

Holyoke Public Schools English Language Arts Curriculum Map

*The First 20 Days: Readers & Writers Workshop
Grade 8*

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Overview of Curriculum Maps

Goals:

1. To ensure that students are exposed to a rigorous curriculum in every school and every grade.
2. To have consistent district wide instruction and assessment.
3. To prepare students for the MCAS test.
4. To explain what is expected to be covered in each ELA unit of study.

Expectations:

The district's expectation is for students to successfully meet the *Massachusetts English Language Arts Standards* and the *Massachusetts English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and Outcomes for English Language Learners*. In order to help facilitate this, teachers are required to follow curriculum maps. The successful implementation of these maps requires the teachers to read the literature outlined in the map and complete the written assignments prior to planning their lessons. Reading the literature and completing the written assignments is an essential part of lesson planning.

Feedback to Students:

Feedback needs to happen daily in the classroom. There are many ways to give feedback. Conferencing, observations, questions asked during the workshop, and written responses to students' work and notebook entries.

ELA Map Components: Elementary

1. Readers Workshop
 - o Opening
 - o Work Period
 - o Closing
2. Skill Block
3. Writers Workshop
 - o Opening
 - o Work Period
 - o Closing

ELA Map Components: Middle School

- Readers/Writers Workshop
- RATA
- Independent Reading
- Opening/Mini-lesson
- Work Period
- Closing

ELA: Evidence of Learning Artifacts

CHARTS & WORD WALLS & TEACHER ASSESSMENT PORTFOLIO & BULLETIN BOARDS	NOTEBOOK ENTRIES	WRITING FOLDER	CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT AND STUDENT PORTFOLIO
<p><u>CHARTS:</u></p> <p>As indicated in the <i>America's Choice</i> Author, Genre, and First Thirty Days Guides</p> <p>Evidence of <i>25 Book Campaign</i></p> <p>Evidence of the School Wide <i>Book of the Month Campaign</i></p> <p><u>WORD WALLS</u></p> <p>As appropriate to the Unit of Study with Visual Support</p> <p><u>TEACHER ASSESSMENT PORTFOLIO</u></p> <p>Status of the Class Conference Notes Small Group Instruction Notes Informal/Formal Assessment Data</p> <p><u>BULLETIN BOARDS</u></p> <p>Standards Based Bulletin Boards with Teacher Commentary (specific to the genre) and Student Reflection</p>	<p><u>Daily Responses</u> to Reading Strategy/Skill Modeled</p> <p><u>On-going</u> Annotated Book Log</p> <p><u>On-going</u> Conference Notes</p> <p><u>On-going</u> Notes for Book Talks</p> <p>Try-outs related to Genre/Author Study</p>	<p>Draft and Revisions of Formal Writing Work Project</p> <p>Draft (notes) of Formal Speaking/Listening/Viewing Work Project (Book Talks)</p>	<p>Establishment of classroom library by genre and/or author</p> <p>Establishment of classroom set-up that reflects a workshop model of instruction</p> <p>Establishment of Readers/Writers Notebook</p> <p>Establishment of guided reading group placement</p> <p>Establishment of guided writing group placement</p> <p>Diagnostic reading & writing assessments with strengths and needs indicated (IRI or DRA and writing sample)</p> <p>Establishment of independent reading book</p>

Assessing Students

The teacher's role in assessing:

- Administer assessments.
- Analyze student data: diagnostic, formative, and summative.
- Clarify student strengths in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
- Develop next steps for student in reading, writing, speaking, and listening based on student's strengths and needs.
- Plan instruction based on students needs and academic standards.
- Scaffold instruction as necessary for student achievement.
- Conduct periodic assessments, analyze data, generate next instructional steps, plan instruction, scaffold instruction, reassess periodically, and resume assessment/teaching cycle.

The students' role in assessing:

- Participate in assessment.
- Explaining their strategy or thinking
- Asking clarifying questions of the teacher
- Being active listeners
- Using language effectively to express themselves
- Practice and apply strategies and skill introduced.

