



Improving Instruction, Assessment, and Policies for Secondary English Learners Across the Content Areas • September 2024

# *The Role of Educative Materials in Ecologies of Learning: Iterative Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of English Language Arts Curriculum*

# The Study

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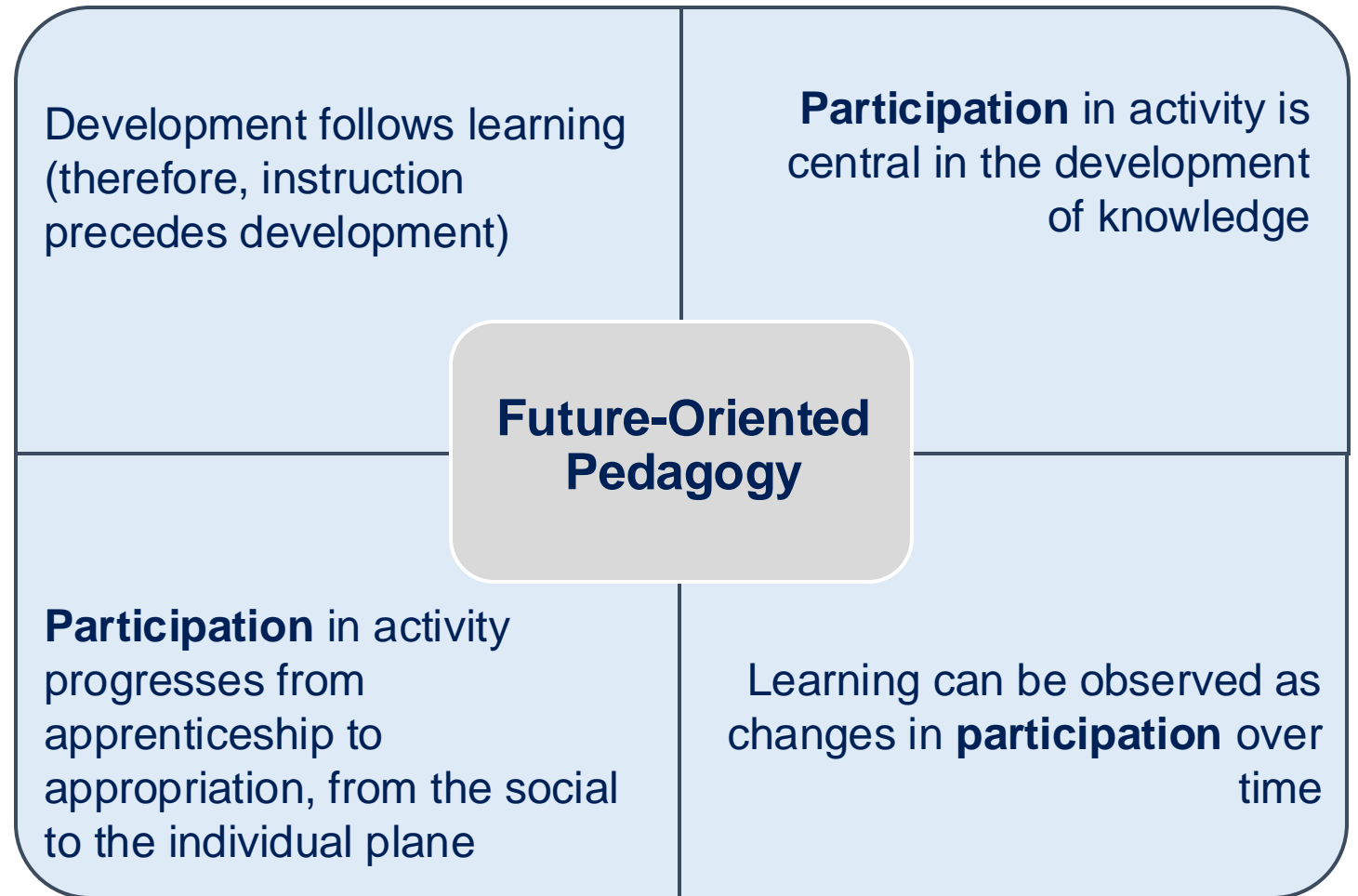
To iteratively design a 12-week “replacement unit” for students classified as “Long Term English Learners” in 8<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA.

- RCT to be conducted next semester.
- Teachers in the control group will receive 4 days of professional development and ongoing implementation support.

