Language Arts Curriculum for High-Ability Learners

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Common Core: English-Language Arts

- Focus as much on the complexity of texts that students are expected to read as on how students read
- Balance between literature and information texts, with significant focus on reading and comprehending informational texts in grades 6-12
- Contains literacy standards for science and history/social studies to supplement content standards in those disciplines
- Focus on explanatory and argumentative writing in later grades

CCSS: Example of Grade-Level Vertical Alignment & Progression in Reading

- CCR Standard 3: Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Informational Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Describe the relationships between a series of historical events, scientific ideas of concepts, of steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g. how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-CCR</td>
<td>Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Common Core Comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old Lexile Ranges</th>
<th>Lexile Ranges Aligned to CCR expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K-1 NA</td>
<td>K-1 NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 450–725</td>
<td>2-3 450-790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5 645–845</td>
<td>4-5 770-980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8 860–1010</td>
<td>6-8 955–1155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9–10 960–1115</td>
<td>9-10 1080–1305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11–CCR 1070–1220</td>
<td>11-CCR 1215-1355</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Integrated Curriculum Model

- VanTassel-Baska, 1986

Advanced Readers

- Brainstorm strategies/characteristics of gifted readers.
- Categorize your sets of examples into no more than 5 and no less than 3 categories.
- What are non examples of strategies/characteristics?
- What general truths can you say about strategies/characteristics of/for gifted readers?
Language Arts Curriculum Goals

- To develop analytical and interpretive skills in literature
- To develop persuasive writing skills
- To develop linguistic competency
- To develop listening/oral communication skills
- To develop reasoning/critical thinking skills in LA
- To understand and apply the concept of change within and across disciplines

Concept of Change (lesson 2)

- Cite examples.
- Categorize.
- Cite non-examples.
- Generalize.

Generalizations About Change

- Change is everywhere.
- Change is linked to time.
- Change may be positive or negative.
- Change may be perceived as orderly or random.
- Change may happen naturally or be caused by people.

Change Model

- Change is linked to time.
- Change may be positive or negative.
- Change may happen naturally or be caused by people.
- Change may be perceived as orderly or random.

Change Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literature</th>
<th>Changes in Characters</th>
<th>Changes in Setting</th>
<th>Changes in Relationships</th>
<th>Changes in You as a Result of Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change Matrix – Persuasion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journey to Topaz (Asian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secret of Gumbo Grove (African)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking Sides (Hispanic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rising Voices (Native)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Change Examples

- Journeys & Destinations
  - Read the story “Shells” by Cynthia Rylant. What does the author think about change? Which of the five ideas about change does this story best support?

- Literary Reflections
  - Examine the 6 selections (African American, Hispanic, Old Man and Affectionate Son, Tongue-Cat Sparrow, Emily Dickinson, your own story) and cite examples to compare the following: internal changes in characters; changes in relationships with others or environment, another important concept, change in your understanding of concept.

Metaphor Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic of the Comparison</th>
<th>What it is Compared to</th>
<th>Important Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fog</td>
<td>quiet, gray, moves softly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moon</td>
<td>shape, curve, seems to have a face</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moon</td>
<td>round, changes shape</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>day</td>
<td>journey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hope</td>
<td>owl wings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample Summative Writing Assignment

Think about how the literature pieces you have read have reflected the five generalizations about change. Select a generalization that seemed especially true to you in the unit readings. Write a persuasive essay arguing that the generalization is true, using specific examples from the literature you have read to support your points. Explain your reasons thoroughly, and write a conclusion to end your essay.

Change Examples

- Autobiographies
  - Based on the author’s autobiography you just read, how did the author change over time? Which generalization of change best describes her life? How does that generalization compare to other changes in your life?

- Persuasion
  - Examine cultural changes that are pervasive, linked to time, systemic or random, growth or regression, and natural order or imposed in the following readings: Dragonwings (Asian American); Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry (African American); Going Home (Hispanic American) and Morning Star, Black Sun (Native American). What examples and generalizations can you make about the culture and change?
Reading Web

- Key Words: What were some words and phrases that were especially interesting or important? What words were new to you?
- Feelings: What feelings did you get reading the passage? What feelings did the characters have? How were those feelings expressed?
- Ideas: What was the main idea? What other major ideas and concepts were important? What was the author trying to say about those ideas?
- Images/Symbols: How did the author use description and imagery in the novel? What sensory images came to your mind? How did the author use symbols?
- Structure: What type of writing was this? What literary and style elements did the author use? How did the structure of the writing contribute to the meaning of the novel?

Grandmother Moon (Beyond Words)

- Each day is a journey, a leaving home, over paths that wind between rocks and bog. Behind each rock is a shadow; behind each shadow, a flower, or a wellspring, or a trembling rabbit, or an unfolding fern

- Only if you look will you find. Only if you leave will you arrive. One step, then another, as day unrolls itself along the road toward night. And at evening, look who welcomes us Grandmother Moon, waiting in the doorway, the stars in her hands – to lead us safely home.

Jane Yolen

Building Textual Understanding

Underlying Assumption: Discourse that promotes understanding needs direction, focus, and movement towards goal.

- Marking (focusing)
- Revoicing (repeating student ideas)
- Turning back (textual or student-based)
- Recapping (synthesizing)
- Modeling (thinking aloud)
- Annotating (providing information)

Beck & McKeown, 1996

Promoting Scaffolding

- Whole group modeling first
- Small group discussion, as applicable
- Debrief again whole class or in a small reading group

Goals and Objectives

- Goal A - To develop inference skills and judging relationships among data provided
  Students will be able to:
  - Provide a sequence of events, procedures, and/or activities that occur in the text.
  - Analyze cause and effect relationships in text.
  - Draw consequences and implications from text for application in the real world.