When assessing and analyzing data the teacher may utilize the following:

Reading:	Writing:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ MCAS ○ MAP ○ MAZE ○ DIBELS ○ IRIs ○ DRA ○ Running Records ○ Conference Notes ○ Status of the Class Records ○ Guided Reading Notes ○ Classroom Observations ○ Notebook entries ○ Open Response Questions (ORQs) ○ Etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ MCAS ○ Writing Prompts ○ Open Response Questions (ORQs) ○ Notebook Entries ○ Writing Folder (process writing) ○ Writing Products (end of unit – genre/author study) ○ Conference Notes ○ Guided Writing Notes ○ Classroom Observations ○ Etc.

Overarching Unit Goals & Standards

Unit Goals:

- Readers Workshop: Students will participate in the routines of the workshop utilizing the specific rituals for each routine established by the teacher.
- Writers Workshop: Students will participate in the routines of the workshop utilizing the specific rituals for each routine established by the teacher.
- Students will independently access the classroom environment and actively participate in his/her learning.

Guiding Principals (from the [Massachusetts English Language Arts Curriculum Frameworks](#))

- Guiding Principal 1: An effective ELA curriculum develops thinking and language together through interactive learning.
- Guiding Principal 2: An effective ELA curriculum develops students' oral language and literacy through appropriate challenging learning.
- Guiding Principal 3: An effective ELA curriculum draws on literature from many genres, time periods, and cultures, featuring works that reflect our common literacy heritage.
- Guiding Principal 4: An effective ELA curriculum emphasizes writing as an essential way to develop, clarify, and communicate ideas in persuasive, expository, narrative, and expressive discourse.
- Guiding Principal 5: An effective ELA curriculum provides for literacy in all forms of media.
- Guiding Principal 6: An effective ELA curriculum provides explicit skill instruction in reading and writing.
- Guiding Principal 7: An effective ELA curriculum teaches the strategies necessary for acquiring academic knowledge, achieving common academic standards, and attaining independence in learning.
- Guiding Principal 8: An effective ELA curriculum builds on the language, experience and interest that students bring to school.
- Guiding Principal 9: An effective ELA curriculum develops each student's distinctive writing or speaking voice.
- Guiding Principal 10: While encouraging respect for differences in home background, an effective ELA curriculum nurtures students' sense of their common ground as present or future American citizens in order to prepare them for responsible participation in our schools and in civic life.

Overarching Unit Goals & Standards (con't)

Planning Instruction (from the Massachusetts English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and Outcomes for English Language Learners p. 6)

- Are our current teaching activities and instructional materials well aligned with the learning objectives identified in these [ELL] benchmarks and outcomes?
- What products of students' activities can be used as evidence of students' attainment of targeted Benchmarks and Outcomes?
- How can we evaluate student performance (evidence) so that strengths in students' performances can be supported and weaknesses can be addressed?
- How can our expectations for students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in English be communicated through our instructional materials, and directly to students in the form of feedback on their performances?

New Performance Standards:

- A.1: Problem Solving: Apply problem solving strategies in purposeful ways, both in situations where the problems and desirable solutions are clearly evident and in situations requiring a creative approach to achieve an outcome.
- A.2: Communication Tools and Techniques: Communicate information and ideas in ways that are appropriate to the purpose and audience through spoken, written, and graphic means of expression.
- A.3: Information Tools and Techniques: Use information gathering techniques, analyze and evaluate information and use information technology to assist in collecting, analyzing, organizing, and presenting information.
- A.4: Learning and Self-management Tools and Techniques: Manage and direct one's own learning.
- A.5: Tools and Techniques for Working with Others: Work with others to achieve a shared goal, help other people learn on-the-job, and respond effectively to the needs of a client.

Unit Work Products

WRITING WORK: Establishment of a readers/writers notebook

The student establishes a notebook (writing section) that:

- Has an organizational structure
- Allow for application and practice of skills/strategies
- Records students learning and reflection
- Acts as a resource for students
- Documents students academic progress in skill, strategy, and writing development

READING WORK: Establishment of a readers/writers notebook

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- Documents students academic progress in skill, strategy, and reading development
- Contains a bibliography of students reading

SPEAKING, LISTENING, & VIEWING: Establishment of classroom discourse

The student participates in accountable talk that:

- Reflects his/her learning
- Clarifies meaning
- Communicates and advances own ideas and that of others
- Demonstrates and presents learning by means of oral presentations (formal and informal)
- Demonstrates appropriate conversational role taking behavior
- Participation effectively and appropriately in discussion: 1:1, small group, and whole class

INTRODUCTION OF UNIT

In this unit, students will learn the core procedures associated with the readers and writers workshop. They will practice reading and writing habits that will be continued throughout the year, including the HPS commitment to “reading a minimum of 25 books or book equivalents (approximately 1,000,000 words) per year from a variety of genres.