# Our Theoretical and Pedagogical Perspectives

- Sociocultural/Ecological Theory
- Educative
- Dialogic Interactions focused on the development of Oracy

# Sociocultural Theory



# Educative Materials

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- Educative materials have the goal of supporting teacher learning as they design and enact lessons (Davis et al 2017)
- We added the goal of fostering student autonomy through social engagement in metacognitive processes
- Formative and summative assessment practices are an integral part of the curriculum for students

# Critical Dialogic Interactions

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- Go beyond IRF to engage students in jointly constructing knowledge (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; Mehan, 1979)
- Students must have deliberately crafted and frequent opportunities to co-construct understandings, and to engage with multiple perspectives, ideas, and backgrounds in their classrooms (Mercer, 2019; Alexander, 2020; Walqui & Schmida, 2022; )
- Opportunities for critical dialogic teaching can foster students' ability to build upon their own life experiences and their understanding of the world in which they live (Walqui, 2024)

# Where we began

We began our work by critically analyzing district mandated curricula for English Language Arts

# Curriculum A:

A review of the current curricula used by the district revealed an overall inclusion of interesting and varied texts

## Unit Texts

- I'm Nobody! Who are you? (Poetry)
- Commencement Address to the Santa Fe Indian School (Argumentative Text)
- Curtain Call (Informational Text)
- So where are you from? (Informational Text)
- The Outsiders (Fiction)
- Slam, Dunk, & Hook (Poetry)
- Abuela Invents the Zero (Fiction)
- Inside Out and Back Again (Fiction)
- Theories of Time and Space (Poetry)
- The Road Not Taken (Poetry)
- The House on Mango Street (Fiction)



# Students mostly work either alone or as a whole class

## SUGGESTED GROUPING FOR ACTIVITIES

(In the table below, "X" means "applicable.")

	WHOLE GROUP	PAIRS OR SMALL GROUPS	ON THEIR OWN
Complete Vocabulary Chart			x
Writer's Notebook			x
Complete Skills Focus		x	x
Collaborative Conversation		x	
Review Prompt and Rubric	x		
(Optional) Prewrite with Graphic Organizer			x
Write			x
Peer Review and Reflect			x
(Optional) Connect to Extended Writing Project	x		
(Optional) Beyond the Book	x		

# Students have few opportunities to work in pairs or small groups



## SUGGESTED GROUPING FOR ACTIVITIES

(In the table below, "X" means "applicable.")

	WHOLE GROUP	PAIRS OR SMALL GROUPS	ON THEIR OWN
Complete Vocabulary Chart			X
Writer's Notebook			X
Complete Skills Focus		X	X
Collaborative Conversation		X	
Review Prompt and Rubric	X		
(Optional) Prewrite with Graphic Organizer			X
Write			X
Peer Review and Reflect			X
(Optional) Connect to Extended Writing Project	X		
(Optional) Beyond the Book	X		

# Opportunities to work together are unstructured



**Complete Skills Focus**  
Have students work in small groups to discuss, read, and annotate the first Skills Focus prompt.

**Check for Success**  
If students struggle to respond to Skills Focus Question #1, ask students the following questions:

1. How is the structure of the lines in the first stanza similar and different to the structure of the lines in the second stanza?
2. How is the rhyme scheme in the first stanza similar and different to the rhyme scheme in the second stanza?

Have students transition to read and annotate independently once they have successfully completed the first Skills Focus prompt.

**CA-CCSS:** CA.RL.8.1, CA.RL.8.2, CA.RL.8.3, CA.RL.8.5, CA.RL.8.10

### Listen for Literary Devices

Turn on the Audio Text feature and play the text for students. Have students actively listen in order to identify literary devices in the text. You may choose to review applicable literary devices with students before starting the audio, which are defined in the following list. (Note: You may have to play the audio two or three times in order for students to successfully complete the task.)

- hyperbole- an exaggerated statement or claim not meant to be taken literally, often used for humorous effect
- tone- the author's, speaker's, or narrator's attitude toward a subject, evident through diction and other style elements
- symbolism- the use of concrete objects to represent abstract ideas or qualities
- imagery- descriptive or figurative language in a work of literature used to appeal to the reader's senses
- mood- the emotional atmosphere of a piece of writing, created through diction, figurative language, and other choices
- irony- the contrast between what is said and what is meant or what is expected and what actually happens
- onomatopoeia- using words that imitate the sound they denote (for example: meow, pop, crash)

After students identify literary devices in the poem, ask students the following question:

- How do these literary devices support your interpretation of the text?

You can choose to have a whole group discussion or break the students into small groups to reflect on this activity.



