

# **Do You Know What They're Teaching In Your Child's School?**

*"Understanding the Common Core," by Marybeth Hicks:*

Perhaps you heard some encouraging news about something called the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI), a project of the National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). (American education is a veritable smorgasbord of initialisms. Sorry.)

Launched in 2009 and completed in 2010, the CCSSI is meant to nationalize the academic expectations for America's high school graduates in every state that adopts them.

According to commoncorestandards.org, the goal of CCSSI is lofty, indeed:

“The Common Core State Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers. With American students fully prepared for the future, our communities will be best positioned to compete successfully in the global economy.”

The name of the game is “college and career ready”—a phrase that Barack Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan repeat so often they must now utter it in their sleep. The problem, of course, is that like most progressive platitudes, this doesn’t really mean anything, even though CCSSI has been “validated” by a committee of education experts and adopted by more than half of the country—45 states and D.C., to be exact. (If you guessed that Texas and Alaska are among the five that have not, give yourself a gold star.) ...

If you have ever wondered why your high schooler was assigned to read Barbara Ehrenreich's anti-capitalist screed "Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America" for a high school economics class; or why your middle schooler's math book includes story problems about sweatshops and unfair labor practices, or why your first grader was shown the anti-capitalist video "The Story of Stuff" to learn about the evils of American consumerism, wonder no more.

Our children's educational curriculum has been hijacked by the Left. And those "top-down," unsubstantial Common Core standards won't stop them.

So what does this curriculum look like? Glad you asked!

Literally millions of middle school and high school students are taught the late Howard Zinn's socialist version of American history, "A People's History of the United States." Though the book came out in 1980, it continues to gain credibility and popularity—for example, if you peruse course syllabi online, you'll see it's used in many AP U.S. History classes today, probably in part because it's listed as a resource for teachers to consider at College Board's (hey, sound familiar?!) AP Central website. And thanks to Hollywood leftists such as Matt Damon, who spearheaded a 2009 video version of the book for PBS, "A People's History" has developed an even wider popular audience.

Zinn encouraged teachers to "reexamine the premises" on which they taught social studies and history—and to give them up and embrace the realization that American history is best explained by class and race conflict. It will not come as a surprise that "Rethinking Columbus" is based on Zinn's retelling of the European "invasion" of North America from the perspective of the Arawak Indians, as he did in "A People's History:"

"These Arawaks of the Bahama Islands were much like Indians on the mainland, who were remarkable (European observers were to say again and again) for their hospitality, their belief in sharing. These traits did not stand out in the Europe of the Renaissance, dominated as it was by the religion of popes, the government of kings, the frenzy for money that marked Western civilization and its first messenger to the Americas, Christopher Columbus."

Now, I know what you're thinking: "Social justice revisionist history" is bad, but not new. But what if I were to tell you about "social justice math?" Nope. It's not a joke.

