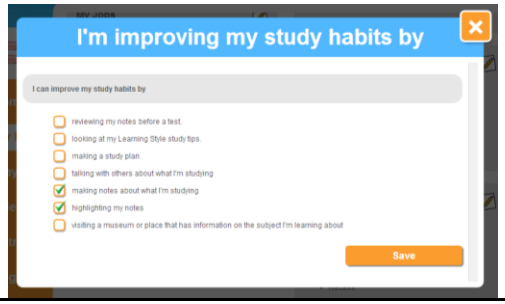
SPARK! AND THE COMMON CORE STANDARDS

Spark! is informed primarily by National Career Development Guidelines (NCDG) and the American School Councillor (ASCA) National Standards, however Common Core standards alignments were also closely considered. The competencies between these standards are complementary. Differences between Common Core and Career guidance standards are as follows:

- **Career development standards intentionally overlap grade levels**, reflecting the variability of student development. The curriculum for the Common Core is linear, one leading to the next, according to a grade level timetable.
- **Career development standards are flexible.** ASCA and NCDG competencies are not currently mandatory. They offer a foundation for creating a program that fits your school and/or student group.
- **Career development standards are inclusive of all students.** Not all students are likely to have the ability or background to achieve the Common Core standards at the same level, such as those students who are English Language Learners.
- **Career development standards are broader in scope than Common Core.** They aim for more than 'success in college and careers'. They include success in learning and transitions over the student's life-span including success in life outside of school, college, and work.
- **Career development standards include psychological and developmental competencies.** The ASCA competencies include terms not found in the Common Core – such as 'attitudes', 'development', 'time and task management', 'feelings'; 'balance between work and leisure', 'self-concept'; 'self-knowledge'; 'interpersonal skills'; 'self-knowledge applications'; and 'motivation'.
- **Career development standards and Common Core Standards are mutually supportive.** The competencies of the two standards complement each other. To be successful in college and career, individuals benefit from both.

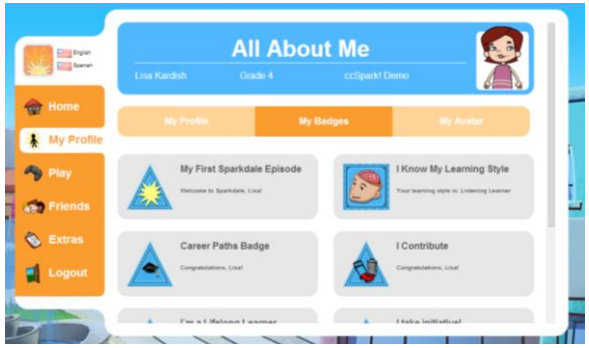
The following table highlights ccSpark! content that correlates to both ASCA/NCDG and Common Core standards. Additionally, commoncorestandards.org lists resources including recommendations for how to evaluate English Language Arts materials for grades K-5, including Text Selection Criteria, Key Criteria for Questions and Tasks, Key Criteria for Writing to Sources and Research which will be addressed in Part 3 of this document.

ASCA / NCDG Standards (Goals)	Common Core (Skills/Competencies)	ccSpark! CAREER LEARNING BEGINS
Academic		
Standard A: Students will acquire the attitudes, knowledge and skills that contribute to effective learning in school and across the life span.	Students will explore the information and arguments from various points of view to think critically and creatively and to solve problems.	Students are presented with a series of reflection activities that raise awareness about skills for success and require academic self-evaluation and make connections between education and training and the world of work. Areas include: how am I doing, what can I do if I need help, what am I good at, what do I like about school, how can I improve, what would I like to try and others. Spark! has been checked for age appropriate language and provides text appropriate for grades 3, 4 and 5 students in each of those grade units. Episodes are cross curricular with history, social studies, math and science. Grades 3, 4 and 5 Educator Guides provide more details for each of the cross curricular content through each of the 21 units. Spark! provides opportunities for students to read along (K-5) to support accuracy and fluency learning. Age appropriate text by grade (K-5).

ASCA / NCDG Standards (Goals)	Common Core (Skills/Competencies)	ccSpark! CAREER LEARNING BEGINS
Academic (Cont'd)		
Standard A: Students will acquire the attitudes, knowledge and skills that contribute to effective learning in school and across the life span. (Cont'd)	Students will explore the information and arguments from various points of view to think critically and creatively and to solve problems.	The grades 3-5 Reflection Activity questions and quiz content allows for reading at grade level with purpose and intent as the student is required to answer comprehension, self-reflection questions and assessments. There are also opportunities to share by reading aloud with class mates for expression on successive readings. Students have the ability to go back are reread sections of Reflection Activities to ensure they have understood the question or to ask for help. 
Standard B: Students will complete school with the academic preparation essential to choose from a wide range of substantial post-secondary options, including college.	Students will learn how to apply the academic, critical, practical, technical, and employability skills needed for success in higher education and the work place and to manage their lives.	

