

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

The Common Core State Standards are keyed to the math-science-language arts-social studies “core” curriculum adopted in 1893. Here are some of the problems with that curriculum and the way it’s been implemented, problems which should have been addressed before the Standards were put in place.

The traditional curriculum:

1. Has no agreed-upon overarching aim
2. Doesn't stimulate creativity, initiative, imagination, curiosity and motivation
3. Dumps information on learners at an intellectually unmanageable rate
4. Shortchanges the educational value of real-world, “hands on” experience
5. Focuses primarily on lower-level thought processes—recall and simple application
6. Has no mechanisms forcing it to adapt to change
7. Neglects moral, ethical and other values issues
8. Doesn't capitalize on the connections among school subjects
9. Fails to exploit the richness of individual differences
10. Supports simplistic, machine-scored testing that can't evaluate high-level divergent thinking
11. Is at odds with the seamless way the brain perceives reality
12. Ignores important new fields of study
13. Is plagued by cultural, social class and ideological biases
14. Isn't seen by learners as immediately useful and relevant
15. Casts learners in passive roles
16. Emphasizes reading to the neglect of the myriad other ways humans learn
17. Perpetuates the fragmented-curriculum problem
18. Is implemented in ways that ignore research on retention in grade, class size, length of school day, homework, need for a sense of autonomy, and other important issues.

"Standardization is the parent of stagnation." Jane Jacobs, *Dark Age Ahead*, p. 119

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