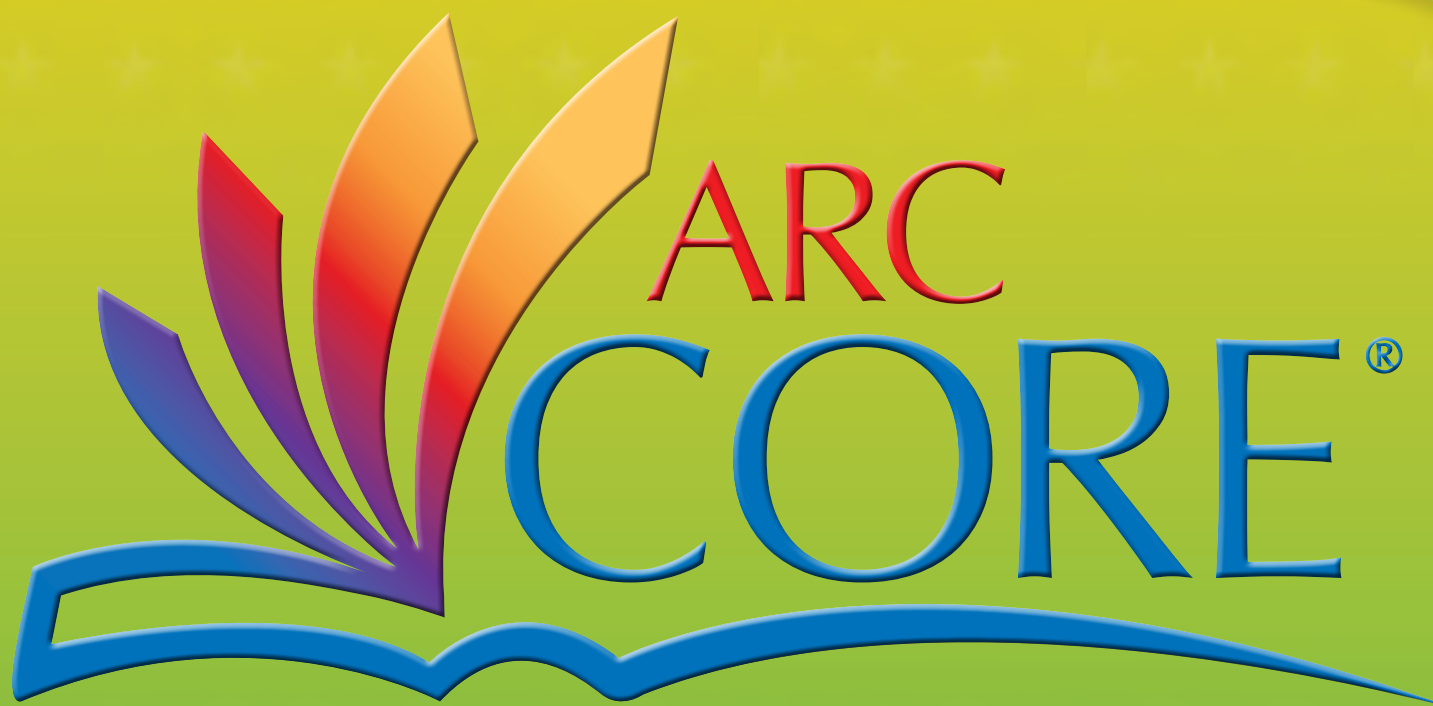


So you want to be a  
**Scientist?**

The logo for ARC CORE features a stylized graphic of five overlapping, curved shapes in shades of purple, red, and orange, resembling a fan or a flower. Below this graphic is a blue, wavy line that forms a base. To the right of the graphic, the word "ARC" is written in red, and "CORE" is written in large, blue, 3D-style letters. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located to the upper right of the word "CORE".

# ARC CORE<sup>®</sup>

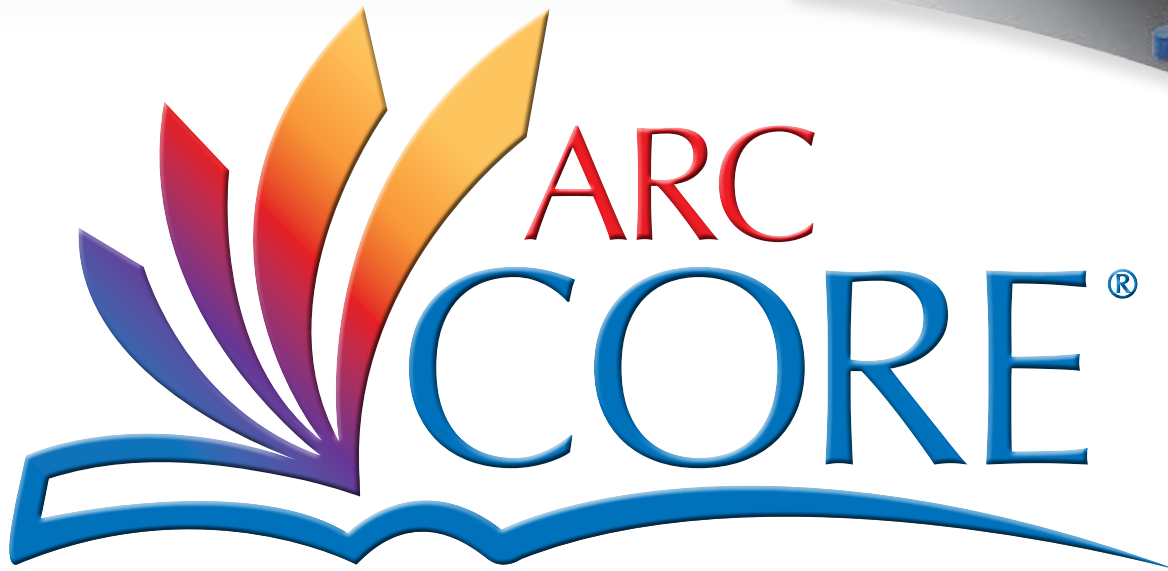


The Educators' Guide to Transformative  
Literacy Instruction

Kindergarten Literacy Lab



So you want to be a  
**Scientist?**



## The Educators' Guide to Transformative Literacy Instruction

### Kindergarten Literacy Lab

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ARC Core® 2017 Edition

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04252023



ARCC-LLE11-GRK



# Letter from the Founder

AMERICAN  
READING COMPANY

Dear Educator,

I spent 28 years teaching school in and around Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, working as a classroom teacher, reading specialist, district teacher trainer, and adjunct professor of education at the University of Pennsylvania. During this time, I raised two of my own children, both of whom were avid readers and outstanding scholars. As a young parent, it became clear to me that it wasn't reading instruction that gave my children an academic advantage, it was their reading lifestyles, their reading identities, their daily reading routines. They read for hours every day, at home, because they wanted to.



My children, Gina and Graedon

As a teacher, I focused on teaching my students HOW to read. As a parent, I knew I had to teach my children to BE readers. AHA!!! Why didn't I do that for my students? It seems obvious now, but we can't expect students who only read their assignments for school to ever get very good at reading, regardless of how effectively we teach.

I created the 100 Book Challenge to see if it were possible to convert my Title One remedial readers to avid readership by challenging them to read 100 books and teaching the reading lifestyle, along with reading skills. We collected thousands of books from yard sales and donations, leveled the books from easy to hard, and read as many of them as possible. 100% of my first group of Title One, Pre-Primer (non-reader) 2nd graders finished the year reading *Goosebumps* (fourth grade level).



Working in a Philadelphia Classroom

After a few months, we began to read in themes. I found my students loved becoming experts on real world topics, as long as they could do the research on a subtopic of their own choice. We studied World War II, with each student becoming an expert on—and writing a biography about—an important person from that era. We did Native Americans, Renaissance Artists, Dinosaurs.



Surrounded by books to be leveled

I worked with the Gifted and Talented classrooms and the remedial reading classrooms using the same paradigm. Lots and lots of student choice, rigorous, interesting Social Studies and Science content, and individual conferencing with each student to know what skills were needed next. As students began to develop expertise, the desire to learn more and more about their particular subjects pulled them further into reading. Others wanted to participate and it spread to the regular 2nd grade class, then the entire school, and eventually 135 schools in Philadelphia. When the Abell Foundation in Baltimore asked me to help them do 100 Book Challenge in their SuperKids Summer Camp, I created a company to meet their request.

I tell you all of this to let you know that American Reading Company is not a business created just to sell programs or make money. American Reading Company is a core of engaged, motivated, smart educators working together to ensure that all children have the kind of education we all want for our own children.

Sincerely,

Jane Hileman, Founder  
American Reading Company



# Table of Contents



---

## Introduction to ARC Core Full-Year Overview

---

---

Introduction to ARC Literacy Lab: Launch Unit 61

---

## Phase 1: Initiate Academic Community

---

---

Week 1 3

---

---

Week 2 67

---

## Phase 2: Initial Assessment and Goal Setting

---

---

Week 3 107

---

---

Week 4 151

---

## Phase 3: Strategic Instruction/Building Expertise

---

---

Week 5 189

---

---

Week 6 227

---

## Tools for Moving Reading Levels All Year

---

---

100 Book Challenge® Reading Culture 263

---

---

IRLA: Conferencing & Formative Assessment 289

---

---

Building Instruction in Units of Study 327

---





*Education is not the filling of  
a pail but the lighting of a fire.*

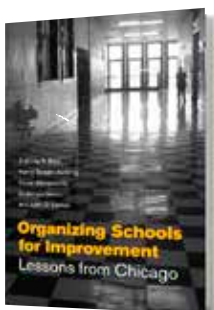
—William Butler Yeats

# Five Essentials for School Success

1. A coherent instructional system
2. Ongoing development of the professional capacity of staff
3. Strong parent-community-school ties
4. A student-centered learning climate
5. Shared leadership to drive innovation



**Pedro Noguera, PhD**  
ARC Advisory Board Member



Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton,  
*Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lessons from Chicago*, 2010.