# Curriculum B:

## A review of a second national curriculum showed similar features



ACTIVITY	CONTENTS
1.1	<b>Previewing the Unit</b> ..... 4
1.2	<b>Escape from Reality</b> ..... 6 <i>Cartoon:</i> “Virtual Pigskin,” by Mike Twohy <i>Argument:</i> from <i>Reality Is Broken</i> , by Jane McGonigal, PhD
1.3	<b>It’s All a Part of the Game: Countering Opposing Claims</b> ..... 15 <i>Argument:</i> from <i>Reality Is Broken</i> , by Jane McGonigal, PhD
1.4	<b>Technology and Communication</b> ..... 21 <i>*Poetry:</i> “Touchscreen,” by Marshall Davis Jones <i>Op-Ed:</i> “The Flight from Conversation,” by Sherry Turkle, PhD <i>Introducing the Strategy:</i> Socratic Seminar and Levels of Questioning
1.5	<b>Analyzing an Argument</b> ..... 31 <i>Language &amp; Writer’s Craft:</i> Embedding Quotations
1.6	<b>Joining the Conversation</b> ..... 37 <i>Argument:</i> from <i>We Need to Talk</i> , by Celeste Headlee <i>Language &amp; Writer’s Craft:</i> Colons and Semicolons
1.7	<b>Taking a Stand on Justice</b> ..... 46 <i>Speech:</i> from <i>On Civil Disobedience</i> , by Mohandas K. Gandhi <i>Language &amp; Writer’s Craft:</i> Organizing an Argument
1.8	<b>Taking a Stand on Legal Issues</b> ..... 51 <i>Speech:</i> “On Surrender at Bear Paw Mountains,” by Chief Joseph <i>Speech:</i> “On Women’s Right to Vote,” by Susan B. Anthony
1.9	<b>Taking a Stand Against Hunger</b> ..... 57 <i>Proclamation:</i> “Declaration of the Rights of the Child,” by the United Nations <i>Editorial:</i> “The Summer Hunger Crisis,” by Billy Shore

# Teacher centered activities and limited opportunities for students to speak and interact

## Activity 1.8 “Taking a Stand on Legal Issues”

### Taking a Stand on Legal Issues

ACTIVITY  
1.8

### ACTIVITY 1.8

#### Learning Targets

- Analyze the use of rhetorical appeals in an argument.
- Analyze seminal U.S. documents of historical and literary significance, including how they address related themes and concepts.

#### Preview

In this activity, you will read two speeches about justice and analyze the speakers’ use of rhetorical appeals.

#### As You Read

My Notes

#### PLAN

**Suggested Pacing:** 1 50-minute class period

#### TEACH

- 1 Read the Learning Targets and Preview with students.
- 2 Review the As You Read instructions. Make sure students understand how to identify whether each type of evidence appeals to the readers’ pathos (emotions), ethos

# Activities and Actions Proposed by the Curriculum are mostly teacher-centered or teacher-directed

4. **Teacher** points students to the title and reads the first sentence aloud.
  - a. **Teacher** asks students to think critically about how the title connects to the speech.
  - b. **Teacher** discusses the emotions of the speech and its purpose: To surrender.
  - c. **Teacher** asks students to think about how the tone of defeat and sadness in each line of the speech contributes to the overall message.



# We then Designed our Our Replacement Curriculum (2020)

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- Based on the needs assessed, we designed and developed 12 weeks of educative replacement units, with:
- **Enticing themes** to serve as mirrors and windows for students
- Instructions (in the form of a ***Student Instruction Booklet***) for students that detail both the purpose and the process of each task as well as all graphic organizers
- A ***Student Text Booklet*** that contain all of the texts (both visual and written)
- ***Teacher Educative Notes*** that contain annotations and elaborations for select tasks in a separate Teacher Manual



# Our Initial Curriculum (2020)

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3
<p><b>Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown</b></p>	<p><b>Pandemics: Societal Consequences of Widespread Disease</b></p>	<p><b>Murals as an Expression of Communal History</b></p>
<p>Lesson 1: The Myth of Arachne</p> <p>Lesson 2: The Myth of Phaeton</p> <p>Lesson 3: The Myth of Orpheus and Eurydice</p>	<p>Lesson 1: Black Death</p> <p>Lesson 2: The Masque of the Red Death</p> <p>Lesson 3: The AIDS Crisis in the United States</p>	<p>Lesson 1: Murals Through History</p> <p>Lesson 2: Social Activism: The Mexican Muralist Movement</p> <p>Lesson 3: Modern Day Neighborhood Murals</p> <p>Lesson 4: Street Art, Community Safety, and Beautification Projects</p>

# Our Educative Materials for Teachers

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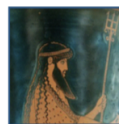
Detailed annotations include:

- Explanations of the pedagogical purpose of each task and its link to other tasks
- Implementation directions and suggestions for variations;
- Reminders of what has come before and where the lesson is headed;
- Formative assessment tasks and options for teacher response to student learning that guide next development

# Implementation #1:

## Unit 1

## Teacher Educative Materials



**Unit 1:** Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

**Lesson 1:** The Myth of Arachne



### Task 7: Compare and Contrast

**Purpose:** As students engage with texts that are beyond their ability to understand on their own, they require the necessary support to be able to develop the conceptual, language, and analytic practices required. In this Compare and Contrast task, students work with a partner and look for character traits for a character that is assigned to them (either Arachne or Athena). The questions that need to be responded to signal essential elements that all students must understand while reinforcing the notion that they do not need to understand every word in a text in order to make sense of it. In this way, they are able to make sense of a difficult text because they know what information they are looking for and what information may not be essential to understand at the moment.