Students will establish and learn to use the resources generated in the workshop model to take charge of their learning. They will learn to negotiate the classroom environment and become self-directed learners. Students will learn to work in various settings: whole group, small group, pairs, 1:1 with the teacher, and independently.

The workshop model utilizes a gradual release of responsibility protocol. Students will move through various stages of support toward independence; from modeled reading and writing, to interactive/shared reading and writing, to guided reading and writing, and finally to independent reading and writing. This apprenticeship model allows students to gain mastery of skills, strategies, and material and learn how to apply their learning in an effective manner depending on audience and purpose.

TEACHER	STUDENT
I do	You watch
I do	You help
I help	You do
I watch	You do

Learning Literacy in an Apprenticeship Model

Other Resource Materials

- Holyoke Public Schools: *First 20 Days: Reader/Writers Workshop*
- America's Choice *Readers Workshop: Monograph Series- secondary*
Writers Workshop: Monograph Series

Please note: the touchstone text for this unit needs to be chosen by teachers based on the specific purpose/objective of the lesson. Please consult with your literacy coach if you need assistance in determining the touchstone text you will be using for your mini-lessons.

Overview of Unit - The First 20 Days

In grades 6 – 8 the readers & writers workshop will consist of a 90 minute block of time each day, with a 20 minute read aloud/think aloud, 20 minutes of independent reading, a ten minute mini-lesson, a 30 minute work period, and a 10 minute closing.

In grades 6 - 8, for approximately the first month of school, the readers & writers workshop will focus on:

1. establishing the rituals and routines used in the workshop model.
2. assessing students’ literacy strengths and needs.
3. having students become familiar with the learning expectations/goals of the workshop model.

Below is a breakdown of the literacy time block:

Note: Throughout the first 30 days, some lessons will take longer than the recommended 10 minutes as you are establishing rituals and routines

Read Aloud/Think Aloud	Independent Reading	Mini-Lesson	Work Period	Closing
<p>Whole Class</p> <p>15 – 20 Minutes: Teacher models a explicit reading habit/strategy using a text specifically selected for the purpose of the lesson</p> <p>Note: Read alouds/think alouds do not have to come from a novel/trade book, but can come from small passages of text suitable for modeling a specific habit/strategy.</p>	<p>Individual</p> <p>15 – 20 Minutes: Students apply reading habits and strategies previously modeled by the teacher and record reading reflections in their notebooks.</p> <p>Note: While students are engaged in independent reading the teacher conducts assessments, provides 1:1 instruction, or conferences with students on their reading.</p>	<p>Whole Class</p> <p>10 Minutes: Teacher conducts either a writing mini-lesson as set out in the genre study or a reading or writing lesson based on the needs of the class.</p> <p>Note: During this time, the teacher is able to present grade level materials and standards to the class. Depending on the need of students the teacher may need to revisit the lesson with students in small group during the work period.</p>	<p>Individual/Partners/Groups</p> <p>30 – 40 Minutes: Students apply what was taught during the mini-lesson, read and/or write independently, participate in guided reading or writing groups, partner read, peer conference, or work in centers, etc.</p> <p>Note: During this time, the teacher conducts guided reading and/or writing groups, provides 1:1 instruction, assesses students, monitors centers, facilitates book groups, etc.</p>	<p>Whole Class</p> <p>5 – 10 Minutes: Students reflect out on the days learning, conduct book talks, read from the author’s chair, etc.</p> <p>Note: The closing allows teachers to observe and assess students’ mastery of skills, habits, and strategies presented in class.</p>

It is essential that the teacher explicitly model each routine several times and give students many opportunities to practice the routines to be utilized in the classroom. By giving students these opportunities teachers will establish the specific ritual process that they will require students to follow when participating in a classroom routine.