# ARC's Comprehensive Core Curriculum: A Coherent Instructional System for Every Element of the Literacy Block

## ARC Core: Standards-Based Thematic Instruction

Teachers use the ARC Core structure to orchestrate highly engaging, content-rich inquiry units in which students are the drivers of their own learning, preparing them for 21st century success.



## IRLA Expert Coaching

Teachers use the IRLA to find the highest level of text complexity students can currently read (and understand) and identify which skills are the most crucial for each reader to learn next.

The IRLA and its tracking system, SchoolPace, allow both students and educators to measure (and improve) the effectiveness of their own efforts, in real time.

## Reading Culture: 100 Book Challenge

100 Book Challenge is a community-wide reading culture system to bring students' own reading interests and choices into the center of the curriculum. This ensures that all children experience the rich reading lifestyle which provides the fuel for system-wide success.

## Professional Development

Job-embedded, gradual-release teacher coaching develops PLCs as continuous-improvement teams who learn to do better through their daily work.



# Stages of Implementation, as Measured by Outcomes

	Standards-Based Instruction	IRLA Expert Coaching	Reading Culture
1	<p>Students can tell you what they are learning/practicing and how it will be measured</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applied to grade-level text</li> <li>• Applied to self-selected text</li> <li>• Demonstrated through writing</li> </ul>	IRLA Reading Levels confirmed by colleagues	100% On Target for in-school reading (30 minutes a day)
2	Students have been captured & inspired	Every student receives a 1:1 conference in each 2–3 week cycle	95% On Target for home reading
3	Students can tell you what they are researching and why	<p>Power Goals confirmed by colleagues</p> <p>Small-group instruction organized by Power Goals</p> <p>Students can tell you what Power Goals they are working on and why</p>	Students' answers to the question <i>what are you reading and why?</i> show they are engaged, finishing books, and reading for their own reasons
4	Evidence of student learning drives teacher decision-making (e.g., effective coaching 1:1, effective grouping, focus for whole-group instruction, lesson planning, pacing, etc.)	Student rate of reading growth drives teacher decision-making	Students LOVE to read and sigh when time is up
5	Students own their own collective learning and drive their own—and each other's—progress while the teacher acts as coach and co-learner		

# Inquiry Cycle Approach

Teachers facilitate “deep learning tasks that restructure the learning process towards knowledge creation and purposeful use.”

—Michael Fullan & Maria Langworthy

## 8 Decisions for Planning a Lesson

### Unit Level

1. Unit Purpose: Knowledge Creation/Standards
2. Unit Outcome: Deep Learning Task/Product
3. Measure of Grade-Level Success/Expertise: Standard/Rubric

### Lesson Level

4. Today’s Task/Question: *What is it? How will it advance the Unit Purpose and Outcome?*
5. Today’s Text: *What is it? How will reading it improve students’ abilities to handle Today’s Task/Question?*
6. Graphic Organizer/Rubric: *What tool(s) will I use? How will I use them to facilitate and monitor learning?*
7. Purposeful Use/Prime & Orient: *How will I leverage what I know about the students in my class to ensure they will find this lesson meaningful and relevant?*
8. Equity: *How will I use this lesson to restructure the learning process and build a democratic classroom culture?*

## 5 Conditions for an Effective Lesson

1. **Appropriate Text:** Text is appropriate for the task (e.g., **content** matches task, **complexity** is grade level or above, **quality** is worth reading/accurate/engaging).
2. **Use of Tool:** Today's tool (e.g., graphic organizer) is used from the beginning of the lesson as both a scaffold for students' learning (as they apply the tool to their own lives, the topic, the text, etc.) and a teacher feedback loop on that learning.
3. **Modeling:** Modeling occurs only at the point of need.
4. **Questions:** Questions posed are worth discussing (as opposed to basic-recall, yes/no, or single-answer questions).
5. **Talking:** Students do the majority of the talking/thinking/learning.

# Example Yearlong Scope & Sequence

## Unit 1

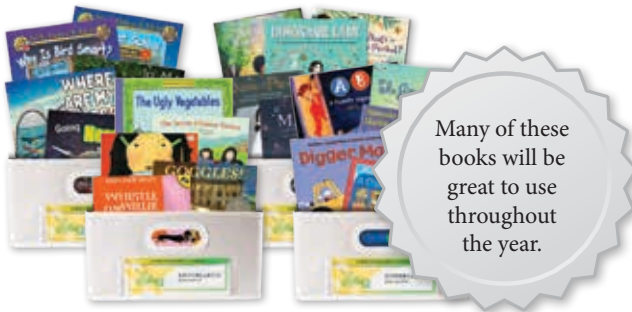
Focus Standards: R.K.1, R.K.4, R.K.6, R.K.7, W.K.7

## Unit 2

Focus Standards: R.K.4, R.K.5, R.L.K.5, W.K.1, W.K.2, W.K.3

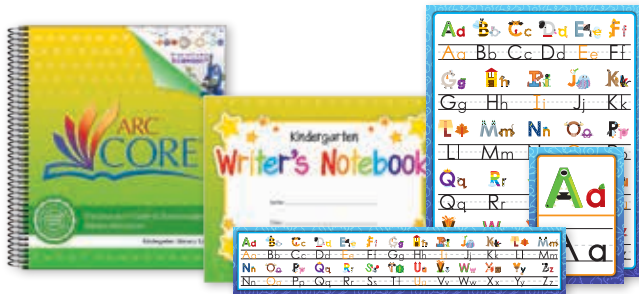
Reading Standards R.K.1, R.K.4, R.K.10 and Writing Standards W.K.5, W.K.7, W.K.8 are Covered in All Four Units.

### ARC Literacy Lab: So You Want to be a Scientist? Building a Community of Avid Readers, Writers, & Scientists



Many of these books will be great to use throughout the year.

100-Book Read-Aloud Immersion Collection



Teacher and student materials support developing proficiency in reading, writing, and foundational skills, including phonemic awareness, phonics, spelling, and word study.

IRLA: Identify what each student can do and what they MOST need to learn next.

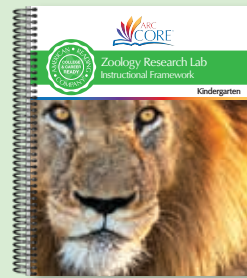


IRLA Foundational Skills Toolkits: Facilitate differentiated instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, word study, and spelling with authentic text application in flexible, strategic small groups.



### Zoology

Knowledge Building and Integrated Reading, Writing, and Foundational Skills



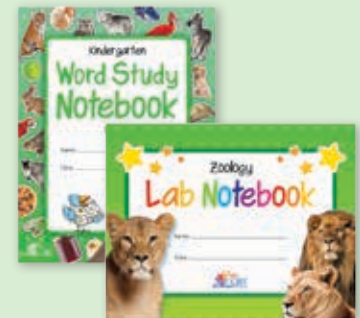
Instructional Framework



Big Book and Read-Aloud Collection



Research Folders and Science Tools



Research Library

SchoolPace: Monitor student reading progress in real time to intervene early and accelerate growth.





## Unit 3

Focus Standards: RI.K.2, RI.K.8, RL.K.2, W.K.1, W.K.2, W.K.3

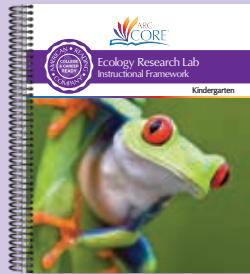
## Unit 4

Focus Standards: RI.K.3, RL.K.3, RL.K.9, W.K.1, W.K.2, W.K.3

All Speaking and Listening Standards and All Language Standards are Covered in All Four Units.

### Ecology

Knowledge Building and Integrated Reading, Writing, and Foundational Skills



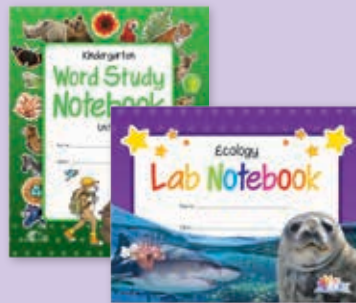
Instructional Framework



Big Book and Read-Aloud Collection



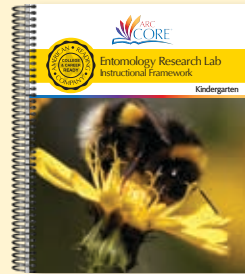
Research Folders and Science Tools



Research Library

### Entomology

Knowledge Building and Integrated Reading, Writing, and Foundational Skills



Instructional Framework



Big Book and Read-Aloud Collection



Research Folders and Science Tools



Research Library

100 Book Challenge Rotating Classroom Libraries: Multicultural, multiperspective texts provide high-volume practice in school and at home.



\*Actual titles may vary.

# Reading, Writing, & Foundational Skills Standards

## Unit 1: ARC Literacy Lab

## Unit 2: Zoology

### Q1: 1st 6–8 Weeks of School

### Q2: Approximate Weeks 9–17

### Reading

**R.K.1:** With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

**R.K.4:** Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.

**R.K.6:** With prompting and support, name the author and illustrator of a story/text and define the role of each in telling the story/presenting the ideas or information in a text.

**R.K.7:** With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story/text in which they appear.

**R.K.4:** Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.

**RL.K.5:** Recognize common types of texts.

**RI.K.5:** Identify the front cover, back cover, and title page of a book.

**RI.K.9:** With prompting and support, identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).

**Across ALL Four Units: R.K.1, R.K.4, R.K.10**

### Writing

**W.K.7:** Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of books by a favorite author and express opinions about them).

Apply Focus Foundational Skills in writing.

**W.K.1, W.K.2, W.K.3:** Students spend a few weeks on each.

Apply Focus Foundational Skills in writing.