**Process:** Students have already read the first paragraph of *The Myth of Arachne* (Handout #1.5) in the previous task. For the next 3 parts of the text, students will work with a partner and each of them will read the myth focusing on one of two characters, the god Athena or the mortal Arachne. Explain to students that as they read, they will use the Compare and Contrast Matrix in Handout #1.7.

Alert them to the fact that the text has been divided into three sections. Each section is marked with a line where it ends. You can have the students decide if they would like to read the text aloud with a partner or individually as they go through. Regardless of how they choose to read, they will fill in their matrix for their character only. So, they will read a section (stopping at the line) and decide if they can add any information to their matrix.

**Variations:** If students need more support and practice distilling answers, they can work in groups of four. Two students are assigned the same character to track. They take notes individually, and then share and discuss them together before dividing the information to present to the other dyad. The idea is that all students should have a reporting role.

# Our Educative Materials for Students

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Educative notes to students in the curriculum are designed to explain:

- What and why they are learning
- Structure and process for their learning
- Clear criteria for desired performance as it relates to learning goals
- Activities that invite students to reflect –in interaction with peers- about the process and content of their learning, where they have been, and where they can go next.

# Implementation #1:

## Unit 1

## Student Educative Materials



**Unit 1:** Mythology: The Human Search to Explain the Unknown

**Lesson 1:** The Myth of Arachne



### Task #7: Character Compare and Contrast (Step I)

**Purpose:** The two characters in the text have similar characteristics, but because one of the characters is a god and the other a mortal, their characteristics do not impact them in the same way. By working together with a partner to identify each character's traits and placing your responses in a Compare and Contrast Matrix, it is easy to see how the two women are similar and how they differ.

**Process:** For the rest of the myth (Handout #1.6: *The Myth of Arachne Parts 2-4*), two people at your table will read with a focus on Arachne, and two people will read with a focus on Athena. Decide in your small group which two of you will focus on Arachne, and which two of you will focus on Athena. Silently read the rest of the myth on your own, adding your ideas to Step 1 of Handout #1.7: *Compare and Contrast Matrix* for your character only. You may refer to stated character traits, as well as implied character traits, based on the thoughts and actions of your character. Be sure to only complete the column for the character you are focusing on; the other two people in your group will complete the other column.

# Unit 1 Implementation Findings

Positive Responses to the Curriculum	Challenges of the Curriculum
Teachers initially thought their students would find the curriculum too difficult, but in fact students were able and capable of doing the work	Pacing
Both teachers and students found the topics engaging and interesting	Both teachers and students found the amount of instructions, and how the instructions were presented, to be overwhelming
Teachers reported an overall increase in student participation, collaboration, and talk	Teachers did not consult the separate teacher manual, and instead relied exclusively on the student instructions

# Implementation and Revision Timeline

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## Implementation 1: LAUSD Spring 2022 (Units 1 and 2)

- Refined Units 1 and 2

## Implementation 2: NYC Summer Session 2022 (by authors)

- Refined Units 1, 2, and 3

## Implementation 3: LAUSD Spring 2023

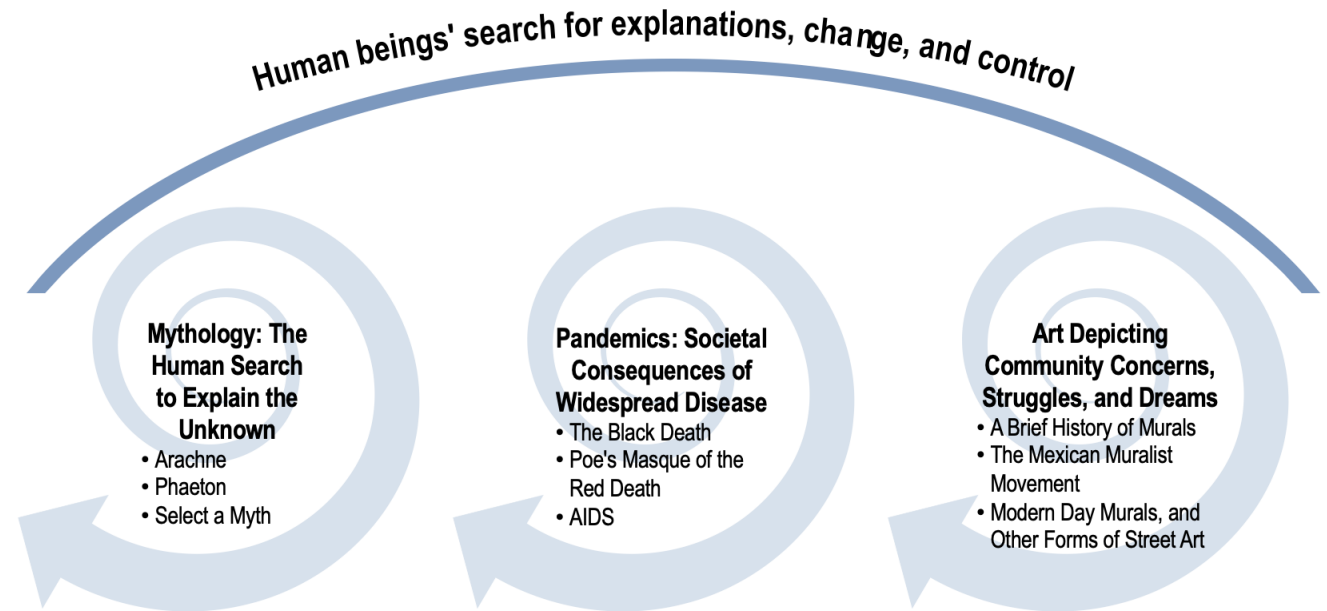
- Refined Units 1, 2, and 3

## Implementation 4: LAUSD Spring 2024

- Refined Units 1, 2, and 3

# Our Final Replacement Materials

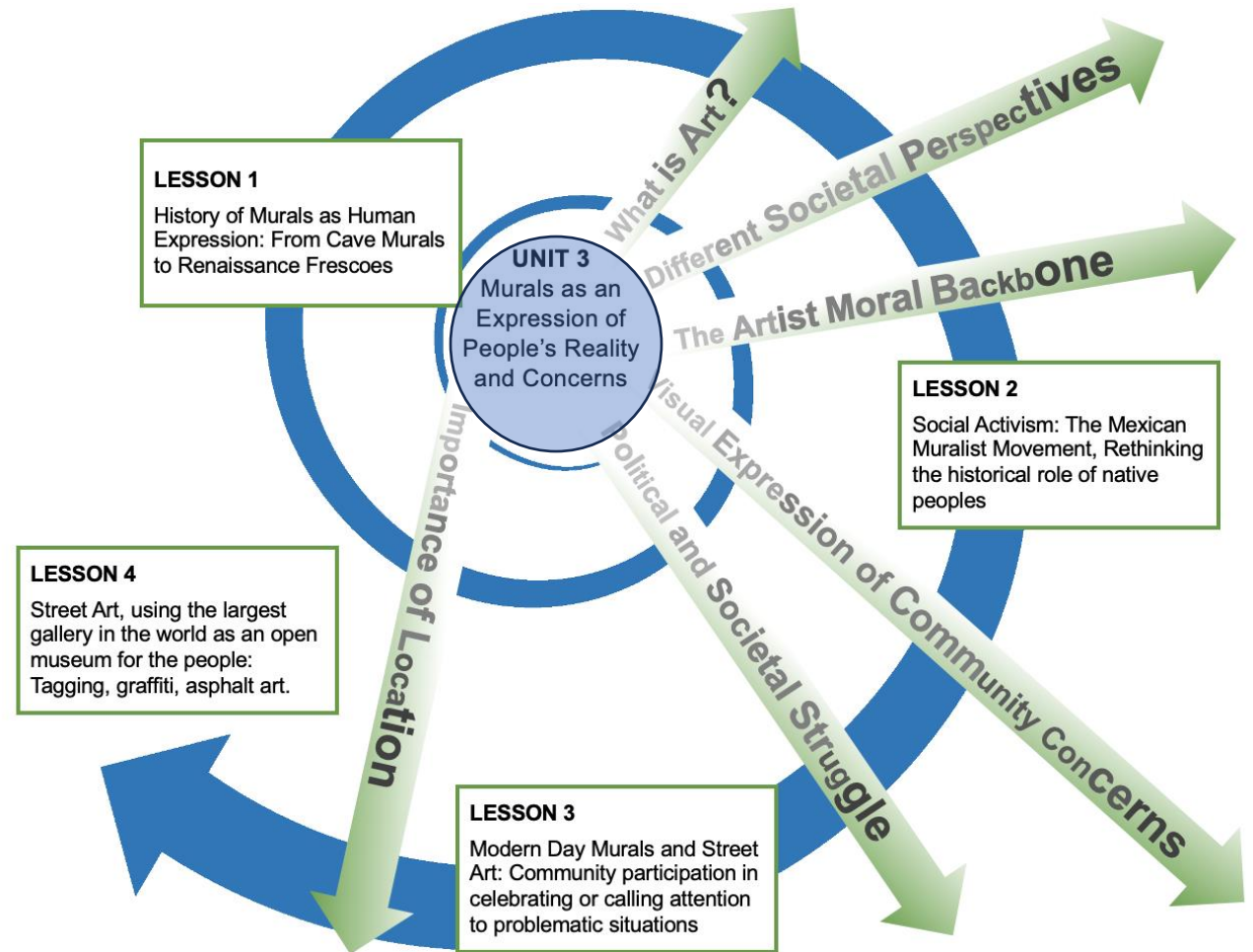
- Thematic Units
- Spiraling Construction
- Aligned to ELA Standards
- Aligned to SBAC assessment
- Teacher Educative Notes
- All handouts and texts included in booklets





# Our Replacement Materials

- Thematic Units
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## Cluster of Standards

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.1:** Cite the textual evidence that supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from that text.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.2:** Determine a central idea or theme of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas and details.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.3:** Analyze how a text makes an argument, maintains a position, or explains an issue (e.g., through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant data, examples, or research).

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.7:** Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different media (print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a topic or text and analyze the impact on the audience.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1:** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, teacher-led, group, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, issues, or texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.2:** Analyze the purpose of a presentation (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats, including digital text, video, and multimedia.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.6:** Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating appropriate command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

## Lesson Objectives

In this lesson you will:

- Learn about the different ways in which humans have used murals to express ideas, beliefs, and understandings of the world.
- Make inferences about people, based on the art they produced.
- Use information from several texts, both written and visual, to define and explain murals as a genre.
- Understand how informational texts are typically organized.
- Analyze informational texts by summarizing, making connections, clarifying and asking questions.

# Our Replacement Materials

- Thematic Units
- Spiraling Construction
- Aligned to ELA Standards
- Aligned to SBAC assessment
- Teacher Educative Notes
- All handouts and texts included in booklets

Remember to use the test taking strategies we practiced before.

1. Read the directions carefully.
2. Answer the question for yourself first, without looking at the answers.
3. Eliminate the answers you know are wrong.
4. Choose the answer that is closest to your answer from Step 2.
5. Guess when you aren't sure or don't know.
6. Do not spend too much time considering what you do not know now. Just mark the test question so you can go back if you have time at the end to reconsider an answer.

## King Midas Questions

1. What is the meaning of the word "avarice" as used in the passage in Section 2?
  - a. Generosity and kindness.
  - b. Greed and excessive desire for wealth.
  - c. Wisdom and intelligence.
  - d. Gratefulness and contentment.
2. What can be inferred about King Midas's change in attitude after his encounter with Dionysus?
  - a. He became even more focused on accumulating wealth.
  - b. He regretted his greed and wished for simplicity and generosity.
  - c. He decided to punish the poor people in his kingdom.
  - d. He planned to seek revenge against Dionysus.

# Our Replacement Materials

- Thematic Units
- Spiraling Construction
- Aligned to ELA Standards
- Aligned to SBAC assessment
- Teacher Educative Notes
- All handouts and texts included in booklets



## Task #1: Anticipatory Guide

**Purpose:** By stating whether you agree or disagree with the statements in the Anticipatory Guide, you have a chance to share with a partner what you already know or believe about murals.

**Process:**

**Step 1:** Decide who is Partner A and who is Partner B. You will complete only the first column, *My Opinion Before Reading*. Do not write down any reasons; you will share them orally with your partner.

**Step 2:** Partner A, using the formulaic expressions at the top of the handout if needed, reads Statement 1 aloud and explains whether they agree or disagree with the statement and why.

**Step 3:** Partner B listens to Student A and then either agrees or disagrees with what Partner A has

### TEACHER NOTES

In this task, students take turns reading the statements in the guide aloud with a partner. The formulaic expressions (language models) at the top of the page support students' turn taking as well as their discussion. Students may use them if they need support in thinking and sharing with their partner, but they can use their own phrases if the expressions are not needed.

Point out to students that the responses ask them to choose between agree and disagree. They state their opinion using their own life experiences.

Since this is not the first time students engage in the task, choose two of them to model for the class using Statement 1.

Be sure to point out the formulaic expressions so that students see how they work, and remind them they can use the expressions if they

# Our Replacement Materials

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Woven through out each unit, lesson, and task:

- Apprenticeship opportunities for students provided by **well-structured conversation and interaction**
- Supports that deliberately target the **development of writing skills**

# Our Replacement Materials

- Thematic Units
- Spiraling Construction
- Aligned to ELA Standards
- Aligned to SBAC assessment
- Teacher Educative Notes
- All handouts and texts included in booklets

## Task #1 Handout: Anticipatory Guide

### Formulaic Expressions

**Partner A:** I will read Statement \_\_\_\_\_. It says, \_\_\_\_\_. I agree/disagree with this statement because \_\_\_\_\_. So, for Statement \_\_\_\_\_ I am going to mark agree/disagree. What do you think?

**Partner B:** I agree/disagree with you because \_\_\_\_\_. For Statement \_\_\_\_\_ I am going to mark agree/disagree. Now I will read Statement \_\_\_\_\_.

	Step 1		Step 2		
	My Opinion Before Reading		My Findings After Reading		Reasons
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	
1. Artists create paintings because they are pretty to look at, not because they want to make people think about history or politics.					



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### Reading Mexican history

4 Stepping away from the center, if one reads the mural like a text, a chronology emerges: the left side of the composition highlights the conquest and colonization of Mexico, the fight for independence and the revolution occupy the majority of the central space, and modern achievements fill the right. For some art historians the central area is a snapshot of bourgeois life in 1895—as refined ladies and gentlemen promenade in their Sunday best, under the watchful eye of Porfirio Díaz in his plumed military garb. One gets a sense of the inequality that stirred average Mexicans to overthrow their dictator and initiate the Mexican Revolution which lasted from 1910 until 1920.

5 In this light we can appreciate the dreams and nightmares within each time period represented. To the left of the balloons the nightmares of the conquest of Mexico by the Spanish and religious intolerance during the colonial-era give way to the dream of a democratic nation



Mural by Diego Rivera, Dream of a Sunday Afternoon in Alameda Central Park. Attribution: Fedaro, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia

### Key Ideas and Questions



## Unit 3: Murals as an Expression of Communal History

### Lesson 3: Street Art as a Reflection of Community Issues, Concerns, and History

# Culminating Task(s)

#### Lesson Architecture

##### Preparing Learners

- **Task #1:** Silent Graffiti
- **Task #2:** Extended Anticipatory Guide, Part 1
- **Task #3:** Reading with a Focus
- **Task #4:** Extended Anticipatory Guide, Part 2
- **Task #5:** Image Match

##### Interacting with Text

- **Task #6:** Paragraph Reading Jigsaw
- **Task #7:** Analyze Text Structure: Argumentative/Persuasive Writing

##### Extending Understanding

- **Task #8:** Quick Write
- **Task #9:** Building on Former Ideas
- **Task #10:** Dyad Share
- **Task #11:** Argumentative Writing Graphic Organizer
- **Task #12:** Round Robin Share
- **Task #13:** Dyad Writing
- **Task #14:** Peer Feedback
- **Task #15:** Rewrite of Final Essay
- **Task #16:** Proposal Presentations



## Unit 3: Murals as an Expression of Communal History

### Lesson 3: Street Art as a Reflection of Community Issues, Concerns, and History

# Sample Tasks

#### Lesson Architecture

##### Preparing Learners

- Task #1: Silent Graffiti
- Task #2: Extended Anticipatory Guide, Part 1
- Task #3: Reading with a Focus
- Task #4: Extended Anticipatory Guide, Part 2
- Task #5: Image Match

##### Interacting with Text

- Task #6: Paragraph Reading Jigsaw
- Task #7: Analyze Text Structure: Argumentative/Persuasive Writing




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- Task #15: Rewrite of Final Essay
- Task #16: Proposal Presentations



# Task #5: Image Match

 Task #5C Handout: Image Match

Image	Title, Location, Purpose
Card A 	
Card B 	
Card C 	

- Form groups of three.
- Place the images you receive face up in the middle of your table.
- Each person will read one of the description cards to themselves first and think about which picture it is describing.
- Each person will explain why they think their description matches one of the pictures.
- The group as a whole must agree.
- Once you have matched your photos and descriptions, fill out the handout.

# Task #6: Reading Jigsaw



Task #6 Handout: Reading Jigsaw Response Chart

Where does this part belong in the writing piece? Do you have the claim, the reason and evidence, the counter-claim and rebuttal, or the conclusion? Why do you think so?

What information do you think came before this part? How do you know?

What information do you think comes after this part? Why?

In groups of four:

- Silently read your card to yourself.
- Think about where the information you read might go in a paragraph and answer the questions on your handout.

# Task #6: Reading Jigsaw

Now put the text together as a group.

1. Whoever thinks they have the first part begins by summarizing the information on their card and explaining why they think their card goes first.
2. The group must agree before the reader puts the card on the table
3. Whoever thinks they have the next card repeats the process.
4. Keep going until you have put the text together.

# Voices from Students

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“Look! At first I only had two things [written down], and now because of you guys, I have all this!”

--Students sharing and discussing the bubonic plague

Steven: Athena is brave and probably smart. What is our evidence, though?

Maria: She wins the challenge. Page 5, paragraph 10. She wins. That's our evidence.

Luis: That's an inference, right? Let's put that.

Steven: We finished with the character traits. I finally finished my work in class! [To Luis] I finished my work in class!

# Voices from Teachers

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“I will definitely take what I have learned and apply it to my own lessons. Structured ways for students to talk and work together, but also different ways to start and support writing. I had never thought of writing like that before.”

“I learned that nothing comes easy and I always have to plan. Everything is not written for you. You have to read first, plan it out, know your kids, wrap your head around it. Plan ahead, and anticipate what might come up. I knew that, but this experience has really reinforced that for me.”

# MICRO-SYSTEM



classroom  
& peers

pedagogy

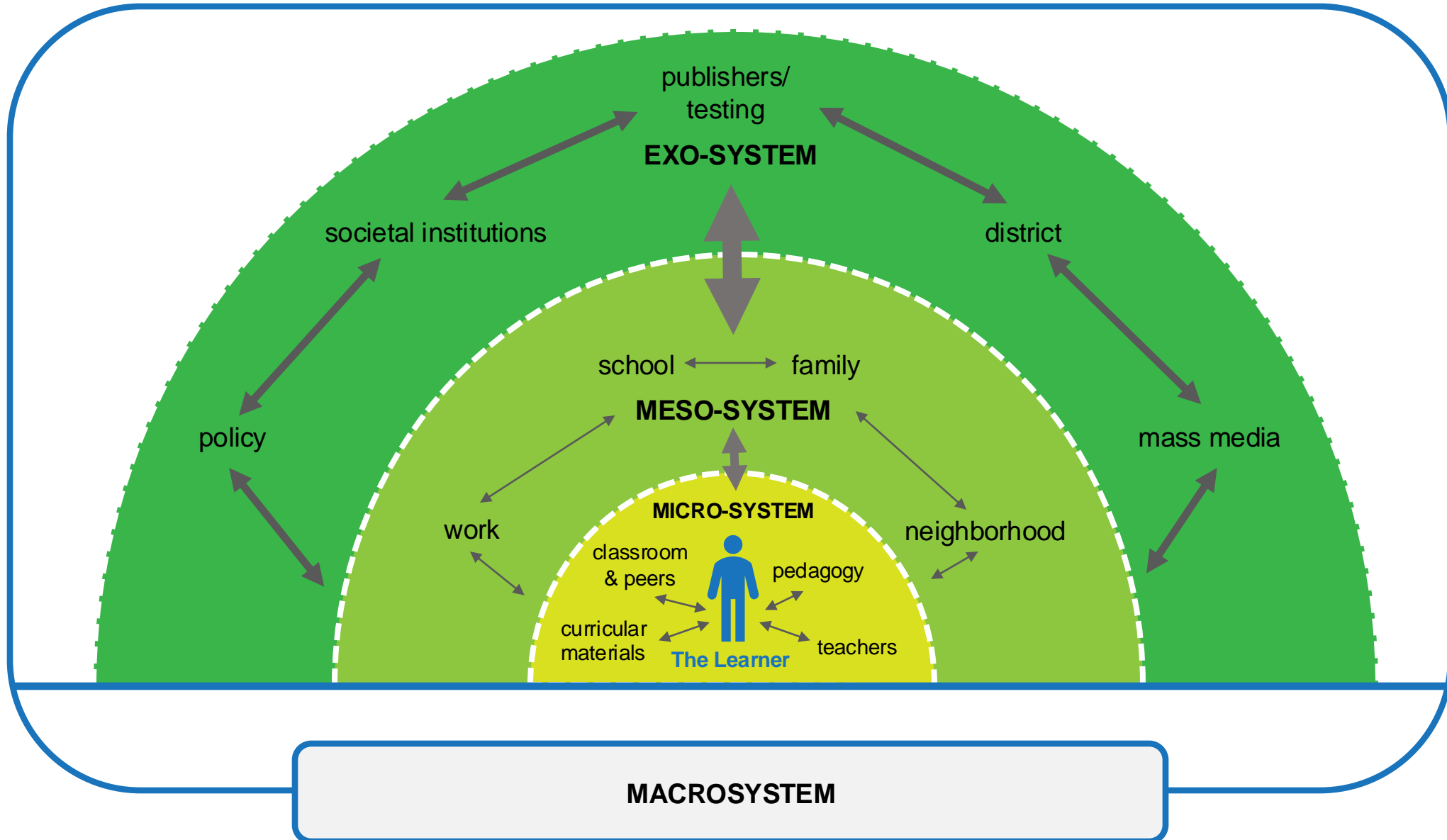
curricular materials

teachers

The Learner



# Our work was possible because of an ecological view of equitable and quality instruction for English Learners



# Thank You!

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For more information, please contact:



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Visit our website at  
[www.elrdcenter.wested.org](http://www.elrdcenter.wested.org)



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# Thank you!

Questions?