ASCA / NCDG Standards (Goals)	Common Core (Skills/Competencies)	ccSpark! CAREER LEARNING BEGINS
Academic (Cont'd)		
Standard C: Students will understand the relationship of academics to the world of work and to life at home and in the community.	Students will actively explore the world of ideas. Students will demonstrate the effort and persistence needed to be successful in school, work and life.	Students are presented with a series of reflection activities that raise awareness about skills for success and require academic self-evaluation and make connections between education and training and the world of work. Areas include: how am I doing, what can I do if I need help, what am I good at, what do I like about school, how can I improve, what would I like to try and others.
Career		
Standard A: Students will acquire the skills to investigate the world of work in relation to knowledge of self and to make informed career decisions.	Students will embrace career as a part of their future; acquire employable skills; demonstrate positive attitudes toward work; demonstrate attitudes and habits that are valued in the workplace; explore a range of careers; explore post-secondary educational opportunities; manage data and use problem-solving and analytical skills to make reasoned decision.	The concept of jobs and contributing to your community is introduced in episode text and students follow up by reading and identifying what jobs they do at home and in their community (ie putting litter in trashcans, feeding a pet etc.).

ASCA / NCDG Standards (Goals)	Common Core (Skills/Competencies)	ccSpark! CAREER LEARNING BEGINS
Career (Cont'd)		
Standard B: Students will employ strategies to achieve future career success and satisfaction.	Students will embrace career as a part of their future; acquire employable skills; demonstrate positive attitudes toward work; demonstrate attitudes and habits that are valued in the workplace; explore a range of careers; explore post-secondary educational opportunities; manage data and use problem-solving and analytical skills to make reasoned decision.	Content in Spark!, particularly the database of Career Town occupations and careers provides an age appropriate, easily accessible careers resource as resource source to complement in class career development research and writing projects as defined by the educator. Students can use Spark! as an internet resource, to inform production and writing publishing.
Standard C: Students will understand the relationship between personal qualities, education and training and the world of work.	Students will embrace career as a part of their future; acquire employable skills; demonstrate positive attitudes toward work; demonstrate attitudes and habits that are valued in the workplace; explore a range of careers; explore post-secondary educational opportunities; manage data and use problem-solving and analytical skills to make reasoned decision.	Reflection Activity questions at the beginning of each unit ask the student for details about characters in the unit's story including how their actions, feelings, motivations contribute to the sequence of events in Sparkdale. Students then respond to prose on bullying and assess their own behaviour related to getting along with others.

ASCA / NCDG Standards (Goals)	Common Core (Skills/Competencies)	ccSpark! CAREER LEARNING BEGINS
Personal/Social		
Standard A: Students will acquire the attitudes, knowledge, and interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect self and others.	Students will work and learn independently and collaboratively as part of a team. Students will gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures. Students will demonstrate a sense of ethics and take responsibilities for their actions. Students are active, constructive embers of the larger community. Students will develop and maintain behaviors that promote lifelong health. Students will understand the implications of living in a finite world. Students will understand the role of systems throughout our society. Students will understand the dynamic nature of society and the universality of change.	Students assess a graphic, five-point sliding scale of "likes to try new things" and organizational skills to decide where they are best represented on this scale. Career information including education and training required, interests matching, types of tasks, how jobs are categorized are addressed in several texts and students are asked follow up questions on the same topic, such as "what career path is Dr Anita Cage on?"

ASCA / NCDG Standards (Goals)	Common Core (Skills/Competencies)	ccSpark! CAREER LEARNING BEGINS
Personal/Social (Cont'd)		
Standard A: Students will acquire the attitudes, knowledge, and interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect self and others. (Cont'd)	Students will work and learn independently and collaboratively as part of a team. Students will gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures. Students will demonstrate a sense of ethics and take responsibilities for their actions. Students are active, constructive embers of the larger community. Students will develop and maintain behaviors that promote lifelong health. Students will understand the implications of living in a finite world. Students will understand the role of systems throughout our society. Students will understand the dynamic nature of society and the universality of change.	Content in Spark! particularly the database of Career Town occupations and careers provides an age appropriate, easily accessed careers resource as a departure point and/or resource source to complete in class research projects as defined by the educator. Relevant experiences and evidence from the student's life are captured when completing reflection activities, and stored in their personal profile which they can use to draw conclusions around such as preliminary career matching and contrasting. Refer to the grades 3-5 Educator Guide for more in class discussion and activity suggestions.