

# The EdGate Observer

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August 2014

[correlation.edgate.com](http://correlation.edgate.com)

## Greetings everyone,

In this month's newsletter, we focus on the most recent education news pertaining to Learning to Read and the Well-known 4th Grade Shift (Hot Topic), Common Core's Polling Problem (Common Core Update), HECAT (Client Solution), Freebies! (EdGate Services) and following up with new additions to the EdGate Standards Repository (Standards Update).

As always, EdGate is your source for staying current with new developments in education and the impact of educational standards.

Regards,

**Sandra Schugren,**  
EdGate General Manager

## Client Solution

### HECAT

For those of our clients who have developed health curriculum you may be interested in the upcoming inclusion of the new HECAT (Health Education Curriculum Analysis Tool ) health topic modules to our repository. [The HECAT modules](#) have been designed in part by the CDC to help educators, districts and schools assess health curriculum. It is also intended for use by curriculum developers to create and evaluate their material to ensure they are meeting the needs of students. The HECAT modules slated for inclusion into our repository consist of the following:



- Alcohol and Other Drugs
- Healthy Eating
- Mental and Emotional Health
- Personal Health and Wellness
- Physical Activity
- Safety
- Sexual Health
- Tobacco
- Violence Prevention

If you are interested in seeing how your health content correlates to the HECAT modules please [contact your sales or project manager](#) for a quote!

**Jennifer Larson**  
Project Manager



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## Top Stories

### [Khan Academy Believes You Can Learn Anything](#)

Khan Academy launched its #youcanlearnanything campaign, designed to encourage lifelong learning and acknowledge the role of struggling in skill development. As part of the campaign, Khan Academy students can now track progress across different subjects through a dashboard. Users can also find discussion guides and "growth-mindset interventions," including explanations of the theory from founder Salman Khan and inspirational stories from celebrities like John Legend.

### [Next Generation Science Standards: Which States Adopted and When?](#)

So far, a dozen states and the District of Columbia have adopted. Key dimensions of the standards include providing a greater emphasis on depth over breadth of science content and asking students to apply their learning through the practices of scientific

## Hot Topic

### Learning to Read and the Well-known 4th Grade Shift

How long does it take for a student's brain to learn to read before they switch to an automatic reading that allows them to read to learn? Behavioral and educational data demonstrates a fourth grade shift in reading development and has affected reading curriculum guidelines over the years. Recent neurological research by Donna Coch is challenging this reading-shift theory with evidence that the answer is not that clear cut and educators should be aware that the teaching of basic reading skills should not end in third grade.



Coch conducted two studies, published in the [Journal for Developmental Science](#), on 96 subjects in 3rd, 4th and 5th grade, as well as college students. A visual and written test were given to students with a variety of a real English words (such as "bed"), pseudo-words (such as "bem"), strings of letters (such as "mbe"), and strings of meaningless symbols (such as "@!#&\*"). Using electrode caps, during the visual test, Coch could quantify exactly how their brains reacted to each set of stimulus down to the millisecond. Up through 5th grade, students of the study proved to be aligned with the college students in how the brain determines whether a group of letters constitutes a word. The data with symbols showed that students as late as 5th grade needed to allow their conscious mind time to decode or interpret the symbols before deciding it was or was not a word. This study is suggesting that automatic decoding of letters can begin earlier than 4th grade while 5th graders are still processing words and symbols differently than adults.

So, how long does it take for a student to learn to read? There is not a concrete shift that can be designated by grade or age. Students are developing decoding and autonomic skills as early as third grade. However, the statement that a shift occurs for students in fourth grade is not factually supported. There is now evidence that even 5th and possibly 6th graders are still developing their autonomic skills in attempts to reach their "adult-like" comprehension. The data interprets that students need support from educators and educational content through at least 6th grade to fully develop their automatic decoding skills.

### [EdGate Language Arts Team](#)

## Common Core Update

### Common Core's Polling Problem

Professional opinion on the Common Core standards is being engaged in regular, informed debate with support and dissent being readily available. The court of public opinion is murkier and public perception of the Common Core is increasingly clouded by the language used in its discussion by the media reporting on it. [A recent article by NPR](#) looks into two recent polls in order to highlight the confusion when it comes to public polling on the Common Core.



There is little question that the perception of the Common Core has darkened substantially over the past year, with many polls, including the recent PDK/Gallup poll, showing that "60 percent of respondents oppose the Core." The question of "why" remains, with much of the rationale given for their dissent being factually incorrect. As fully half of those polled learned of the Common Core via media, it raises some questions about the accuracy of public-facing punditry on either side.

inquiry and engineering design. Use this handy reference tool to view the timeline to see where things stand.

### [A Swivel Chair: The Most Important Classroom Technology?](#)

Redesigned learning spaces can engage students and faculty members, research says. What if the key to boosting student engagement was as simple as swapping out desks and chairs and rearranging the layout of a classroom? The most important classroom technology nowadays is not a classroom projector, laptop or tablet - it's the swivel chair, according to one environment and behavior researcher.

