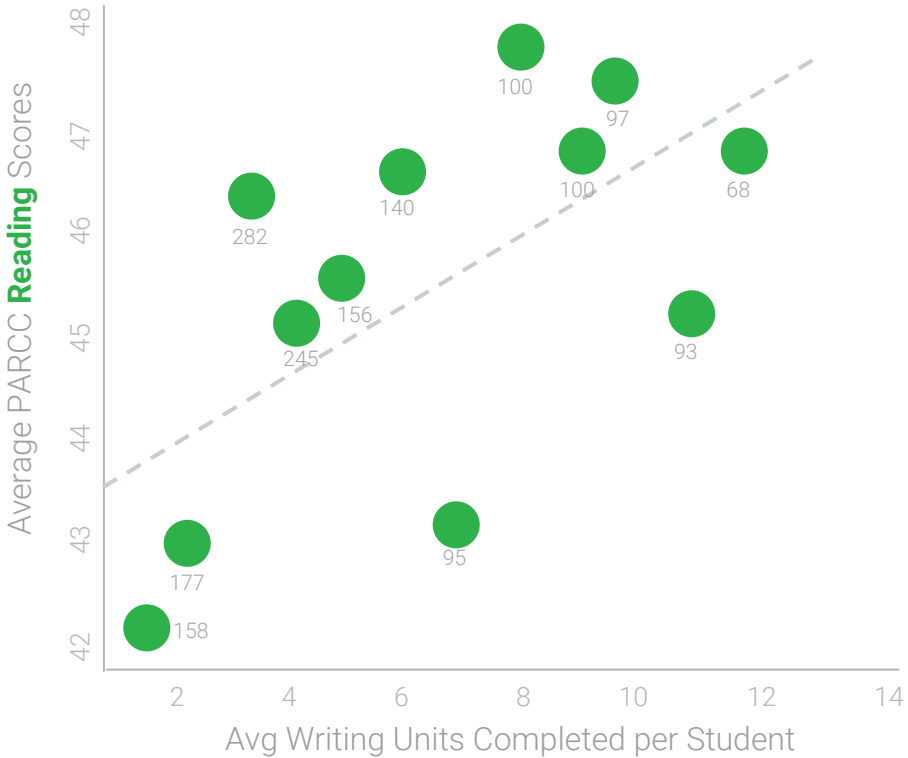
Applied Lessons + PARCC Scaled Reading Scores: District



- District Leaders drew direct correlation between ThinkCERCA Writing Units used with student growth.
- Students who completed more Writing Units showed higher PARCC growth.

Applied Lessons + PARCC Scaled Reading Scores: District





Strategies

- Error Analysis
- Prediction
- Annotation
- Classroom Layout

Why Annotate the Text

Annotation helps students locate information quickly and determine key elements.

Why Annotate the Text

- 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.

"Annotating helps readers reach a deeper level of engagement and promotes active reading."

(Porter-O'Donnell 2004)

Strategies for Scaffolding Annotation

Encourage students to annotate with peers to deepen their understanding as well as perspectives on a text. For example, **consider a gradual release of annotation**:

"I Do It"

Project a reading and model the annotation strategy for students. Provide a variety of types of annotation (questions, comments, reactions) and acknowledge the importance and use of each of them.

"We Do It"

Have students participate in annotation in a small group or whole class. Share out annotations and discuss the type of annotation that was done.

"You Do It Together"

Have students annotate in pairs. Encourage students to take a different goal in their annotation so they can share their learning with their partner.

"You Do It Alone"

Have students annotate individually. Make sure to give them feedback promptly.

Why Predict Answers

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

Why Predict Answers

- 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.

Strategies for Scaffolding Prediction

If students are unsure of an answer, suggest that they **eliminate answers** before they make a prediction.
Another strategy is to **gradually release the strategy of prediction**:

"I Do It"

Project a reading and model, out loud, how you might predict the answer. Provide students with a variety of responses and questioning as you predict.

"We Do It"

Have students predict the answer to a multiple choice question in a small group or whole class. Discuss their thought process as a whole group.

"You Do It Together"

Have students predict in pairs. Encourage students to take a write down the reason they selected an answer.

"You Do It Alone"

Have students predict individually. Make sure to give them feedback promptly.

Why Analyze Errors

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

Why Analyze Errors

- 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.

Reasons Why Students Make Errors

1. Students may make an error because they **do not remember** learning the information.
2. Students may make an error because they **did not answer the actual question** being asked.
3. Students may may an error if they **answer a question partially**.
4. Students may make an error if they **misread the question**.
5. Students may make an error because they **calculated incorrectly**.
6. Students may make an error when their **answer is disconnected from the question** being asked.

Strategies for Scaffolding Error Analysis

Encourage students to do an error analysis with a peer. Working with a classmate can provide students with a new perspective.

Come up with codes for the most common errors in your class and have students mark their returned assessments with the code. Students may notice a pattern in their own responses that they can apply as they continue with the assessments.

Provide students with a graphic organizer to plan out their thinking for incorrect and correct answers.

Encourage students to eliminate answers first. If they can eliminate answers they are confident are incorrect, they have more opportunities to sidestep errors.

Classroom Layout

Restructuring 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.

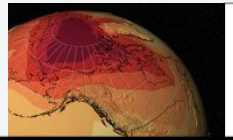
Classroom layout options allow students to leverage the most valuable research in their classroom: the other human beings!

ThinkCERCA™ | Lesson Library | Custom Lessons | Classes | Insight | Resources | Support

How should we farm in a world with a changing climate?

Diggin' Dirt — Grade 7

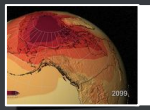
Earth's Soil is Getting Too Salty for Crops to Grow — Grade 8



Testing Future Conditions for the Food Chain — Grade 9

Earth's Soil is Getting Too Salty for Crops to Grow

Diggin' Dirt



Testing Future Conditions for the Food Chain

Thank You

ThinkCERCA™

Spark Courageous Thinking in Every Subject

Personalized Literacy Platform for Grades 4-12