Unit Expectations - Teacher

The First Twenty Days Readers/Writers Workshop:

- Establish workshop rituals and routines – see *Rituals, Routines, and Artifacts: Writing Series Monographs* and *Rituals, Routines, and Artifacts: Reading Series Monographs (secondary)*.
- Teach students the goals and expectations of Readers/Writers Workshop.
- Provide Read alouds/Think alouds that model a specific reading habit (see attached “*Seven Habits of a Good Reader*”).
- Students read daily and respond to their reading (written and/or oral).
- Students have opportunities for oral language development daily and participate in “accountable talk”.
- Teach students the writing process.
- Create a print rich environment – charts, rubrics, expectations, and student work visible and used as classroom resources.
- Establish a word wall with visuals.
- Students will write daily – see grade level for clarification.
- 1:1 Conferencing with students.
- Establish and use the “author’s chair”.
- Provide students with “standards based” feedback.
- Display students’ work and use this work as a resource when teaching.
- Assess students’ literacy strengths and needs: reading, writing, speaking, and listening and establish a Teacher Assessment Notebook (TAN) – (see attached: Reading/Text Levels Chart).
- By the end of the twenty days – establish groups (guided reading/writing) for targeted instruction.
- All student will participate in the *25 Book Campaign*.
- All students will participate in the *Book-of-the-Month Campaign*.

Unit Expectations - Students

The First Twenty Days Readers/Writers Workshop:

GRADES 6 - 8

- Readers/Writers Notebook with table of contents and annotated book lists
- Student will read independently for 15 minutes daily and respond/reflect on this reading
- Students will write daily in their Readers/Writers Notebook – demonstrating writer’s craft lessons
- Formal “Book Talks”
- Reader/Writers Notebooks will contain notes on specific skills taught – inferencing, text-to-text connections, reading habits, etc. (both reading & writing instruction)
- Students will work in small groups/partner peer editing, conferencing, and revising work and/or discussing texts read
- Students will participate in book discussion groups
- Students will have opportunities to self-direct their learning and demonstrate internalization of the workshop rituals and routines
- Students will access the classroom library and resource materials independently
- Students will participate in guided reading and guided writing groups (see attached: Reading/Text Levels Chart)

Teachers should also review the *reading monograph series* and the *writing monograph series* for further clarification of the specific routines and rituals covered in the first twenty days of Reader/Writers Workshop.

In addition, each grade level manual will refer to “Touchstone Text”. These are texts that the manual utilizes to teach a lesson. **If these texts are not available, teachers may use alternate texts that correspond to the goal of the lesson.** The ultimate focus of the lesson should be the process and objective, not the specific context.

Also note, that while not specifically listed, grammar, spelling and conventions are to be taught during the writers’ workshop and practiced in context.

Readers/Writers Workshop Map
- 1st Twenty Days -

Readers/Writers Workshop
The First Twenty Days

Read Aloud/Think Aloud	Independent Reading	Opening	Work Period	Closing	Student Work
<p>Days 1 – 20</p> <p>As indicated in <i>The First Twenty Days Readers/Writers Workshop Manual</i></p>	<p>Days 1 – 20</p> <p>As indicated in <i>The First Twenty Days Readers/Writers Workshop Manual</i></p>	<p>Days 1 – 20</p> <p>As indicated in <i>The First Twenty Days Readers/Writers Workshop Manual</i></p>	<p>Days 1 – 20</p> <p>As indicated in <i>The First Twenty Days Readers/Writers Workshop Manual</i></p>	<p>Days 1 – 20</p> <p>As indicated in <i>The First Twenty Days Readers/Writers Workshop Manual</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Readers/Writers Notebook <input type="checkbox"/> NB entries demonstrating understanding of specific readers/writers workshop routines <input type="checkbox"/> NB entries demonstrating application of mini-lessons, skills, strategies, and reading habits <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom charts and artifacts that enable the students to access materials independently for self-directed learning <input type="checkbox"/> *Accountable talk that demonstrates students understanding of the rituals and routines of the writers workshop <input type="checkbox"/> *Ability to negotiate the classroom and use resources independently <input type="checkbox"/> Bibliography of text read <p>*observable behavior</p>
<p><u>Please note:</u> The opening will take longer than the usual 10 minutes as the routines for the year are being established. During this time, students will practice the specific routines of the readers’ workshop using the rituals established by the classroom teacher.</p> <p>Please consult with your building literacy coach regarding the nature and length of each routine, as some may take longer than a day to establish and other lessons may be able to be combined with another lesson.</p>					

Teacher Resources

THE SEVEN READING HABITS

The reading habits are used by proficient readers, while reading, in order to understand, assess and analyze what is being read.