**Across ALL Four Units: W.K.5, W.K.7, W.K.8**

### Foundational Skills

**RF.K.4:** Read emergent-reader texts with purpose and understanding.

**RF.K.1.A:** Follow words from left to right, top to bottom, and page by page.

**RF.K.1.C:** Understand that words are separated by spaces in print.

**RF.K.1.D:** Recognize and name all upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet.

**RF.K.2.A:** Recognize and produce rhyming words.

**RF.K.3.A:** Demonstrate basic knowledge of one-to-one letter-sound correspondences by producing the primary sound or many of the most frequent sounds for each consonant.

**RF.K.1.B:** Recognize that spoken words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters.

**RF.K.3.C:** Read common high-frequency words by sight (e.g., *the, of, to, you, she, my, is, are, do, does*).

**RF.K.3.D:** Distinguish between similarly spelled words by identifying the sounds of the letters that differ.

#### Ehri's Phases of Word Reading Development (Orthographic Mapping)

Pre-Alphabetic —————> Partial Alphabetic —————

#### Phonological Awareness

Oral rhyming

Alliteration

Phoneme Isolation

#### Phonics

Letter names and sounds

Letter names and sounds

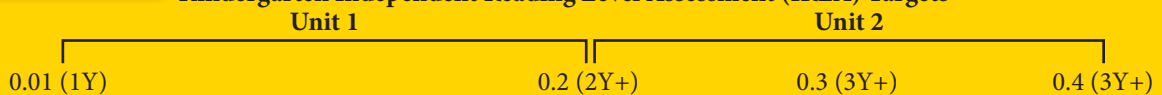
#### Word Study

Writing represents speech.

Words are represented by specific strings of letters.  
Read and spell 1G words.

**Leave No Reader Behind**

#### Kindergarten Independent Reading Level Assessment (IRLA) Targets\*



\*See SchoolPace for current target based on your school/district calendar.

# Kindergarten Scope & Sequence

## Unit 3: Ecology

## Unit 4: Entomology

### Q3: Approximate Weeks 18–26

### Q4: Approximate Weeks 27–36

**RI.K.2:** With prompting and support, identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.

**RL.K.2:** With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including key details.

**RI.K.8:** With prompting and support, identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.

**RI.K.3:** With prompting and support, describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.

**RL.K.3:** With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story.

**RL.K.9:** With prompting and support, compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories.

#### Across ALL Four Units: R.K.1, R.K.4, R.K.10

**W.K.1, W.K.2, W.K.3:** Students spend a few weeks on each. Apply Focus Foundational Skills in writing.

**W.K.1, W.K.2, W.K.3:** Students spend a few weeks on each. Apply Focus Foundational Skills in writing.

#### Across ALL Four Units: W.K.5, W.K.7, W.K.8

**RF.K.2.B:** Count, pronounce, blend, and segment syllables in spoken words.

**RF.K.3.D:** Distinguish between similarly spelled words by identifying the sounds of the letters that differ.

**RF.1.3.A:** Know the spelling-sound correspondences for common consonant digraphs [(sh-, ch-, th-, wh-) and blends].

**RF.K.2.C:** Blend and segment onset and rimes of single-syllable spoken words.

**RF.K.2.D:** Isolate and pronounce the initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in three-phoneme (consonant-vowel-consonant, or CVC) words.

**RF.K.2.E:** Add or substitute individual sounds (phonemes) in simple, one-syllable words to make new words.

**RF.K.3.B:** Associate the long and short sounds with the common spellings (graphemes) for the five major vowels.

→ Full Alphabetic

Syllables  
Phoneme Isolation

Onset and rime  
Phoneme Manipulation

Initial blends and digraphs

One syllable decoding:  
Long and short vowels

Read and spell 1G/2G words.

Read and spell 2G/1B words.

### Kindergarten Independent Reading Level Assessment (IRLA) Targets\*

#### Unit 3

#### Unit 4

0.4 (3Y+)

0.5 (1G)/0.6 (1G+)

0.7 (1G+)

0.8(2G)/0.9(2G+)

0.99 (Ready for 1B)

## Speaking & Listening and Language Standards

### Unit 1: ARC Literacy Lab

### Unit 2: Zoology

Q1: 1st 6–8 Weeks of School

Q2: Approximate Weeks 9–17

Speaking & Listening

**Across ALL Four Units**

SL.K.1: Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

SL.K.2: Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.

SL.K.3: Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.

Language

**Across ALL Four Units**

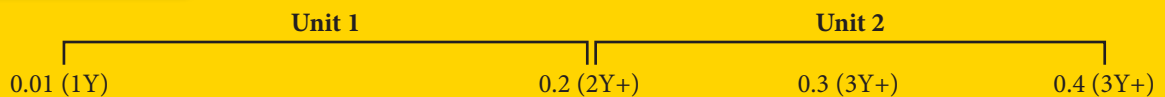
L.K.1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

L.K.2: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

L.K.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on kindergarten reading and content.

**Leave No Reader Behind**

**Kindergarten Independent Reading Level Assessment (IRLA) Targets\***



\*See SchoolPace for current target based on your school/district calendar.

# Kindergarten Scope & Sequence

## Unit 3: Ecology

## Unit 4: Entomology

**Q3: Approximate Weeks 18–26**

**Q4: Approximate Weeks 27–36**

**Across ALL Four Units**

SL.K.4: Describe familiar people, places, things, and events, and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail.

SL.K.5: Add drawings and other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.

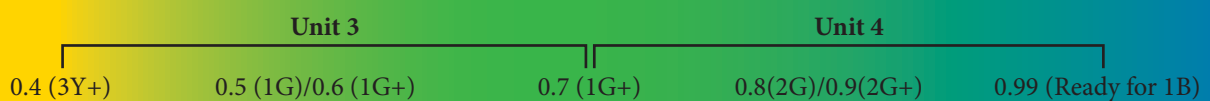
SL.K.6: Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.

**Across ALL Four Units**

L.K.5: With guidance and support from adults, explore word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

L.K.6: Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts.

### Kindergarten Independent Reading Level Assessment (IRLA) Targets\*



# Kindergarten Foundational Skills

	Week	Phonological/Phonemic Awareness	Phonics/Word Study Writing Represents Speech Letter Names & Sounds
Unit 1	1	Syllable Blending & Segmentation Rhyme Recognition & Production Sentence-Level Substitution (Word Awareness)	<p><b>Choose the sequence most appropriate for your class.</b></p> <p><b>Recommended Sequence:</b>                      Starter Consonants: b, t, d, j, k, p, v, z                      Ender Consonants: f, l, m, n, r, s, x                      Two-Sound Consonants: c, g                      Vowels: i, a, e, o, u                      Remaining Consonants: h, q, w, y</p> <p><b>Continuous vs. Stop Sequence:</b>                      Continuous Consonants: c,* f, l, m, n, r, s, v, w, z                      Stop Consonants: b, c,* d, g, h, j, k, p, t                      Vowels: i, a, e, o, u                      Vowel sounds are continuous.  <i>**“C” is continuous when it sounds /s/ and stop when it sounds /k/.</i></p> <p><b>Sequence to Leverage the Spanish Language:</b>                      Begin with the consonants that have a similar sound in both languages: b, d, f, m, n, p, s, t, k, x, y</p>
	2	Rhyme Recognition & Production Phoneme Recognition and Production	
	3	Rhyme Recognition & Production Sentence-Level Substitution (Word Awareness) Phoneme Recognition and Production	
	4	Rhyme Recognition & Production Phoneme Recognition and Production	
	5	Rhyme Recognition & Production Phoneme Recognition and Production	
	6	Rhyme Recognition & Production Phoneme Recognition and Production	

# Scope and Sequence

	Topic	Phonological/Phonemic Awareness	Phonics/Word Study Use known grapheme-phoneme correspondences to start to read, encode/spell, and analyze high-frequency words.
Unit 2	1.1	Alliteration Phoneme Isolation Phoneme Segmentation	Review: “l” and “v”: <i>love, l, a</i>
	1.2		Review: “a,” “t,” “m”: <i>at, am</i>
	1.3		Review: “i” and “n”: <i>in, it, is</i>
	1.4		Review: “u,” “p,” “o”: <i>up, on</i>
	1.5		Review: “j” and “c”: <i>an, can, can’t</i>
	2.1	Alliteration Phoneme Isolation Phoneme Segmentation	Review: “b” and “g”: <i>the, big</i>
	2.2		Review: “h” and “d”: <i>had, has</i>
	2.3		Review: “e” and “y”: <i>get, yes</i>
	2.4		Review: “s” and “k”: <i>lots, and, look</i>
	3.1	Alliteration Phoneme Isolation Phoneme Segmentation	“th”*: <i>this, that</i>
	3.2		Review: “w”: <i>with, will</i>
	3.3		Cumulative review of letters and sounds: <i>live, have</i>
	3.4		Review: “f” and “r”: <i>for, are</i>
	4.1	Alliteration Phoneme Isolation Phoneme Segmentation	Long “o”: <i>no, go</i>
	4.2		Long “e”: <i>be, we</i>
	4.3		Long “e”: <i>he, me</i>
	4.4		“sh”*: <i>she, all, was</i>
	5.1	Alliteration Phoneme Isolation Phoneme Segmentation	Cumulative review of letters and sounds: <i>my, why</i>
	5.2		Cumulative review of letters and sounds: <i>to, do</i>
	5.3		Cumulative review of letters and sounds: <i>who, you</i>
	6.1	Alliteration Phoneme Isolation Phoneme Segmentation	Review: “z” <i>see</i>
	6.2		Review: “q” <i>like</i>
	6.3		Review: “x” <i>of</i>
	6.4		Cumulative review of high-frequency words, letters, and sounds.
	6.5		

\*The digraphs “th” and “sh” are briefly introduced in this Unit and further studied in Unit 3.

