



CSDE Model Curricula Quick Start Guide

English Language Arts K-3

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Quick Start Guide: Implementing the K-3 ELA Model Curriculum

Introduction

Connecticut General Statute Section 10-25b(b), as amended by Public Act No. 23-167, Section 16, effective July 1, 2023, ("An Act Concerning Transparency in Education") directed the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to develop a model curriculum for grades kindergarten to grade eight, inclusive, that may be used in whole or in part by any local or regional board of education. Accordingly, the CSDE has developed a model curriculum for English Language Arts (ELA), Grades K-8. This ELA quick start guide addendum is designed to provide an overview for adapting and using the portion of the ELA model curriculum developed for Grades K-3.

Curriculum Defined

Curriculum is the central roadmap for communicating essential learning outcomes for mastery by the end of a grade or grade band. The curriculum differs from state standards in that standards define what students are expected to learn by subject and grade. Specifically, the curriculum combines how teachers will teach to develop skills and content knowledge and assess students' ability to transfer learning. The structure and organization of the curriculum are guided by a curriculum framework that must include standards-aligned concepts, skills, and multiple means of assessment aligned to standards, along with high-impact instructional methods and high-quality instructional materials.

Considerations for Adapting the K-3 ELA Model Curriculum

Utilizing the K-3 ELA model curriculum requires considerations for incorporating text sets, students' lived experiences, local history, and sociocultural influences. Users of the model curriculum should consult local curriculum leaders and administrators to understand the district curriculum development process before deciding to adapt the units. Furthermore, curriculum leaders should assist in developing an implementation plan to ensure students have equitable access to grade-level standards. Although the process for implementing the CSDE K-3 ELA model curriculum is a local decision, it is critical to generally maintain the units as provided because the progressions of learning (i.e., a coherent sequence of learning targets) within and across grade bands are organized and presented in a manner that supports the development of the interrelated skills that contribute to skilled reading and writing. This will purposefully promote students' development of literacy skills and understanding at each grade and as they progress through the grades, and extend skills and knowledge mastered in preceding grades.

Putting the Grades K-3 ELA Model Curriculum into Practice

The process for implementing the K-3 ELA model curriculum entails an in-depth and systematic approach, and an effective curricula team to continue to oversee the implementation, updating, and evaluation of the curriculum. It is important to remember that any innovation introduced into a system — including a new curriculum — requires time and support to be fully implemented. Districts and schools must invest in and provide professional learning and specialized supports to curriculum leaders and teachers to develop the knowledge and skills regarding the content and ensure fidelity to the curriculum. Teachers need opportunities to analyze the K-3 ELA model curriculum for logic and design and as the primary stakeholders, determine in what manner the curriculum will support and enhance their daily literacy instruction. The curricula development team and district and school administrators must be aware that teachers need at least two years to implement the K-3 ELA model curriculum and new resources in their classrooms and be available to nurture it. In addition, district and school implementation teams will need to consider developing or refining structures to strengthen curriculum implementation that includes:

- schoolwide schedules, classroom management routines to support students' metacognition and self-regulation, and guidance for multi-step instructional routines that support Tier I whole- and small-group instruction and interventions;
- local district- and school-level documents that describe grade-specific core resources and expectations of use
- ongoing and job-embedded professional learning opportunities to support the implementation of foundational skills and comprehensive reading instruction (e.g., instructional strategies based on the Science of Reading research, the connections between speaking and reading, the phases of reading development, and the connections to spelling and writing); and
- accessible curriculum maps with embedded instructional materials and resources for developing engaging and relevant learning experiences connected to essential questions and enduring understanding aligned to the standards and learning targets in each of the K-3 ELA model units.

Using Instructional Materials and Resources to Meet Standards and Learning Targets

Identifying instructional materials to assist with curriculum implementation includes resources to help answer the question, "What instructional materials are available to help meet a particular standard, learning target, or set of learning targets?" These instructional materials should include a variety of resources and technology, in particular, [Connecticut Approved K-3 Reading Curriculum Models or Programs](#) (per Connecticut General Statutes Sections 10-14hh and 14ii).

Aligned Core Resources for [Connecticut Approved K-3 Reading Curriculum Models or Programs](#) will be developed to indicate how they align with the K-3 ELA model curriculum, suggested pacing, and scope and sequence. Visit [GoOpenCT.org](#) and navigate to the Aligned Core Resources section on the grade level overview page for recently published documents.

Questions?

If you have questions or need assistance with the K-3 ELA model curriculum, send an email to Joanne.R.White@ct.gov, K-12 Literacy/English Language Arts Education Consultant.