Three Reasons for Using Inductive Learning to Address the Common Core

# Inference

Marzano (2010) identifies inference as a foundational process that underlies higher-order thinking and 21st century skills. Perhaps this is the reason why the Common Core's very first Reading Anchor Standard (R.CCR.1) requires students to "make logical inferences." The Inductive Learning strategy shines a direct light on inference making by emphasizing the sub-processes that go into it: examining information closely, looking for hidden relationships, generating tentative hypotheses, and drawing conclusions that are not explicitly stated.

# Evidence

Few themes get more attention in the Common Core than evidence. The English Language Arts standards' description of college and career readiness as well as Standard for Mathematical Practice 3, Reading Anchor Standard 1, Writing Anchor Standards 1 and 9, and numerous additional grade-specific standards all require students to support their thinking with high-quality evidence. In an Inductive Learning lesson, the search for evidence fuels the learning process, as students must actively seek out information to support their hypotheses. They must also collect and consider evidence that runs counter to their hypotheses, a practice that leads to stronger, more refined hypotheses.

# Academic Vocabulary

Because most Inductive Learning lessons are built around words and terms, the strategy is a great way to introduce "academic and domain-specific words and phrases" (L.CCR.6) to students. But Inductive Learning does more than simply introduce new vocabulary terms: it forces students to search for key attributes and relationships among the words, a skill emphasized in Language Anchor Standard 5. Students use the relationships they discover to help them organize all of the terms into a schema that suggests the larger structure of the content.