# Kindergarten Foundational Skills

	Topic	Phonological/Phonemic Awareness	Phonics/Word Study Use known grapheme-phoneme correspondences to continue to read, encode/spell, and analyze high-frequency words.
Unit 3	1.1	Syllables	Review: “i,” “f,” “h,” “m”: <i>if, him</i>
	1.2	Phoneme Isolation Phoneme Segmentation Phoneme Blending	Review: “u,” “n,” “b,” “t”: <i>fun, but</i>
	2.1		/z/ spelled “s”: <i>as, his</i>
	2.2	Syllables	/th/: <i>them, then, these</i>
	2.3	Phoneme Isolation	/th/: <i>there, they</i>
	2.4	Phoneme Segmentation	/th/: <i>with</i>
	2.5	Phoneme Blending	Cumulative review
	3.1		/sh/: <i>she</i>
	3.2	Syllables	/ch/
	3.3	Phoneme Isolation	/wh/: <i>when</i>
	3.4	Phoneme Segmentation	/wh/: <i>what, where</i>
	3.5	Phoneme Blending	Cumulative review
	4.1		“L” blends: <i>play</i>
	4.2	Syllables	“R” blends: <i>from</i>
	4.3	Phoneme Isolation	Final blends: <i>jump, went</i>
	4.4	Phoneme Segmentation	“S” blends: <i>stop</i>
	4.5	Phoneme Blending	Cumulative review
	5.1		Long “i”: <i>like</i>
	5.2	Syllables	Long “o”: <i>home</i>
	5.3	Phoneme Isolation	Long “a”: <i>make, take, came</i>
	5.4	Phoneme Segmentation	Long “a”: <i>day</i>
	5.5	Phoneme Blending	Long “e”: <i>eat, see</i>
	6.1		/ow/: <i>down, how, now</i>
	6.2	Syllables	/ow/: <i>out</i>
	6.3	Phoneme Isolation	/aw/: <i>saw</i>
	6.4	Phoneme Segmentation	R-controlled vowels: <i>or, her</i>
	6.5	Phoneme Blending	Cumulative review



# Scope and Sequence

	Topic	Phonological/Phonemic Awareness	Phonics/Word Study Use grapheme-phoneme and onset-rime analysis to decode and encode/spell additional one-syllable words.	
Unit 4	1.1	Onset/Rime	Short Vowels	-at
	1.2	Phoneme Segmentation		-up
	1.3	Phoneme Blending Phoneme Manipulation		-it, -in
	2.1	Onset/Rime Phoneme Segmentation Phoneme Blending Phoneme Manipulation	Other Vowels	-am
	2.2			-an, -and
	2.3			-eat
	2.4			-all
	2.5			-out
	3.1	Onset/Rime Phoneme Segmentation Phoneme Blending Phoneme Manipulation	Short Vowels	-et, -en
	3.2			-ot, -op
	3.3			-ump
	3.4			-ill, -ack
	4.1	Onset/Rime Phoneme Segmentation Phoneme Blending Phoneme Manipulation	Long Vowels	-ike
	4.2			-ine
	4.3			-ake
	4.4			-ame
	4.5			Cumulative review
	5.1	Onset/Rime		Vowel team “ee” and final “e”
5.2	Phoneme Segmentation Phoneme Blending		Cumulative review	
5.3	Phoneme Manipulation		Cumulative review	

K-2 Foundational Skills instruction includes print concepts, phonological awareness, advanced phoneme awareness, letter formation, phonics, word recognition, word study, spelling, morphology, and fluency. Time is provided and protected each day for Foundational Skills instruction guided by explicit direction in the teacher’s guide, and for ample practice. American Reading Company engages in cycles of continuous improvement and revises materials regularly. | ARC04.27.23

# Restoring Humanity to Teaching, and Delight to Our Classrooms

By Justin Minkel



In education, tough talk is the coin of the realm for politicians, reformers, and administrators. “Accountability” plays well. “No excuses” is a trusty mantra.

Yet the great educators I know—those who consistently elicit the dramatic academic growth these tough talkers claim to want—tend to talk very differently about the children in their care.

They speak unashamedly of patience, kindness, and giving children second, third, and fourth chances. They speak without embarrassment or irony about compassion, joy, and hope.

Rich Ognibene, the 2008 New York Teacher of the Year, gave a talk this year at the annual conference of the National Network of State Teachers of the Year called “Keeping the Humanity in Our Profession.” He stated:

***“Teaching, at its core, is still a very human interaction. It must nourish the mind but it must also nourish the soul. Intellectual rigor must be accompanied by community building and social justice and unconditional love.”***

He went on to ask:

*“How do we resist the urge to spend so much time teaching to the test that we exclude love, laughter, art, music, play, and other lessons that are essential to human development? How do we keep the humanity in our profession?”*

Dyon T. Rozier, an assistant principal who grew up in the same high-poverty neighborhood in the Bronx where his school is located, came up to me after Ognibene’s presentation and said, “I’m excited, man! All this affective, social-emotional stuff is exactly what I believe in. But lately, I kept feeling like I was the only one.”

Dyon’s compassion for his students came through clearly, and he showed us photo after photo of young African-American men at his school with their arms slung around his shoulders, grinning with joy and confidence.

How could this impassioned, talented educator have come to feel he was the only administrator in his professional sphere who values students as human beings?

# Changing the Mission

I don't know any capable teacher who argues that quantifiable student achievement doesn't matter. If you lavish love and affection on your students but they don't learn to read, you have failed them.

But tough-talking policymakers seem to be missing the fundamental link between a child's humanity and her academic growth.

Shortly before his resignation in 2013, Principal George Wood reflected on the national shift in the educational climate in a final letter to his staff at the Stewart, Ohio, high school he had led for more than twenty years.

*What has changed is that it is harder for us to be nice to kids. With 'zero tolerance' laws and other Draconian rules, the mistakes some children make can no longer be forgiven. There is no benefit to this toughness. Turning a deaf ear to the needs of kids, to moments when we could be kind rather than just follow the rules, does not help kids learn anything.*

In systems that are punitive and authoritarian, with a myopic focus on standardized tests as a substitute for true student achievement, children wilt.

In systems that value children for who they are, where test data is simply one tool among many to help students become better thinkers, children thrive. In these places, tests and rules are a means to a greater end, not the end in themselves.

Last year our school changed its mission statement from a blandly worded line about student achievement to words that better reflect our true purpose: **"To help students live the lives they dream."**

Words matter. That simple revision keeps us focused on the ultimate destination rather than the tests our kids will take along the way.

Pernille Ripp, a Wisconsin teacher, author, and founder of the Global Read Aloud Project, describes her transformation as a teacher who started by shaping her classroom to adult priorities and then chose instead to shape it to children's needs.

Pernille admits that in her first few years as a teacher, she talked too much in class, made too many of the decisions, and wielded grades, tests, and threats like blunt weapons. She confesses, "The nine-year old me would have hated me as a teacher."

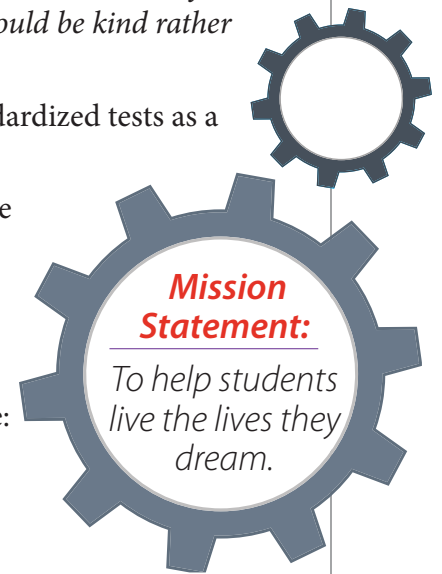
She also explains why and how she changed: "I reached a point where it became scarier to follow the rules than to break them."

George Wood writes:

*"School should be a place for all sorts of kindnesses. Students should leave us knowing that for this time in their lives they were in the company of people who genuinely liked them and worked in their best interests."*

Pernille's classroom became a place built around student ideas and student needs, because she did three simple things: **"Ask the students. Then listen. Then do."**

*Ask the students. Then listen. Then do.*



## A Gentler Approach

There is a jarring dissonance between the approach taken by world-class educators like Rich, Dyon, George Wood, and Pernille, and the approach inflicted on schools by architects of NCLB-era fear and punishment who still, after a 14-year failed experiment, beat the same weary drum.

**Any proposed policy that impacts children’s experience of school should be able to answer two fundamental questions.**

- 1. Will it make students’ lives better? Looking ahead to college, a career, and the lives they will lead, will students be happier, more thoughtful and capable human beings because of what they learned during their time in school?**
- 2. Does it work? Not just on paper, not as a set of talking points, but in real classrooms with real kids?**

Plenty of tough-talking reform efforts fail that test.

What actually works is a lot gentler. It doesn’t roar or bluster. It leads to miraculous results, but they are gradual miracles. They take years.

**Listening to children. Finding out what lies beneath their surface behavior. Helping them figure out who they want to become.**

Paying attention to who is in our classes, not just what the standards say they should learn. Treating our students with dignity, patience, and kindness whenever possible, even when it makes our jobs harder.

And remembering a simple truth: *School is for children.*

It’s not for legislators, administrators, philanthropists, business leaders, or even teachers.

Children spend more waking hours in school during the week than they spend with their own families. We need to design classrooms, policies, and school systems with their needs—not the needs of adults—in mind.

## The Courage to Change Schools

I believe we all need to be a little braver about challenging policies that fail children. We also need to have the courage to become the kinds of teachers our students need us to be.

When school or district priorities weight test scores more heavily than truly meeting children’s needs, we need to speak up. When our students perform well on tests but take no joy in learning, we need to ask where we have gone wrong.

It can be scary to speak truth to power, but it’s sometimes even harder to speak truth to yourself.

Writing a blistering blog post about failed policies put forth by powerful leaders, or standing up at a public meeting to give a legislator an earful about flaws in a new teacher-evaluation system, takes some measure of courage.

But realizing that our deepest beliefs about teaching may be out of alignment with our daily decisions can be terrifying. The admission is wrenching because there is no one to blame.

But that's also the reason why self-reflection can be so powerful. It always lies within our power to change the teacher we have become, not in some vague and distant future, but tomorrow and next week.

We ask a tremendous amount of our students. Constant focus. Patience with annoying classmates. Speaking in front of the class even if their English is shaky or they struggle to make sense of numbers.

So we can't ask less courage of ourselves. Witnessing teachers who have made that leap, even when they were the only ones leaping, has left me with a simple resolution: **to do a better job of shaping my classroom to the individual kids who walk through the door, instead of shaping those kids to my systems.**

I have begun to take more risks, as 2010 National Teacher of the Year Sarah Brown Wessling challenges everyone in our profession to do with a simple insight about her own journey as a teacher leader: "I have reached a point where I am more afraid of mediocrity than I am of making mistakes."

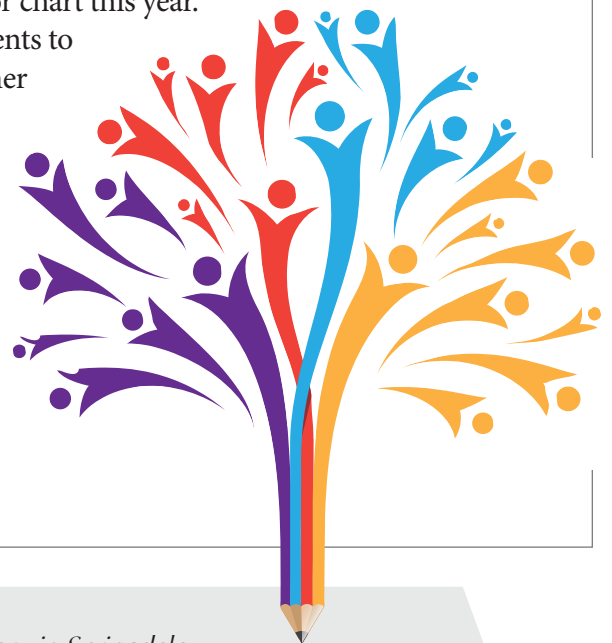
*I have made time to find out what my students like about our class, what they don't, and why.*

I have resolved to put less self worth into my students' test scores, and more into the degree of excitement and curiosity I see in their faces each day.

**I have made time to find out what my students like about our class, what they don't, and why.** One of the simplest ways to do this is the "Stoplight" activity, where students write one thing they want you to keep doing, one thing they want you to stop doing, and one thing they want you to start doing.

As a result, I took down the behavior chart this year. I have found ways to teach my students to work hard and be kind to one another without resorting to punishments or prizes. Being a teacher is harder now, but it's better, too.

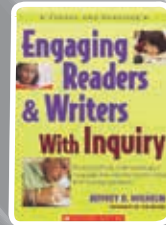
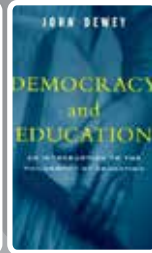
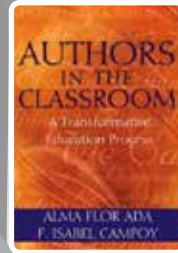
I love Philip Pullman's line that **"Responsibility and delight can co-exist."** In a time when some 1st graders can tell you their MAP score but can't tell you what they want to be when they grow up, the pendulum has swung far enough toward responsibility. Our job now is to restore the delight.



*Justin Minkel teaches 2nd and 3rd grade at Jones Elementary in Springdale, Ark., a high-performing, high-poverty school where 85 percent of the students are English-language learners. A former Teach For America corps member, Minkel was the 2007 Arkansas Teacher of the Year. In his instruction, he is focused on bringing advanced learning opportunities to immigrant and at-risk students. Follow him at @JustinMinkel.*

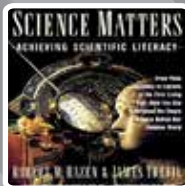
Article by Justin Minkel. Published in *Education Week Teacher*, online, November 30, 2015. <http://www.edweek.org/tm/articles/2015/11/30/restoring-humanity-to-teaching-and-delight-to.html>. Copyright © 2015 by Justin Minkel. Permission granted by the author.

# AMERICAN READING COMPANY



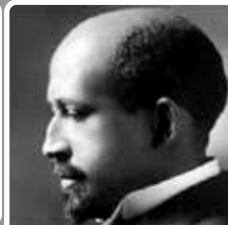
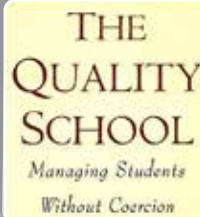
*The difference between an amateur and a pro is that the pro makes the 100th revision.*

—American Reading Company staff and 100BC teachers, students, parents, administrators



*The purpose of education is to organize the powers that ensure growth.*

—John Dewey and William Glasser



*Education is either liberation or perpetuation.*

—Paulo Freire, Alma Flor Ada, Isabel Campoy, Jiddu Krishnamurti, Kwame Ture, Jawanza Kunjufu, Sylvia Ashton-Warner, W. E. B. DuBois

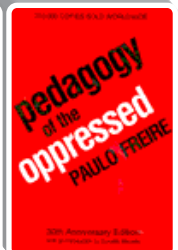
*If you want to teach people to do something new, don't bother telling them; give them a tool, the use of which will provide the learning.*

—Buckminster Fuller



*For me, it is an urgent question of power and morality; for others, it is an everyday matter of life and death.*

—Cornel West, Luis Rodriguez

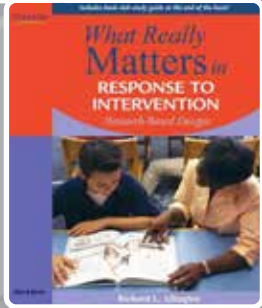
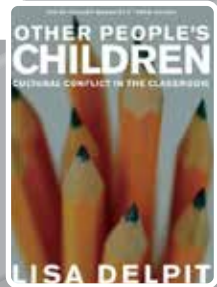


## Is Built on Big Ideas,



*If you are going to teach reading, you'd better be a reader. If you are going to teach writing, you'd better write.*

—Don Murray, Jane Hansen, Haki Madhubuti, Eleanor Duckworth, bell hooks, Robert Moses, Lisa Delpit, Dick Allington, Nancie Atwell

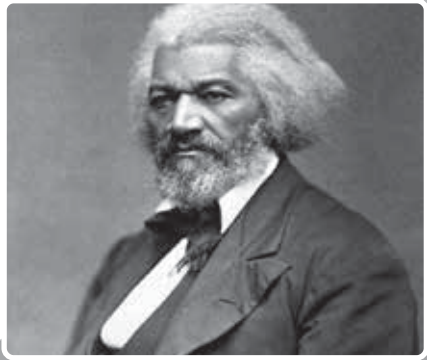


*Provide basic structure, promote self-direction.*  
—Grant Wiggins

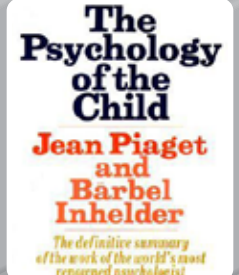
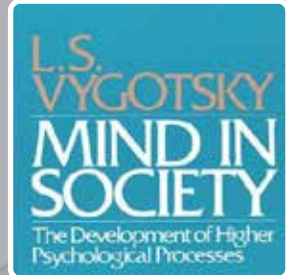
*You can only use what you already know to learn something new.*  
—David Ausubel



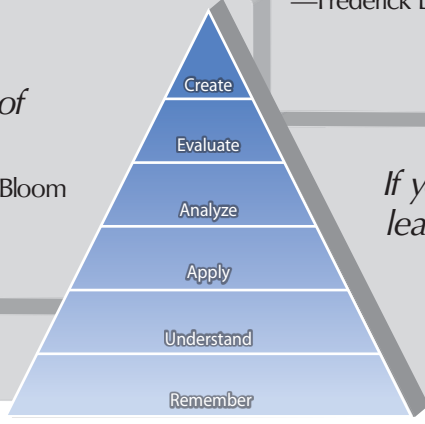
*Smart is not something you are. Smart is something you become.*  
—L. S. Vygotsky



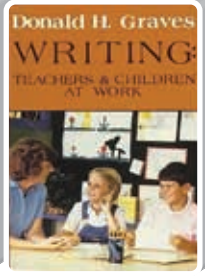
*Once you learn to read, you will be forever free.*  
—Frederick Douglass



*Taxonomy of Cognition*  
—Benjamin Bloom



*If you want to learn how people learn, watch one person closely.*  
—E. L. Thorndike, Jean Piaget, Carl Jung, Novak & Gowin



# Faith, and Frustration

# AMERICAN READING COMPANY'S

## *5 Touchstones for Excellence and Equity*

1. Examine the unconscious biases, fears, and assumptions that may constrain students' chances to be college- and career-ready.
2. Change entrenched institutional practices, including curriculum and instruction, that work against closing achievement gaps.
3. Create a healthy learning environment for students of all races and ethnicities, particularly students of color who have historically been excluded or unwelcome.
4. Create a hospitable learning environment for students of all gender presentations and family compositions.
5. Redesign approaches and systems so that no student's socioeconomic status is a barrier to success.





# Our Strength Is in Our Diversity

American Reading Company is a team of literacy activists devoted to one mission: every child in America reading and writing on or above grade-level, prepared to be the leader of their own life.

We believe that all children deserve:

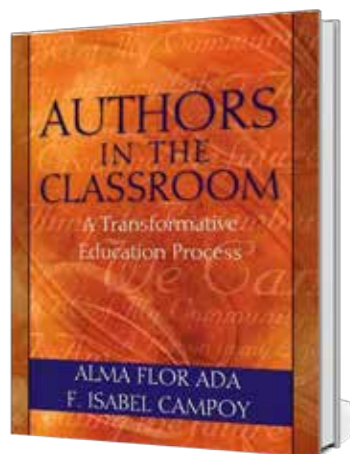
- books they CAN read and WANT to read in as many languages as they speak
- books that are both mirrors that celebrate their own cultures and windows into the diversity of our world
- academic friendships with people like and not like themselves
- participation in real learning about history, science, literature, and the world that includes the history of people like them
- writing projects that allow them to discover and express their own passions, identities, and geniuses
- a teacher-coach who knows how to use student differences as resources, not liabilities, and who believes they can be great readers, writers, and thinkers
- a team of teachers that learns from each other's talents to improve the outcomes for all students

...and a school that makes all of this possible.

## Writing and Leadership

*Public speaking and writing one's thoughts are leadership activities. The emphasis on creative activities connected with leadership tends to be reserved for the education of the elite. If we are to help all of our youth develop their ability, courage, and strength as leaders of a more just society, further attention needs to be given to the development of voice, both spoken and written (p. 31).*

—Alma Flor Ada & F. Isabel Campoy (2004),  
*Authors in the Classroom: A Transformative  
Education Process*





## To Write Is to Claim One's Voice

At ARC, we understand that reading and writing are two sides of the same coin—we read to learn about ourselves and the world as we write to claim our places in it. Reading and writing instruction must be integrated because they are multipliers of each other—improvement in either one drives improvement in the other.

ARC Core is a writing-intensive curriculum in which students write, revise, rewrite, and write again every day, producing many short pieces and 3–5 extended texts every year. Authentic tasks that require extensive reading and writing allow students to build vocabulary, practice speaking and listening skills, and work on grammar, mechanics, usage, and structure naturally. Over several years, this practice develops confident, competent, inspired writers who can easily dash off a well-researched editorial to a local paper or carefully polish a perfect short story for publication.

## What Reading Does for the Mind

We found that reading volume made a significant contribution to multiple measures of vocabulary, general knowledge, spelling, and verbal fluency even after reading comprehension ability and nonverbal ability had been partialled out...

Scores among the group high in reading volume and low in television exposure were the highest, and the lowest scores were achieved by those high in television exposure and low in reading volume...

Those who read a lot will enhance their verbal intelligence; that is, reading will make them smarter...

A positive dimension of our research is that all of our studies have demonstrated that reading yields significant dividends for everyone—not just for the “smart kids” or the more able readers. Even the child with limited reading and comprehension skills will build vocabulary and cognitive structures through reading...

We often despair of changing our students’ abilities, but there is at least one partially malleable habit that will itself develop abilities—reading!

—Anne E. Cunningham & Keith E. Stanovich (1998),  
“What Reading Does for the Mind”



## Avid Reading Is Fundamental

Loving reading is not innate—some children learn it from their families and some children don't. For those who don't learn to love books at home, it is the first job of teachers to use school time to teach them to love to read. Students who learn to love reading read enough to get good at it.

Older students who fall in love with reading for the first time in middle or high school, who read like crazy and get help from their teachers or parents, make two, three, even four years of growth in one year. Avid reading changes lives.



**Smart Is Not  
Something  
You Are;**

**Smart Is  
Something  
You Become.**





# All Means All

We believe that it is possible to do school in such a way that ALL students, from those not yet reading at grade level to those reading far above, thrive in the same classrooms.

## **Grade-Level Rigor for ALL**

Multilingual learners, students not yet reading at grade level, and students receiving specific supports (special education, gifted and talented education, etc.) work successfully with rich, complex text and each other, every day.

## **Appropriate Support for ALL**

Our supports go far beyond the traditional *below*, *on*, and *above*. We know that students in our classrooms can't be so easily categorized. ARC classroom libraries routinely include a much wider range of reading levels, usually six to eight grade levels' worth. We assess each book separately for reading level and age appropriateness, allowing us to offer collections tailored to elementary students reading at high school levels as well as ones for high school students reading at elementary reading levels.

## **Achievement Growth for ALL**

Every child's rate of reading growth is tracked in real time to ensure that all students, no matter how high above grade level, make at least a year's growth in a year, while students not yet reading at grade level make enough accelerated growth to catch up to their peers.

# IRLA DEVELOPMENTAL READING TAXONOMY



















































## Meet Them Where They Are

Our approach asks teachers to start with what each child CAN do.

Teachers begin with CAN: Identify the one essential skill/standard that a student needs next to move reading levels, help the student learn it, and repeat in a relentless march toward grade level and beyond.

Teachers know their students, students know themselves, and teachers and students are partners in the learning process.

Teachers collaborate with their peers—learning who already knows how to teach chunking or Latin roots or science fiction—working as a team to improve their practices and outcomes for their collective students.

	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
K	 So, You Want to Be a Scientist?	<b>Zoology</b>	<b>Ecology</b>	<b>Entomology</b>
	<b>Literacy Lab</b> (R.1, R.4, R.10, W.9, W.10)	<b>Informational</b> (R.2, R.5, R.7, W.2)	<b>Genre</b> (R.2, R.3, R.5, R.9, W.1, W.3)	<b>Argument</b> (R.6, R.8, W.1)
Grade 1	 Mapping My World			
Grade 2	 Words Change the World			
Grade 3	 Dinosaurs & Knights			
Grade 4	 Bravery & Your Brain			
Grade 5	 Aliens			
Grade 6	 	<b>GEOLOGY</b>		
Grade 7	 	<b>HUMAN BODY</b>		
Grade 8	 	<b>Environmental Studies</b>		
Grade 9	 	<b>Memoir</b> & Writing		
Grade 10	 			
Grade 11	 			
Grade 12	 	<b>AFRICA</b>		

Scope & Sequence Customized to Match Your District

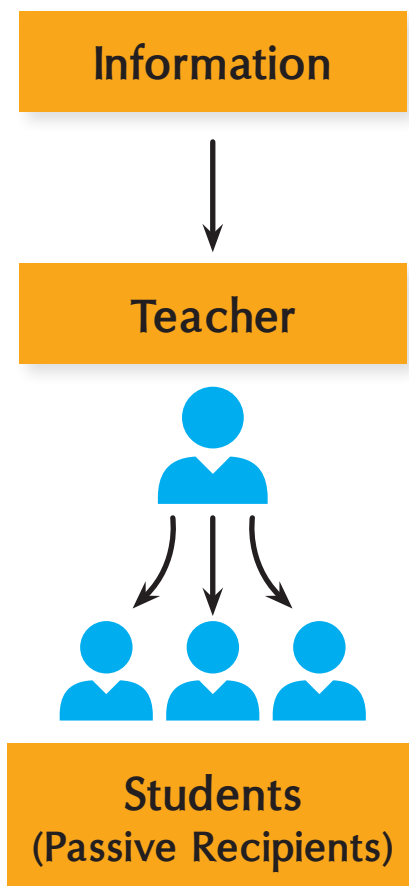


## Knowledge Matters

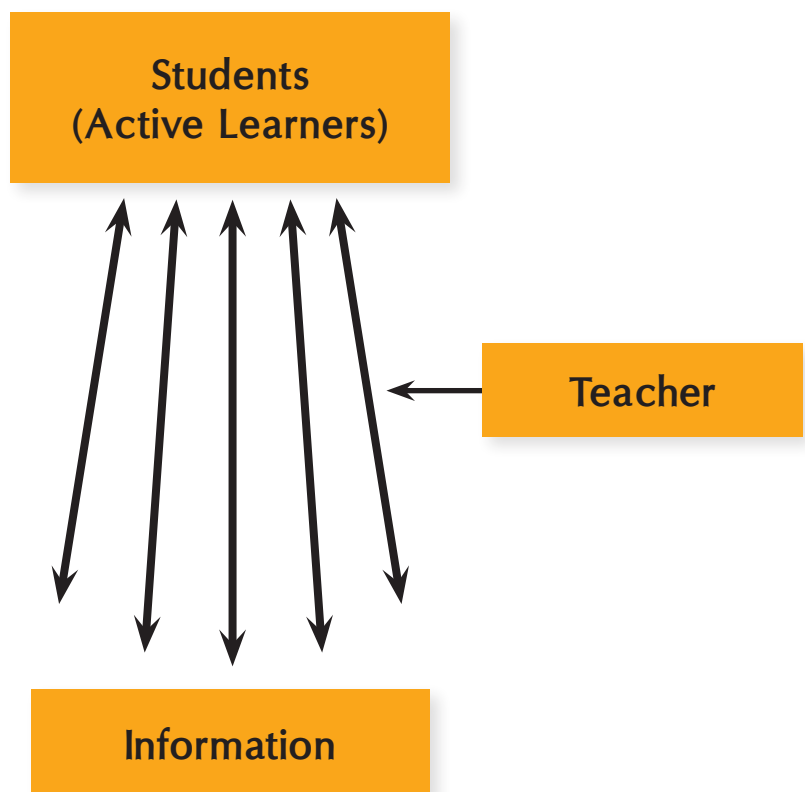
The major distinguishers between a 3rd-grade-level text and a 12th-grade-level text are the amount of academic vocabulary and knowledge about the world a reader must already have in order to understand the text. Knowing this, we start developing students' deep knowledge about a few real-world topics through reading, writing, research, word work, and collaboration from the beginning of Kindergarten. By the time children in ARC schools reach 3rd grade, they are already experts on animals, bugs, the ocean, ecosystems, and weather, among others, while also spending hundreds of hours in free choice reading about anything and everything under the sun.

From K–12, the combination of free choice wide reading and the focused study of a few topics work together to systematically build students' knowledge, vocabulary, and global perspective(s) through the 12th-grade level.

## Stand & Deliver



## Teacher As Learning Coach





## Teacher as Researcher

At ARC, our approach is different because it does not focus on teachers delivering a specific set of content about specific texts. Instead, we ask teachers to coach students on *how to learn*—how to apply standards and thinking skills and big ideas to *any text or any topic*—then watch while they do it to see what works and what needs to change. As the most expert reader, writer, and learner in the room, the teacher shifts from transmitting information to modeling and facilitating learning.

The goal is to create students who are capable of creative, innovative thinking while building both deep knowledge and the “soft skills” like collaboration, learning from feedback, self-direction, and problem solving that will prepare students for the 21st century workplace.

In this model, evidence of student learning drives decision making. The question is not *What did I teach?*, but rather *What have students learned? How do I know? What will I/they do differently tomorrow and why?*

When students leave school, they will enter a world where self-motivation, creativity, autonomy, and perseverance are all critically important, and these are characteristics that are hard to practice in an environment centered on standardization and compliance.

—Mike Anderson (2016), *Learning to Choose, Choosing to Learn*



# Provide Basic Structure

# Promote Self-Direction

## Basic Structure (Daily Routine)

- The IRLA/ENIL provides both direction and momentum, but does not limit reading choices.
- Students, regardless of reading level or language background, read, reread, and discuss grade-level texts and content with the entire class.
- Proficiency criteria are clear for all projects (rubrics) and understood by students.
- Students work in success-level materials both independently and with skilled teacher support in a variety of groupings and contexts.
- Students write for a variety of reasons, both short, targeted pieces and larger, published research projects.
- Students work together, listen to each other talk, draw, use technology, arts, music, etc.

## Self-Direction

- Student choice (what book to read, what subtopic to research, what topic to write about, which position to support, etc.)

Inquiry is the daily craft of teachers as reflective practitioners and professional knowledge-makers, as well as part of our work as collaborative fellow learners with students being apprenticed into the expert practices of readers, composers, and problem-solvers of all kinds. And that is why inquiry through apprenticeship is the smartest way to teach: because it makes both students and teachers smarter in ways that count in school, in real disciplinary work, and in that most authentic of all testing situations—out in the world of democratic work and living.

—Jeffrey Wilhelm (2016), “What Is Inquiry Through Apprenticeship and Why Should We Teach This Way?”






# Provide Basic Structure Promote Self-Direction...for Educators

## Basic Structure

- Protect daily reading from self-selected texts (not limited to specific levels).
- Engage the whole group in rigorous, grade-level content and texts.
- Connect reading and writing in meaningful ways.
- Organize one-on-one and small-group instruction and intervention by the IRLA/ENIL.
- Use the embedded backward design model, teaching to end of day, end of week, end of Unit goals (Focus Standard clusters, rubrics, FPOs, etc.).
- Work with the Professional Learning Community (PLC) to become a continuous improvement research team.

## Self-Direction

Our curriculum is a FRAMEWORK, not a script. What should students argue about while they study the Civil War? What lessons should they take away from a study of Science Fiction? It depends. It depends on the children in your classroom. It depends on you. There is no perfect script that will work for all personalities and all classrooms. Instead, we give you a highly structured framework that works in general, from which you will need to create the version that *works for you*, in your district, in your school, in your classroom, with your students.



Knowledge will forever govern ignorance: And a people who mean to be their own Governors, must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives.

—James Madison



# Teach Like Our Democracy Depends on It

...Because it does.

# What Is Inquiry Through Apprenticeship And Why Should We Teach This Way?

*Jeffrey D. Wilhelm, Distinguished Professor of English Education at Boise State University*

There are three broad models of teaching and learning (Rogoff et al., 1996). It must be the goal of expert teaching to assist students to deep and usable understandings, or what might be called “**conscious competence**”—i.e., knowing what you know, how you know it, how to justify it with disciplinary standards, and how to apply and continue developing this knowledge. Only one model, **inquiry through apprenticeship**, effectively develops students’ conscious competence and prepares them for real world success.

## What Is Inquiry Through Apprenticeship?

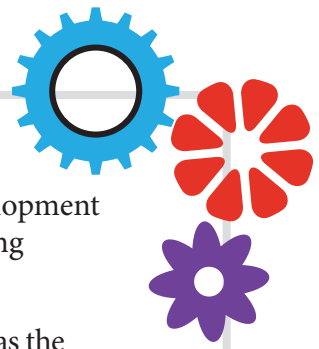
What is inquiry through apprenticeship and how is it different from other educational approaches? To explain, let’s imagine a teacher trying to teach students how to make spaghetti sauce.

**Approach 1: Information Transmission:** The teacher provides the students with a standard archival recipe for making spaghetti sauce and asks students to memorize the recipe and repeat it on a test. Teaching here is telling and focuses on the WHAT or information to be purveyed. Learning, in this model, is demonstrated by retelling. But here’s a big bold BUT: research shows that even students who ace the retelling test typically do not understand the content, cannot apply it, and regularly forget the information.

**Approach 2: Discovery:** The teacher provides kitchen space, tomato paste, spices and the like and says “Go to town! Figure it out!” Learning is demonstrated through effort and doing something for oneself. One can imagine the mess that could ensue. Teaching in this model is creating a nurturing environment and focuses on the WHO of the learner. The teacher provides materials and an environment to stimulate student activity and “discovery.” Research indicates that in such environments, students do what they already know to do and do not learn new ways of thinking, problem-solving, or being.

**Approach 3: Inquiry Through Apprenticeship:** First, the teacher models different ways of making spaghetti sauce, then mentors, guides, and assists learners to make some different sauces, all the while helping students to develop “conscious competence” by articulating principles/conceptual knowledge about the chemistry of cooking, the interaction of flavors and the like, and principles of practice/procedural knowledge of cooking. Learning is demonstrated through actual independent accomplishment in a culminating project, e.g., developing one’s own unique spaghetti sauce, based on the principles and practices learned, shared and explained to a real audience. The focus here is on the WHY and the HOW—the purposes and processes of learning—but also on the WHAT of generative conceptual knowledge, the WHO of the





disciplinary expert, and the WHEN and WHERE of the context of knowledge development and application. In this model, teaching is modeling, then mentoring and monitoring learning.

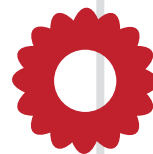
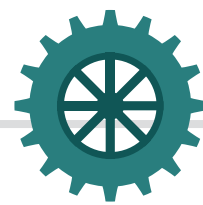
A further goal of the inquiry apprenticeship model is that learners meet what is known as the “**correspondence concept**” by thinking about cooking in ways that correspond more closely to how experts think about the culinary arts, that they practice cooking more like an expert, and that they would continue to develop this knowledge through their lives. In other words, the learner has been apprenticed into expertise through inquiry in ways that lead to further inquiry. The developed knowledge is generative and unconstrained—able to be further developed and honed over a lifetime—unlike the inert facts learned through information transmission or the kinds of learning unconnected to disciplinary knowledge and standards that tend to occur through discovery learning. As a term of art in cognitive science, inquiry is the *rigorous apprenticeship into disciplinary expertise and meaning-making*. It is learning how to solve problems and design solutions by using the stances and strategies of expert practitioners.

Likewise, expert teachers strive to attain their own conscious competence as teachers—to possess a wide repertoire of strategies to assist student learning in various ways under different conditions. Expertise in teaching resides in what is known as **pedagogical content knowledge**—knowing *how* to teach students *how* to read, write, and learn (Shulman, 1986). Our next generation standards (like the Core in the U.S.) represent profound cognitive achievements in producing and performing knowledge, and meeting the demands of these standards and their assessments will require expert teaching in the HOW.

## Why Inquiry Through Apprenticeship Works

There are many studies that support the case for using inquiry as cognitive apprenticeship both in terms of student learning and in teacher development. The gold standard research for student learning is the *Successful School Restructuring Study* conducted by Fred Newman (Newman & Wehlage, 1995; Newman, et al, 1996). Involving 23 schools and over 2,300 students, learners were found to enjoy significantly higher engagement and achievement on challenging tasks when they learned in an inquiry environment. Inquiry practices were shown to have more positive impact on student performance both short- and long-term than any other factor, including prior achievement and background. Furthermore, internationally, standardized test data that can be disaggregated by teaching treatment, such as the TIMSS and NAEPs, show that students who learn in an inquiry context achieve at significantly higher levels (See, for example, Weglinsky, 2004; McTighe, Seif, & Wiggins, 2004). George Hillocks’ finely grained studies and reviews also make the case for inquiry. Hillocks’ findings are that reading and writing are forms of inquiry that are best taught and learned in inquiry contexts. Period. FULL STOP. (See Hillocks 1986, 1995, 1999).

Inquiry invites differentiation and meets the needs of all students, particularly those who are reluctant, because it foregrounds learning as purposeful, provides varied kinds of assistance and practice, multiple opportunities to make and do things with what is learned, helps students stake their identity, and—perhaps most importantly—explicitly and flexibly apprentices and assists students over time to achieve visible signs of competence, deep understanding, and actual accomplishment (Smith & Wilhelm, 2002; 2006). In our studies of boys, we found that inquiry



naturally meets all basic human needs for engagement and the conditions of “flow” experience (Czikszentmihalyi, 1990):

- A clear purpose, intermediate goals, immediate and continuous feedback about one’s progress
- A challenge that requires an appropriate level of skill and assistance to meet the challenge (as needed to be successful)
- A sense of control and developing competence (e.g., learners exercise their own voices, stake their opinions and identities, make meaningful choices, and name their growing competence)
- A focus on Immediate Experience (e.g., what is learned has current relevance; is connected personally to students as well as to the world; students make and do things with an immediate function; involves edginess, fun and sometimes humor)
- The social (students do significant work together, sharing and using it with others)

Inquiry models also meet human needs for relationship, reciprocity, collaboration, and the “contract to care” as teachers and students work together to solve problems and create knowledge (Smith & Wilhelm, 2002; 2006).

It is compelling how traditional information-transmission formats like lectures, worksheets, formulaic assessments, and textbook reading meet none of the conditions of flow nor the contract to care in schools. However, inquiry treatments necessarily and by design *do* meet all of these conditions.

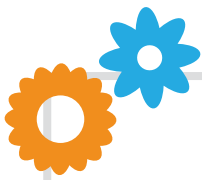
## **Inquiry Is Democratic.**

Another important aspect of inquiry is that it involves collaboration between teachers and students, between students as peers, and, at least implicitly though sometimes explicitly, between teachers and students and disciplinary experts. Inquiry is a particularly democratic form of teaching and learning and, as such, privileges pre-existing interests, unique perspectives, and the various strengths of individuals, including those of students who may be typically marginalized in school. Inquiry requires students and teachers to be agents and activist learners who know how to problem-solve and learn, who are willing to take on challenges and to provide service to others based on what they have learned.