1. ACTIVATE SCHEMA

Access background knowledge/use what you already know

Text to self – “This reminds me of something from my life...”

Text to text – “This reminds me of a character/conflict/setting from another text...”

Text to world – “This reminds me of something happening in the Middle East...”

2. VISUALIZE

Make pictures in your mind of characters/conflicts/settings

“I can see...” “I can picture...”

3. QUESTION

Ask implicit and explicit questions of the text

“I wonder why...” “I wonder how...” “I wonder what...”

4. DETERMINE IMPORTANCE

Identify valuable information from the text

“I think it’s important that...”

5. INFER

Use explicit information from the text to draw conclusions about characters/conflicts/settings

“Based on what this character said/did, I can conclude that the character feels...”

6. MONITOR FOR MEANING

Using fix-up strategies to assure understanding of the text

“I defined this word so that I could understand...”

“I re-read and activated my schema, so that I could better understand...”

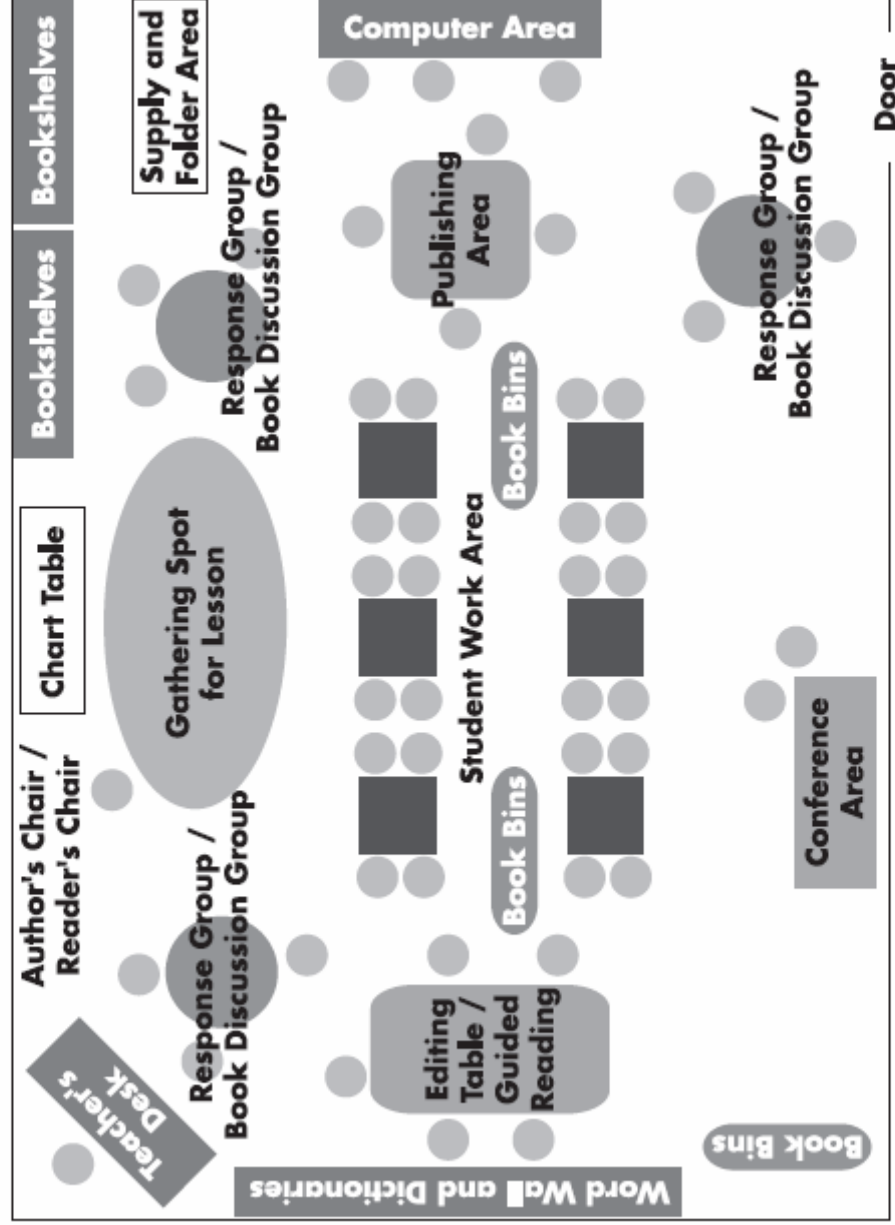
“I determined importance throughout the passage, so that I could understand...”