## Staff Highlight

In this issue of the EdGate Observer, we would like to introduce to you a member of our Social Studies Project Team, **Jennifer Larson**.



Jennifer has been working as the Social Studies Project Manager at EdGate since 2004. Her problem solving skills, desire for excellence and commitment to customer service has made Jennifer an asset to EdGate's remarkable group of dedicated educators. Jennifer has a BA in History with a minor in Political Science and a Social Science Teaching Credential with a Cross-cultural Language and Academic Development certification. Correlating a myriad of material from multimedia projects, to textbooks, to daily news stories, Jennifer gets to combine her love for history and politics with outstanding publisher content.

A similar level of dissent was found within the second poll by Education Next. The primary twist in their polling methodology was a change in the wording used within their poll groups to try and better assess the objectionable points within the Core's perception. They asked a much more detailed question of participants which generated a slightly more favorable result than the PDK/Gallup poll, and then asked a second polling group the same question "[. . .] without using the words 'Common Core.' Support jumped: from 53 percent to 68 percent."

Also recently, [a MSN/WSJ poll conducted by Hart Research Associates](#) suggests that nearly half of American Adults aren't even aware of the Common Core standards.

The only clear result of polling about the public opinion of Common Core is that there remains a substantial amount of public confusion and it is nowhere near reaching an informed consensus.

## EdGate Services

### Freebies!

Admit it, everyone likes a freebee now and then and as an EdGate correlation and content mapping client, you are eligible for participation in EdGate's Curriculum Matrix. The best part, it's FREE!

Curriculum Matrix is a comprehensive, user friendly curriculum management tool designed to help educators find thousands of quality resources aligned to their state standards. The dynamic search engine which includes the option for a federated search, allows teachers to easily search for content based on their specific needs (i.e., grade, subject, and state). Whether your content is fee based or free, the Matrix will seamlessly direct the user to your site for obtaining more information about the resource or make a purchase direct from you.

If we have correlated your content or mapped into our system for hosting and you have not taken advantage of this free marketing service, please contact your Project Manager and he/she will be happy to set you up! To learn more about Curriculum Matrix please visit our website at <http://curriculummatrix.com/> and see how thousands of users are benefiting from this management tool.

For assistance with a new project or to learn more about EdGate services, please contact Tracy Olstad at [tolstad@edgate.com](mailto:tolstad@edgate.com) or Larry Johnson at [ljohnson@edgate.com](mailto:ljohnson@edgate.com). You can also learn more about EdGate products and services by visiting our website at <http://correlation.edgate.com>.



**The "EdGate Advantage is  
YOUR Advantage"**



## Standards Update

Updates to **The EdGate Standards Repository** include:

- Common Core Essential Elements - Mathematics (2014)
- HECAT: Module Alcohol and Other Drug Use Prevention Curriculum - Health and PE (2011)
- HECAT: Module Healthy Eating Curriculum - Health and PE (2011)
- HECAT: Module Mental and Emotional Health Curriculum - Health and PE (2011)
- Common Core Essential Elements - Language Arts (2014)
- HECAT: Module Personal Health and Wellness Curriculum - Health and PE (2011)
- HECAT: Module Physical Activity Curriculum - Health and PE (2011)
- HECAT: Module Safety Curriculum - Health and PE (2011)
- HECAT: Module Sexual Health Curriculum - Health and PE (2011)
- HECAT: Module Tobacco Use Prevention Curriculum - Health and PE (2011)
- HECAT: Module Violence Prevention Curriculum - Health and PE (2011)
- Loudoun County Public Schools Curriculum - Social Studies (2014)
- Mississippi - Health and PE (2013)
- New South Wales - Science (2014)

- New South Wales - Social Studies (2014)
- Pennsylvania - Language Arts (2014)
- Pennsylvania - Mathematics (2014)
- Pennsylvania - Science (2014 Literacy)
- Pennsylvania - Social Studies (2014 Literacy)
- Texas Assessment Standards (STAAR Alternate) - Language Arts (2011)
- Texas Assessment Standards (STAAR Alternate) - Mathematics (2011)
- Texas Assessment Standards (STAAR Alternate) - Social Studies (2011)
- Wisconsin - Early Childhood Education (2014)

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## Kristie McCarley

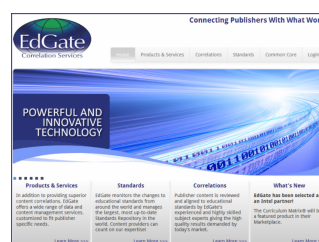
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## About Us

EdGate Correlation Services works with over 200 content providers to increase the value of their products in a rapidly expanding digital world. EdGate uses its patented technology and highly skilled staff to assure client success. Employing its nearly two decades of innovation experience, EdGate has proven learning platforms, robust metadata tools and comprehensive correlation services to serve every clients unique needs.

EdGate currently focuses on correlation consulting, content and metadata development and management, media segmentation and licensing of international educational standards. EdGate Correlation Services LLC is a division of EDmin, Inc., a learning management and instructional technology solutions company based in San Diego, California.



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