- Goal B - To develop deductive reasoning skills, moving from the concrete to the abstract
  Students will be able to:
  - Provide details, examples and illustrations from written text.
  - Classify details from the story/text into categories.
  - Create generalizations about the story/text based on categories.
**Jacob's Skill Ladders**

**Jacob's Ladder B - 4th Grade**

**Goals and Objectives (cont.)**

- **Goal C** - To develop literary analysis skills, based on understanding literary elements
  - Students will be able to:
    - Identify character traits and qualities for main characters in a story.
    - Identify and analyze poetic devices as appropriate.
    - State the setting or context for the story by place and time.
    - Make inferences or provide evidence about the story from given data.
    - State the main ideas or themes of the story.

- **Goal D** - To develop synthesis skills, moving from restating to creative synthesis
  - Paraphrase important quotations from the text.
  - Summarize the main ideas presented in the text and provide support using text-based evidence.
  - Generate new ideas based on their evaluation of existing ideas.

**Consequences and Implications**

- How might the space exploration program be different if the Challenger disaster had been avoided?

**Cause and Effect**

- What caused Christa McAuliffe to want to teach in space? Support your answer.

**Sequence**

- List the events of the Challenger disaster in order.

**Details/Examples**

- These acted bravely in this myth by facing the Minotaur. List at least 25 different ways a person can be brave.

**Category/Classification**

- Using the list you generated in question B1, create categories.

**Evidence/Inference**

- What caused the Minotaur to be killed? Support your answer using evidence from your reading.
NEW: Word Study

Playing with Words
Write your own poem with an AB rhyming pattern.

Thinking About Words
Is it important for both stanzas' rhyming patterns to match? Why or why not? What does that mean?

Understanding Words
In a different color, underline the matching rhyming words at the end of each line. For example if the words bath and hark rhyme both would be underlined in the same color.

Goals and Objectives (cont.)
* Process Goal - To promote learning through interaction and discussion of reading material in the classroom.
  Students will be able to:
  - Articulate their understanding of a reading through oral, written, and other mediums.
  - Solve problems collaboratively.
  - Use text to justify answers.
  - Engage in a dialogue about the meaning of a selection.
  - Reflect upon a text and how it relates to self.

By Casey Carroll
Grades 4-5
Honorable Mention
Center for Gifted Education Talent Search
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Beck & McKeown, 1996

Why Own A House When You Can Own an R.V.?

The nineties are so hectic nobody spends any time in their homes with their families. Leisurely evenings at home have given way to hectic evenings on the road. People are always on the go, so why not take the house with you? That’s where the recreational vehicle (R.V.) comes in. When you have to run errands, or take your kids to soccer or basketball practice, your time could also be spent cleaning your house, doing your laundry or making a meal.

We’ve created a world where the goal is to make things faster and to allow us to do two or three things at once. Traditional mail has been replaced by overnight mail, e-mail and faxes, and home cooked meals have been replaced by fast food or microwave meals. We have so many things to make our lives “easier,” but we never have time to use any of them.

One solution for anyone who says “I spend no time in my house,” is to trade your expensive mortgage for a house you can take with you. After all, with a good hook-up, an R.V. contains all the necessities of life: a bathroom, running water, kitchen, beds, satellite TV, cellular phones, electric lights, and, of course, a moving vehicle. In the near future, our communities will simply be R.V. lots so families can drive from their home lot to temporary lots that provide home-like settings for busy families on the go.

Another solution would be to cut back your busy schedules and stay home more often. Do one thing at a time and live for today. Sit back once in a while, relax, and take the time to enjoy your life.

Robert J. Hidy

Second Place: Essays, Grades 4-5

Theme/Concept

What ideas are expressed in the essay about the concept of time?

Evidence/Inference

Do you agree or disagree with the author about trading in your house for an R.V.? What evidence supports your answer?

Characterization

Write a paragraph or draw a picture of the type of family being characterized in this essay.

Generalizations

What generalizations can you make about how families spend time today?

Classifications

Classify your list into categories.

Details

Make a list of at least 25 things that keep families busy.

Sample Follow-Up Questions

★ That’s interesting.. Does anyone have a different idea?
★ I agree with ---- because...
★ I disagree with --- because..
★ I thought the passage... was... because
★ My idea was different or the same as...
★ I think... because in the story it says...

Sample Follow-Up Questions

★ On p. xx the author says.... how does that contribute to...
★ Why do you think the author...
★ Justify your answer...
★ In what ways does the story....
★ What else might....
Students’ Longitudinal Gains on TCT by Condition

Students Longitudinal Gains on ITBS by Condition

Student Learning Gains on Literary Analysis across Three Years

Student Learning Gains on Persuasive Writing across Three Years

% Frequency of Year Three Teachers’ Presence of Behavioral Categories by Condition

Veteran Teachers’ Longitudinal Behavioral Change on the COS-R Total Scale

F (1,23) = 14.8, p < .01, partial eta squared = .39

Across three years, veteran experimental teachers did statistically significant and educationally larger instructional improvement on the COS-R than their counterpart control teachers.
The most important outcome of education is to help students become independent of formal education.

— Paul E. Gray