## **An Inquiry Culture Within and Across Classrooms**

In my mind, the most successful learning is supported by inquiry at multiple levels. Such learning contexts feature students who:

1. Collaboratively explore inquiry topics with each other and with their teacher/s and other experts, working together to create knowledge and knowledge artifacts that are usable, revisable, extensible, transferable, and archival.
2. Develop conscious competence with threshold concepts and procedures for learning, problem-solving and meaning-making that can be developed and honed throughout a lifetime.



3. Inquire into their own reading and writing, learning about expert practice, monitoring their own progress, and sharing expertise with others through modeling and peer response. These students will use assessment as learning: constantly reflecting on their work and analyzing their processes in order to improve them. These students will create daily deliverables that reveal what they know and can do, as well as their areas of productive struggle.

Such a context also features teachers:

4. Collaboratively participating in creating meanings with students, continuously learning from students how to teach them better.
5. Engaging in inquiry as action research, trying new actions and interventions, creating conscious competence and principles of practice, always extending their repertoires.
6. Operating as public intellectuals, reading research together, deprivatizing their practice, working as thinking partners by sharing their instructional moves, student work, and action research.

## The Bottom Line!

Inquiry leads to deep engagement, understanding, and use. I have to ask: if you aren't teaching and learning for conscious competence and application, then what are you teaching and learning for? Inquiry provides the additional benefits of fostering imagination, joy, service, and the pursuit of wisdom (Wilhelm, Fry & Douglass, 2014; Wilhelm & Novak, 2013). Inquiry is the most powerful educational path forward and must be part of students' daily experiences as learners of powerful stances and strategies for reading, writing, solving problems and doing work in the world. Inquiry is also the daily craft of teachers as reflective practitioners and professional knowledge-makers, as well as part of our work as collaborative fellow learners with students being apprenticed into the expert practices of readers, composers, and problem-solvers of all kinds. And that is why inquiry through apprenticeship is the smartest way to teach: because it makes both students and teachers smarter in ways that count in school, in real disciplinary work, and in that most authentic of all testing situations—out in the world of democratic work and living.

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# Reading – Kindergarten

		UNIT 1: ARC Literacy Lab	UNIT 2: Zoology	UNIT 3: Ecology	UNIT 4: Entomology
<b>Reading Standards: Literature</b>					
RL.K.1	With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	✓	✓	✓	✓
RL.K.2	With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including key details.	✓		✓	
RL.K.3	With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story.	✓			✓
RL.K.4	Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.	✓	✓	✓	✓
RL.K.5	Recognize common types of texts (e.g., storybooks, poems).		✓		
RL.6.K	With prompting and support, name the author and illustrator of a story and define the role of each in telling the story.	✓			
RL.K.7	With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear (e.g., what moment in a story an illustration depicts).	✓		✓	
RL.K.8	(RL.K.8 not applicable to literature)				
RL.K.9	With prompting and support, compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories.	✓			✓
RL.K.10	Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.	✓	✓	✓	✓



# Reading – Kindergarten

		UNIT 1: ARC Literacy Lab	UNIT 2: Zoology	UNIT 3: Ecology	UNIT 4: Entomology
<b>Reading Standards: Informational</b>					
RI.K.1	With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	✓	✓	✓	✓
RI.K.2	With prompting and support, identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.		✓	✓	✓
RI.K.3	With prompting and support, describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.				✓
RI.K.4	With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.	✓	✓	✓	✓
RI.K.5	Identify the front cover, back cover, and title page of a book.	✓	✓		
RI.6.K	Name the author and illustrator of a text and define the role of each in presenting the ideas or information in a text.	✓			
RI.K.7	With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the text in which they appear (e.g., what person, place, thing, or idea in the text an illustration depicts).	✓	✓	✓	✓
RI.K.8	With prompting and support, identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.			✓	
RI.K.9	With prompting and support, identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).		✓	✓	✓
RI.K.10	Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.	✓	✓	✓	✓

## Foundational Skills – Kindergarten

		UNIT 1: ARC Literacy Lab	UNIT 2: Zoology	UNIT 3: Ecology	UNIT 4: Entomology
<b>Print Concepts</b>					
<b>RF.K.1:</b> Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.					
RF.K.1	A. Follow words from left to right, top to bottom, and page by page.	✓			
	B. Recognize that spoken words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters.	✓	✓		
	C. Understand that words are separated by spaces in print.	✓			
	D. Recognize and name all upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet.	✓		✓	
<b>Phonological Awareness</b>					
<b>RF.K.2:</b> Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).					
RF.K.2	A. Recognize and produce rhyming words.	✓			
	B. Count, pronounce, blend, and segment syllables in spoken words.			✓	
	C. Blend and segment onsets and rimes of single-syllable spoken words.				✓
	D. Isolate and pronounce the initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in three-phoneme (consonant-vowel-consonant, or CVC) words. (This does not include CVCs ending with /l/, /r/, or /x/.)			✓	✓
	E. Add or substitute individual sounds (phonemes) in simple, one-syllable words to make new words.			✓	✓

## Foundational Skills – Kindergarten

		UNIT 1: ARC Literacy Lab	UNIT 2: Zoology	UNIT 3: Ecology	UNIT 4: Entomology
<b>Phonics and Word Recognition</b>					
<b>RF.K.3:</b> Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.					
RF.K.3	A. Demonstrate basic knowledge of one-to-one letter-sound correspondences by producing the primary sound or many of the most frequent sounds for each consonant.	✓			
	B. Associate the long and short sounds with the common spellings (graphemes) for the five major vowels.				✓
	C. Read common high-frequency words by sight (e.g., <i>the, of, to, you, she, my, is, are, do, does</i> ).		✓	✓	
	D. Distinguish between similarly spelled words by identifying the sounds of the letters that differ.		✓	✓	
<b>Fluency</b>					
RF.K.4	Read emergent-reader texts with purpose and understanding.	✓	✓	✓	✓

# Writing – Kindergarten

		UNIT 1: ARC Literacy Lab	UNIT 2: Zoology	UNIT 3: Ecology	UNIT 4: Entomology
<b>Text Types and Purposes</b>					
W.K.1	Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces in which they tell a reader the topic or the name of the book they are writing about and state an opinion or preference about the topic or book (e.g., <i>My favorite book is...</i> ).	✓	✓	✓	✓
W.K.2	Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.		✓	✓	✓
W.K.3	Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.		✓	✓	✓
<b>Production and Distribution of Writing</b>					
W.K.4	(W.K.4 begins in grade 3)				
W.K.5	With guidance and support from adults, respond to questions and suggestions from peers and add details to strengthen writing as needed.		✓	✓	✓
W.K.6	With guidance and support from adults, explore a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers.		✓	✓	✓
<b>Research to Build and Present Knowledge</b>					
W.K.7	Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of books by a favorite author and express opinions about them).	✓	✓	✓	✓
W.K.8	With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.		✓	✓	✓
W.K.9	(W.K.9 begins in grade 4)				
<b>Range of Writing</b>					
W.K.10	(W.K.10 begins in grade 3)				

# Language – Kindergarten

		UNIT 1: ARC Literacy Lab	UNIT 2: Zoology	UNIT 3: Ecology	UNIT 4: Entomology
<b>Conventions of Standard English</b>					
L.K.1	<p>Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</p> <p>A. Print many upper- and lowercase letters.</p> <p>B. Use frequently occurring nouns and verbs.</p> <p>C. Form regular plural nouns orally by adding /s/ or /es/ (e.g., <i>dog, dogs; wish, wishes</i>).</p> <p>D. Understand and use question words (interrogatives) (e.g., <i>who, what, where, when, why, how</i>).</p> <p>E. Use the most frequently occurring prepositions (e.g., <i>to, from, in, out, on, off, for, of, by, with</i>).</p> <p>F. Produce and expand complete sentences in shared language activities.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓
L.K.2	<p>Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</p> <p>A. Capitalize the first word in a sentence and the pronoun <i>I</i>.</p> <p>B. Recognize and name end punctuation.</p> <p>C. Write a letter or letters for most consonant and short-vowel sounds (phonemes).</p> <p>D. Spell simple words phonetically, drawing on knowledge of sound-letter relationships.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Knowledge of Language</b>					
L.K.3	(L.K.3 begins in grade 2)				
<b>Vocabulary Acquisition and Use</b>					
L.K.4	<p>Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on kindergarten reading and content.</p> <p>A. Identify new meanings for familiar words and apply them accurately (e.g., knowing <i>duck</i> is a bird and learning the verb <i>to duck</i>).</p> <p>B. Use the most frequently occurring inflections and affixes (e.g., <i>-ed, -s, re-, un-, pre-, -ful, -less</i>) as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓
L.K.5	<p>With guidance and support from adults, explore word relationships and nuances in word meanings.</p> <p>A. Sort common objects into categories (e.g., shapes, foods) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent.</p> <p>B. Demonstrate understanding of frequently occurring verbs and adjectives by relating them to their opposites (antonyms).</p> <p>C. Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., note places at school that are colorful).</p> <p>D. Distinguish shades of meaning among verbs describing the same general action (e.g., <i>walk, march, strut, prance</i>) by acting out the meanings.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓
L.K.6	Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts.	✓	✓	✓	✓

# Speaking & Listening – Kindergarten

		UNIT 1: ARC Literacy Lab	UNIT 2: Zoology	UNIT 3: Ecology	UNIT 4: Entomology
<b>Comprehension and Collaboration</b>					
SL.K.1	<p>Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.</p> <p>A. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others and taking turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion).</p> <p>B. Continue a conversation through multiple exchanges.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓
SL.K.2	<p>Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓
SL.K.3	<p>Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas</b>					
SLK.4	<p>Describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓
SL.K.5	<p>Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓
SL.K.6	<p>Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