7. SYNTHESIZE

Combine important information from the text in order to draw a conclusion about characters/conflicts/settings

“Based on the way the character deals with all of the conflicts, I can tell that struggle makes a person stronger.”

Suggested Room Set-up



Data Collection Sheet

Block: _____

School: _____

Grade: _____ **Teacher:** _____

	SASID#	Last Name	First Name	MI	SRI – FALL 2008	MAP - FALL 2008 (lexile level)	MAP - WINTER 2009 (lexile level)	MAP - SPRING 2009 (lexile level)	WPM FALL 2008	WPM WINTER 2009	WPM SPRING 2009	IRI FALL 2008	IRI WINTER 2009	IRI SPRING 2009	MCAS 2008	MCAS 2007	MCAS 2006	LONG COMP SCORE (7 TH GRADE)	LONG COMP SCORE
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FIVE ESSENTIAL PRACTICES FOR TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

The five essential practices for teaching English language learners are practices developed by America's Choice to support the literacy needs of ELL students. These practices are a result of current second language acquisition research, literacy development, and effective classroom practices. They provide a framework for creating appropriate Readers and Writers Workshop lessons for students who are emerging English Speakers. (*America's Choice: Teaching English Language Learners: Literacy*)

Essential Practice 1	Classroom Applications
<p data-bbox="132 516 842 594">Develop Oral Language through Meaningful Conversation and Context.</p> <p data-bbox="132 638 974 927">Oral language is the foundation of literacy and a main tool for learning and interacting in both academic and social settings. Natural exposure and planned experiences with oral language facilitates increases expression and understanding of the second language. Oral language also supports vocabulary development in context, paving the way for better comprehension and production. Exposure to rich oral and written language environments is vital for developing literacy and language skills.</p>	<ul data-bbox="1052 537 1892 1279" style="list-style-type: none">• Develop oral language through meaningful conversation by planning language experiences and building consistent time to engage conversation.• Enunciate and rephrase difficult words and allow extra time for practice and repetition.• Demonstrate and orally explain activities step-by step. Rephrase difficult instructions• Use think-alouds. Verbally share the comprehension thought process.• Provide opportunity for practice: allow extra time for practice and repetition in oral, reading, and writing activities with appropriate feedback.• Allow students to respond through Turn and Talk activities, oral, choral reading and re-reading.• Use audio recording of a text to provide extended literacy opportunities where students listen to the reading of a text independently while developing fluency, accuracy, and language acquisition.• Plan daily read-alouds to model literacy strategies and to scaffold fluency, accuracy, and independent reading.

Essential Practice 2**Classroom Applications****Teach Targeted Skills through Contextualized and Explicit Instruction**

Full literacy is a fluid combination of oral, reading, and writing skills. These skills must be taught through explicit and contextualized instruction that scaffolds learning. Contextualized instruction provides students with extra linguistic clues that support understanding not only of the content but also of the language being used in the lesson. Combining contextualized practices with the knowledge of phonemic awareness, phonics skills, language structures and functions, text patterns, and literary devices such as metaphors, analogies, figurative language, and unfamiliar cultural concepts, will aid students in achieving stronger literacy skills. Explicit skills give the students the tools they need to comprehend increasingly complex literacy demands.

- Use clues of context to make instruction meaningful. Teach skills and strategies using materials, books or writing that students know and understand
- Use Big Books or shared reading to teach phonics, vocabulary and language features.
- Use student or teacher writing models to teach craft, spelling, and language conventions.
- Teach phonemic awareness within a context. ELL children must attach meaning and experience to phonemes they may never have heard before. Teach phonemic awareness while explicitly teaching vocabulary, meaning, or within-a-story context.
- Understand the linguistic background of native language and address these issues specifically.
- Pay special attention to sounds of letters. Languages have different linguistic features. For example, while the vowel sounds in English vary, Spanish vowel sounds are consistent. Students will transfer what they know about one language and automatically, and sometimes incorrectly, apply it to English.
- Use meaningful activities to teach phonemic awareness, such as language games, Word Walls, word banks, songs, poems, and rhymes that focus on particular sounds or letters.

Essential Practice 3

Classroom Applications

Build Vocabulary through Authentic and Meaningful Experiences with Words

Developing and deepening a student’s understanding of new words is essential for English language learners. Building vocabulary in the context of literature experiences, and modeled writing ensures that students will own the new words they encounter. Vocabulary building is a lifelong process and students must learn ways to integrate and approach new and challenging words. Discussing, playing with, and using new words allow students to gain new vocabulary through meaningful, and therefore memorable, experiences.

- Vocabulary development must be taught intentionally. Since word knowledge correlates with reading comprehension and meaning-making strategies used in decoding, it must be a focus for instruction.
- Vocabulary development must be taught in context. Connect word knowledge with background knowledge and instructional context. ELL students need both meaning and context to acquire new vocabulary.
- Facilitate and plan activities that support the three main ways vocabulary is learned:
 1. Through meaningful conversations with adults and other students.
 2. Listening to adults read at slightly higher levels than the student’s independent level.
 3. Read extensively on their own at their reading level.
- Pre-teach vocabulary words, prefixes/suffix, context clues, and cognates. Build students’ skill box with vocabulary and give them tools to understand and connect new vocabulary.
- Use content Word Walls or word webs. Support cognitive structuring for ELLs by connecting new vocabulary to themes, ideas, or generalizations.
- Explicitly focus on and teach academic language. Students need to be consistently exposed to formal or content specific language and vocabulary.
- Explicitly teach the building blocks of language. Students need to learn the connecting and transition words of the English language (“however,” “in conclusion”, etc.)Teach them in context and teach them explicitly.
- Focus teaching Tier 2 words, as well as essential Tier 1 words. Although most explicit vocabulary instruction should focus on Tier 2 words (words with a high frequency in the written language, example: examine), ELLs need instruction around Tier 1, or basic spoken words as well.

Essential Practice 4**Classroom Applications****Build and Activate Background Knowledge**

Learning is based on establishing neural connections in the brain, drawing on previous experience, background knowledge, and prior and current environments. It is both the teacher's and the student's job to facilitate these connections in order to construct meaning and understand new ideas and concepts while expanding on their own world knowledge. Actively fostering these connections will enable students to more easily interpret their surroundings and assign meaning to new concepts while expanding their own.

- Elicit student's experience and comments. Connect school, literary and personal events through talking, writing, and reading.
- Consider the cultural background of students when selecting literacy materials such as books and poems. Support language development of ELL students by giving them new English words for experiences that are close to home. Using materials that represent their cultural background, increases motivation and supports participation.
- Discuss and build language around universal themes. Connect new language to universal experiences.
- Build content-based word banks and webs. Connect new language to other known words, experiences, and ideas to support cognitive structuring.
- Use native language. Value home culture. View home cultures as a resource, rather than a liability.
- Use hands-on experience based instruction in all academic areas. Language can be built upon common classroom experiences.
- Encourage students to make connections before, during and after reading.
- Find out what students know and build on their experience.

Essential Practice 5

Teach and Use Meaning-Making Strategies

Intentionally teaching meaning-making strategies provides students with a toolbox to approach future learning challenges. Meaning-making strategies vary from helping students comprehend text to various strategies students can use to understand English-dependent lessons. Modeling appropriate behaviors to students gives them the tools to be autonomous learners and supplies them with options they can use to interpret environmental input, both academically and socially.

Classroom Applications

- Explicitly teach student meaning-making strategies. Model for students how to visualize, make connections, monitor for meaning, determine importance, etc.
- Provide opportunities for practice. Sustain daily work periods in reading and writing for students to practice these strategies.
- Systematically assess students and adjust instruction. Monitor progress and use data to adjust the focus of mini-lessons, conferences and small-group instruction.
- Model activities and thinking for certain skills. Students need to see and experience what is expected of them before they perform a task.
- Beginning ELLs need more than just phonics and English Language Development instruction. EXPOSE STUDENTS RIGHT AWAY TO COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES. Waiting to address skills in chronological order hinders academic growth and English proficiency.
- Teach students how to help themselves in English-dependent lessons. Model your thinking and how you approach problems. Build students cognitive toolbox by explicitly teaching the ways to help themselves during difficult language situations.

Notes: