

Materials Adaptation Project (MAP) Guide: McGraw-Hill *Wonders*

The Kindergarten MAP



Source: McGraw-Hill *Wonders*

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Part One: About *Wonders California/2017* (K-6)

A description of the strengths in alignment and areas of focus called out and proposed by the Wonders MAPs.

Overview

California/2017 Wonders, published by McGraw-Hill Education, was written to address the Common Core State Standards, with the first Common Core edition being published in 2014. There have been several updates made, the most recent being the 2017 and specialized California editions. For the most part, all of the editions contain the same texts and tasks, and components and follow similar instructional approaches. Notable developments since the 2014 version are the robust digital platform and tool suite found within ConnectEd, and the English Language Development (ELD) materials, which are nearly complete enough to be a set of instructional materials in their own right. Those with 2014 versions have the opportunity to upgrade to the 2017 enhancements for a per pupil fee.

California/2017 Wonders K-6 consists of six units per grade level, with ‘Smart Start’ orientation weeks offered at the beginning of each school year. Within each unit, five weekly lessons guided by an essential question tie the multiple readings and activities of the weeks together. Week six of every unit is designated for assessment and extended project work. At the center of each week’s core instruction are the Literature Anthology weekly selections (for grades 2-6, second half of grade 1) and the Literature Big Book (for kindergarten, first half of grade 1). They are impressive for consistently high-quality authentic text selections. But these central texts are paired with a variety of short additional passages, sometimes as many as seven others to be attended to during the week. Generally, the central texts fall within grade band complexity range both quantitatively and qualitatively. The many ancillary texts each week vary in quality and utility, so our recommendations for using them or setting them aside will fall into several recommended pathways.

Vocabulary, Foundational Reading and Grammar Elements

California/2017 Wonders provides ample vocabulary practice with carefully selected words. Vocabulary protocols are organized to introduce, enrich, and extend academic language. Phonics, grammar, and spelling lessons are all research-based, sensibly paced, and sequenced. They amply address grade level college- and career-readiness standards well. The ELD supports are research-based and concrete. They can be drawn upon to support English Language Learners (ELL) students at varying levels and are sound resources for any students who needs additional bridging to strengthen their reading ability. Since the ELD addresses the same texts as the ELA version, it can easily be drawn on to extend your tools for helping students gain proficiency.

Text Selection and Weekly Grouping

The groups of text selections include: texts for interactive read alouds (K-6), Readers and Writers Workshop selections (K-6), Literature Big Books (K-1), Literature Anthology (1-6), additional related content passages (K-6), Leveled Readers (K-6), Decodable Readers (K-2), ELD texts, and suggestions for independent reading. Although these selections are organized around the essential question, and several offer well-developed opportunities for growing vocabulary, the connections between texts can be superficial and some text selections support students in building knowledge of a specific topic better than others.

Gradual Release Model

Throughout *Wonders*, there is a weekly model of releasing students to work more independently *within* each week. This is partly why so many texts are introduced so briefly: to build students ability with a targeted skill quickly. Students don't generally gain independent capacity inside five school days; if taught well, they will grow measurably in ability and confidence across the months of the school year.

Overabundance of Materials

The sheer volume of reading passages and ELA components *Wonders* offers weekly is its outstanding characteristic. It is not always obvious how much time and energy you should spend on a given component. That could lead students to move quickly through all the texts with little time devoted to the most worthy reading selections. You must make frequent transitions daily to shift focus to another component element, but even so cannot hope to address all the parts of *Wonders* in a day. It can be quite challenging to distinguish the priority purpose for each component, or to discern what you should do with/for students and what students could do in small groups or working on their own or with peers.

Variations in Coherence from Unit to Unit

While questions and tasks associated with the variety of weekly reading selections are generally text-dependent, too many components focus on background-building questions or skills and strategy tasks in isolation. How can more coherence be built for students' ELA experience? On weeks when the texts are only loosely connected, this guidance recommends tasks are directed so students focus primarily on a single text. This is because tasks designed to connect learnings from multiple texts feel forced and uninspiring. In contrast, the weeks where the topic focus of the week is clear and the texts have strong connections, they allow students to build knowledge of that topic, and have solid exposure to the vocabulary those content-linked readings offer.

This pattern of loose links/tight links continues in the unevenness of weekly writing or performance tasks. Writing assignments are more robust during more coherent weeks that build knowledge, and students have logical opportunities to present what they've learned in writing. Where the connections are poorly drawn, so are the prompts.

While the attention paid to research skills is a praiseworthy focus of *Wonders*, in all of the grades K-2 units, and in half the units in grades 3-6 (always units 1, 5, and 6), the research component consists of disjointed tasks on unconnected topics from week to week. But in grades 3-6 during the other units (always units 2, 3, and 4), the research component builds on itself from week to week and creates a strong pathway for building knowledge systematically for students. The pattern is called out with more specific recommendations in the Rules of Thumb for Research.

Summary

Wonders has nearly all the materials and approaches needed to allow children to become literate and knowledgeable students. But clear direction on how, when, and how much to use the various components to provide children with maximal chance to grow their literacy abilities is absent, as is a yearlong approach to 'gradual release.' The Materials Adaptation Project (MAP) provides maps to answer those questions for you and your students.

Part Two: Adaptations

Lightweight modifications to improve alignment

The goal of MAP is to offer guidance to teachers, curriculum leaders, school and district leaders on how to best understand and use the essential features of materials to guide and enhance student experience of the “traditional basal,” in this case *California/2017 Wonders*, and to improve alignment to the instructional shifts required by sets of college- and career-readiness standards.

The major recommended adaptations for *California/2017 Wonders* are all intended to streamline the materials in order to allow you and your students to focus on the work that matters most for developing proficient and confident readers, writers, listeners and speakers. In doing this work, a team of expert reviewers and seasoned *Wonders* users made many choices and by necessity set aside some personal favorites in favor of moves that created tight alignment and carved out enough time for focusing on the work and practice with reading, writing, speaking, listening and language experiences that would grow students’ language capacities in all areas the most. The recommendations sought to reduce the number of transitions for students. Every recommendation also had to bring *Wonders* into tighter alignment with one or more of the instructional implications for achieving college- and career-level rigor at every grade level (known as the Shifts), while allowing for adequate time and attention for foundational reading:

- **Foundational Reading:** Abundant exposure to a systematic, research-based foundational skills progression with ample opportunities for students to practice and teachers to assess reading skills.
- **Complexity:** Regular practice with complex text and its academic language.
- **Evidence:** Reading, writing and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational.
- **Knowledge:** Building knowledge through content-rich non-fiction reading.

Summary of Instructional Modifications Throughout the Guidance:

1. Always support foundational skills, ALWAYS.
2. Elevate the best texts...they’re there!
3. Let rereading of less complex texts happen outside of whole group instruction (in small groups or independently).
4. Cut to the heart of the instructional purpose of the lessons (avoid extraneous activities or questions).
5. Build knowledge and vocabulary, whenever possible!
6. Reduce the number of transitions your students have to make each day

Part Three: Adaptations Overview and Tips for Instructional Use - What is here and how it is organized

Maps provide rationales and guidance for streamlining Wonders for your students and yourself. Each map is connected to Week at a Glance (WAG) Planning Template for grades K-6, and specific Rules of Thumb for handling each component of Wonders.

How the MAP is Organized

The material alignment guidance maps developed for *California/2017 Wonders* are sorted into these categories:

| Element | Shift associated/ Why essential | Explanation |
|---|--|---|
| Build Academic Language | Text Complexity/ Knowledge | Teaching words and sentence patterns directly strengthens students’ capacity for learning from context: the more words a student knows, the more likely she is to be gathering new meanings from context. Both methods of exposure—direct instruction of words and syntax <i>and</i> learning vocabulary and encountering sentences in context—are necessary components of academic language instruction. <i>Wonders</i> has lots of vocabulary and syntax activities folded throughout each week and grade level. Additional resources that offer more concrete and supportive approaches are available in the ELD materials. |
| Close Reading of Texts | Text Complexity/ Evidence | Being able to listen to and read complex text critically with understanding and insight is essential for confidence throughout school and to successfully navigate modern life, college, and the workplace. If students cannot hear challenging texts with understanding at their grade level starting with the early grades, and don’t learn to read well so they can access complex texts and ideas for themselves, they will read less in general, extending the performance gap between students who are comfortable readers and those who are not every year. Learning to listen and then read closely and carefully takes time and focus. That fact is the driver for the recommended text selections in kindergarten and grade 1 in <i>Wonders</i> . High-quality texts are offered weekly in <i>Wonders</i> , but there are lots of distractors that could prevent you from giving your students the time to pay careful attention. The Rules of Thumb guidance is designed to allow you to quickly see where to focus and what texts to use in other ways for student practice when they are not working directly with you. |
| Volume of Writing | Evidence/Knowledge | The ability to find, evaluate, and present evidence is a critical skill in college- and career-readiness standards. That’s because it is a vital skill in life. Providing lots of practice, and a variety of ways to help students strengthen the ‘evidence-seeking muscle’ needs to be baked into every lesson. |

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| | | <p>The good news is students really like to find evidence and present their arguments/sets of reasons for why they have the right insight into something they have heard or read for themselves. It’s an investigation that is deeply satisfying.</p> <p>Chances to practice recognizing and presenting text evidence are all over <i>Wonders</i>. Perhaps the most essential place to get practice is when students are asked to write down their evidence in an organized way, whether that is in a short response to a text-specific question or in a longer piece, or after doing independent discovery through research. Writing is complicated and needs lots of practice. Writing about evidence and learning to stay focused is even harder. The guidance offered regarding all the writing scattered across the week in a given <i>Wonders</i> lesson and unit works to focus your attention on the highest value and most focused opportunities.</p> |
| Foundational Skills | All the Shifts | <p>If students can’t read for themselves, they can’t function independently on grade level. They can only comprehend and express their understanding with external support. The Foundational Skills Guidance is a comprehensive explanation of the research case for structured foundational reading instruction and why lots of practice is essential to solidify learning.</p> <p>The Foundational Skills Guidance provides an explanation of the elements essential for a human brain to learn how to read. It is designed to support and educate about those core elements and <i>why</i> they are critical. It then turns to offering pinpointed and practical guidance to accelerate students’ early reading success. Much of the Foundational Skills Guidance is universally applicable – it is useful in any primary grades setting, regardless of the instructional materials present. But there is a special section that points out where each of the essential elements can be found in <i>Wonders</i>.</p> |
| Volume of Reading | Knowledge | <p>Every performance-based task improves through practice opportunities. The more complex the task, the more it benefits from lots of practice opportunities. There is almost nothing we ask of our children more complex than learning to read and write. It is a fun thing to learn how to do and to practice when you’re young. Because it is so vital to lay a strong foundation, many of the recommendations for volume of reading in grades K-2 have to do with letting students read and re-read their Decodable Readers. Once they are smooth readers there, they can move on to Leveled Readers and experiment with word patterns they may not be as familiar with.</p> <p>We already know that vocabulary grows faster when words are learned in context, and we know that students are more interested and learn more when they can stick with a topic that is of interest to them for a while. It is essential that we provide opportunities for students to hear high-quality texts read aloud, and for teachers to chose texts that stay on a topic so students can accelerate their knowledge and vocabulary growth.</p> |

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| <p>Selected Independent Work Activities (during small group time)</p> | <p>Focused practice with: Foundational Skills, Evidence, Knowledge, Complexity</p> | <p>Always consider the following values when selecting independent work activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Direct student choices toward options that will have maximum payoffs for strengthening students' literacy outcomes. 2. Independent work can be completed in partnerships or small groups. Whenever possible, student talk and collaboration are encouraged! 3. Independent work should need no or minimal direct teacher support, allowing your teacher-led small groups to happen seamlessly. Repeating activities but replacing content is highly suggested. 4. Less is more. The Keep It Simple doctrine should be uppermost in your mind when planning. It's okay to only have 2-3 options for your students. Allow #1 above to guide your decision-making and design for success! |
| <p>Assessment</p> | <p>Foundational Skills</p> | <p><i>Wonders</i> contains an abundance of weekly and end-of-unit assessment opportunities. If they were all utilized, nearly a quarter of your time would be spent in assessing your students. Obviously that is not good!</p> <p>What you do need to always know is how well your students are doing in mastering foundational reading: all aspects of learning to read in grades K-2 and then reading fluency in the upper elementary grades. There is also a solid research base to recommend use of spelling tests when they are organized by phonetic patterns as they generally are in <i>Wonders</i>.</p> <p>You will not be able to see significant comprehension gains in your students by the week, nor after six weeks in most cases. Over-assessing reading comprehension is not a good use of your time or your students' energy. To the degree this is in your control, we recommend being picky about which passages and items you have your students take.</p> <p>All this said, we know many districts and schools do not recognize the wisdom of this and have a test-prep culture that you may have to abide by.</p> |
| <p>Smart Start/Week 6</p> | <p>Focused practice with: Foundational Skills, Evidence, Knowledge, Complexity</p> | <p>Each year of <i>Wonders</i> begins with 2-3 weeks of Smart Start so children can learn routines. This is important in the primary grades, and a refresher week may be in order as high as grade 3, especially if you have lots of attrition. We recommend skipping or condensing the Smart Start and instead give yourself the luxury of spending a week and a half or two weeks on the first week with regular content. That will teach the routines just as well, and you'll be working with higher quality texts and tasks.</p> <p>Every sixth week (grades 1 through 6) there is no new content introduced. This opens up time for you to reinforce important learnings, reteach and support students with gaps, and do activities you haven't been able to give adequate time to during the packed five weeks that came before. While you and your students are getting used to all the moving parts of <i>Wonders</i>, week six may be needed to catch up!</p> |

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| | | Make sure you are the gift of time on the activities that will build your students' reading, writing, speaking and language abilities the most. We've provided a menu of those high-value activities with the week six rules of thumb. |
| Evidence-Based Discussions & Supports for English Language Learners | Evidence, Knowledge, & Speaking, Listening and Language proficiency | This category of alignment advice is the only one that runs vertically alongside every other component. That is done to illustrate that discussion: the chance for children to listen to and talk with each other, should be baked into <i>every</i> aspect of the academic program. Evidence-based discussion is an essential component to meeting college- and career-ready benchmarks. <i>Wonders</i> incorporates discussion opportunities while tackling texts and directions often push students to use text evidence during discussions. While there are many chances to let students engage in text-based discussion outlined in the <i>Wonders</i> program, there are also missed opportunities to allow student voices to shine. It is recommended to always seize opportunities for students to do the thinking and work, and to shy away from <i>Wonders</i> -scripted time for teacher talk and modeling. |

Week at a Glance (WAG) Planning Templates

The WAG provides a streamlined view of the recommendations for focus weekly by grade-level clusters. The primary grades are each uniquely structured in *Wonders*, so each grade from K through grade 2 has its own WAG. But *Wonders* has organized instructional materials in grades 3 through 6 virtually identically, a single WAG addresses those four grades.

The WAG templates illustrate the suggestions in Part Two and offer a snapshot of the priority activities of each week. The WAG template is a framework you can use as an organizing center and planning tool for the week. You will need to apply your professional judgment against the WAGs and Rules of Thumb to make unit-by-unit and week-by-week decisions that serve you students and situations as well as possible. We have provided you a blank WAG for you to use as a weekly planner if you wish.

[WAG for Kindergarten](#)

Rules of Thumb

The Rules of Thumb are similar to the WAGs in that they provide a 'quick and dirty' snapshot of precisely what to do with each component of *California/2017 Wonders*. A sample for how to use the ELD lesson plans is below. The left column names the component and has a few sentences that provide the specific advice. The left column provides the rationale for why we are making these suggestions. The Rules of Thumb are not designed as scripts or absolutes. Often, they will give you several considerations to think about in making up your mind in planning for any given week or in pre-planning across an entire unit. You will still have to decide for yourself exactly how to handle these components based on your students' needs and the realities of your own setting.

|  Rule of Thumb: English Language Development Resources (ELD) | Rationale |
|---|---|
| Use the Collaborative Conversation sentence starters as a framework for whole class discussion. | Sentence starters and other supports in gaining proficiency in academic English syntax are particularly helpful for students without a solid English base. |
| Check ConnectEd for additional multimedia resources and engaging activities (e.g., songs and chants in the Language Warm Up). | Because the ELD resources follow best practices research for ELLs, they are more concrete and clear than some of the core activities in the <i>Wonders</i> ELA materials. |
| Use <i>Wonders</i> -planned text-specific questioning with small groups who are struggling with any individual text as option for more intensive support. | There are additional good text dependent/specific questions in <i>Wonders</i> that can help scaffold comprehension of the gist of complex text selections. |
| In kindergarten and grade 1, the My Language Book offers language supports that are text-specific (e.g., sentences frames, graphic organizers) for students' independent work. These can be printed from ConnectEd. | These are excellent resources for promoting close study of syntax. The added supports allow students to gain more independence than they might otherwise have. |
| Use ELD Differentiated Texts with student work options aligned to weekly topic. These offer lower level texts aligned to the weekly topic. | These are particularly good for older grade students who might otherwise not be able to access the ELA text selections initially. They can also be tapped as extra resources for building knowledge in weeks that have a topical focus. |

Part Four: Moving into your MAP

About the Kindergarten adaptations

As you move into the specific guidance and rules of thumb for kindergarten, you'll see there is not that much overall guidance telling you how to streamline the *Wonders* materials. This is because, for the most part, the scope of activities provided for kindergarten is tight and well-tied together as is. It serves well for providing students with a solid introduction to learning to read and all the other foundational

components of a research-based English Language Arts program. Where there is guidance offered, pay careful attention to it. The guidance here is based on research on best practices for teaching children the foundations that will make them successful readers forever more.

- You'll be asked to focus on teaching your students how to read.
 - That means a clear focus and adequate time on foundational reading learning and practice, particularly on phonemic awareness; and
 - That means creating abundant opportunities to grow vocabulary, knowledge and basic reading comprehension.
- You'll also see that the guidance works hard to free up time for you to make your own decisions about what elements to emphasize and what to reinforce: every fifth day and every end-of-unit week (week six). In first grade, that will mean keeping focused on insuring each and every one of your students learns how to decode with mastery so they are set up for a life of success as readers.

Kindergarten Modified Week at a Glance for Weeks 1-3*

*Teacher's Edition (TE) is only referenced on the WAG when this plan uses a lesson component on a different day than it appears in *Wonders*.

| Essential Question: | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|--|--|
| | | Day 1 | Day 2 | Day 3 | Day 4 | Day 5 |
| Evidence-Based Discussions & Supports for English Language Learners | Build Academic Language | Build Background: Introduce Essential Question Oral Vocabulary | Category Words Daily Wrap up: Essential Question | Oral Vocabulary Daily Wrap up: Essential Question | Category Words Daily Wrap up: Essential Question | Selected activities from Day 5 Activity Menu : |
| | Close Reading of Texts | Literature Big Book | Literature Big Book | Reading/Writing Workshop: Shared Read (from TE Day 2) | Interactive Read Aloud | |
| | Volume of Writing | Shared Writing with Literature Big Book <i>Grammar</i> | Interactive Writing with Literature Big Book <i>Grammar</i> | Independent Writing with Shared Read <i>Grammar</i> | Independent Writing with Shared Read <i>Grammar</i> | |
| | Foundational Skills (45 minutes) Volume of Reading | Word Work (including Decodable Readers) Leveled Readers Independent Reading | | | | |
| | Selected Independent Work Activities (during small group time) | | | | | |
| Other instructional elements: Assessment and Smart Start | | | | | | |

Build Academic Language

Teaching words directly enhances students’ capacity for learning from context: The more words a student knows, the more likely he/she is to be gathering new meanings from context. This is even more likely with words that appear in a wide range of text types and are expected to be seen frequently. Clearly, both methods of word exposure—direct instruction of vocabulary *and* learning vocabulary in context—are necessary components of vocabulary instruction. Similarly, direct instruction and discussion of a variety of sentence types and working together to unpack complex sentences are worthy activities that will enhance students ability to parse challenging sentences independently when they are encountered while reading without a buddy or teacher around. *Wonders* has vocabulary and syntax activities folded throughout the week and additional resources that offer more concrete and supportive approaches are available in the ELD materials.

As with many of the *Wonders* resources, the overarching guidance is to be picky! If a given vocabulary activity is not well-designed, or you and your students don’t enjoy it, don’t spend time there. You may also find that some of the protocols get too easy or repetitive for your students. Change them up, substitute an alternative, or streamline them!

| Component | Recommendation |
|---|---|
| Introduce/Build/Extend the Concept <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Essential Question discussion ● Oral Vocabulary Words ● Category Words | Use with modifications. Use daily. Use on Days 1 and 3. Use on Days 2 and 4. |
| Interactive Read Aloud | Always use. See related guidance in Close Reading of Text . |

|  Rule of Thumb | Rationale |
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| Essential Question | |
| Discuss the Essential Question daily. On Day 1, use the protocol outlined in the Introduce the Concept section. On all remaining days, use the Essential Question discussion activity from the Daily Wrap Up. | Discussion of the Essential Question gives students a chance to orient themselves to the weekly topic and practice using new vocabulary. For the early grades, this is an especially important routine to promote talk time and continue circling back to an abstract question with new ideas. |
| Teaching Vocabulary in Context | |
| Highlight vocabulary in context whenever possible. Also, engage students in thinking about vocabulary strategies when reading or discussion text. | To the extent possible, treating words in context is ideal. While isolated vocabulary instruction has the merit of getting students to attend carefully to words and word parts, in general, words should be learned in service of understanding them in sentences when listening and reading, and using |

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| <p>The Interactive Read Aloud provides an opportunity to hear the weekly Oral Vocabulary Words in context and reinforce their meaning.</p> | <p>them accurately in sentences when speaking and writing.</p> |
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Oral Vocabulary Words (Days 1 and 3)

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| <p>Follow the Define/Example/Ask Routine (TE Day 1: Introduce the Concept - Build Background) to introduce vocabulary words before they are seen in context. Reinforce use of these words when they come up again while discussing text/Essential Question and encourage students to use them in their speaking and writing.</p> <p>“Spice up” practice with selected words by replacing Define/Example/Ask with charades, Pictionary™, word concept maps (using drawings or words), or <i>Wonder’s</i> online vocabulary practice games.</p> | <p><i>Wonders’</i> selected vocabulary words are high-quality and merit attention. Introducing these words attunes students to key vocabulary they will see later within text. Encouraging use of these words while speaking or writing will solidify student understanding.</p> <p>Words are fun! Using fun and interactive practice with selected vocabulary makes words “sticky.”</p> |
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Category Words (Days 2 and 4)

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| <p>Pay close attention to the Category Words on Days 2 and 4. If possible, build word walls from the Category Words lessons and encourage use of these words in your classroom. Students can also continue to work with these word categories during independent work time using the related “Your Turn Practice Book” page or by brainstorming additional words with partners and using words or drawings to show their thinking.</p> | <p><i>Wonders’</i> focus on Category Words helps our youngest learners build a foundation of connected words, see relationships between these words, and later add new related words.</p> |
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Additional Opportunities for Vocabulary Development

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| <p>Point out and quickly teach selected vocabulary words from the Literature Big Book. As needed, select additional words for study when academic words are found in any weekly texts, especially the Literature Big Book.</p> <p>Use the Academic Word Finder and Wordsmyth games and activities to teach the high value words you want to spend more time on. For guidance on what makes a word ‘high value’ use “Which Words Do I Teach and Why?”</p> <p>Ensure that you are on the lookout for complicated syntax in any text that your students will encounter. Tackle a particularly complicated sentence with students by unpacking it together, piece by piece.</p> | <p>The words from the Literature Big Book tend to be “quick wins” and provide an opportunity to treat vocabulary in context.</p> <p>While <i>Wonders’</i> selected words are meaningful, you know your students best. If there are additional words in weekly texts you feel deserve attention, make a plan to teach and reinforce them.</p> <p>Complicated syntax is often the culprit of poor comprehension! ‘Juicy sentences’ are well worth your attention during instructional time so that students can see this type of thinking and transfer it to their own reading later on.</p> <p>Review the Core Task Project’s resource for more on ‘Juicy Sentences’ and how to work with them.</p> |
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Access to Text Complexity

Being able to listen to, and later read, complex text critically with understanding and insight is essential for confidence throughout school and to successfully navigate modern life, college, and the workplace. If students cannot hear challenging texts with understanding at their grade level starting with the early grades, and don't learn to read well, they will read less in general, extending the performance gap between students who are comfortable readers and those who are not every year.

If students don't have access to informational text to learn about their world, they will likely turn to easier-to-digest sources such as videos, podcasts, and similar media for information. These sources, while not without value, cannot capture the nuances, subtlety, depth, or breadth of ideas developed through complex text. Young students can listen and comprehend well above their grade level if they get a chance!

Close Reading of Texts

Learning to listen and then read closely and carefully takes time and focus. That fact is the driver for the recommendations we make for text selection for Kindergarten and grade 1 in *Wonders*. There are high-quality texts offered weekly, but there are lots of distractors that could prevent you from giving your students the time to pay careful attention.

Wonders instruction is often built around reading comprehension skills and strategies. Proficient readers need strategies like rereading when confused or asking and answering questions, but this type of instruction too often dominates in *Wonders*. Focusing too heavily on skills and strategies takes time away from thinking and talking about the text itself. Understanding what's been read is the goal, not mastery of standalone strategies!

The focus on strategies is the most repetitive and potentially does harm to students' ability to develop deep reading comprehension. Proficient readers use strategies like rereading or asking and answering questions of the text naturally when confused. But this type of instruction, where one strategy is taught in isolation and then emphasized to the exclusion of the rest of the reading behaviors to activate, too often dominates in *Wonders*. Stronger listener-readers will instinctively read for all aspects of understanding (essentially, they will politely ignore your direction), but students who struggle with making meaning will focus gratefully only on the single comprehension strategy they've been told to and ignore all other aspects of the text. Thus we are accidentally getting weak listener-readers into the habit of not expecting to fully comprehend.

In sum, focusing too heavily on skills and strategies takes time away from thinking and talking about the text itself. Understanding what's been heard is the goal, not mastery of standalone strategies!

When considering how to incorporate Comprehension Skills and Strategies in your instruction with any text:

1. Introduce the Skill or Strategy whole class as it appears in *Wonders*.
2. Reinforce this Skill or Strategy with occasional teacher modeling in the first week, inventorying students' use throughout the first week and beyond.
3. When the majority of students have demonstrated understanding of the Skill or Strategy, skip further modeling or discussion in later lessons unless referencing would be helpful to clarify student misconceptions or support deeper understanding.
4. Support Skills and Strategies in small group lessons as needed.

Whole Class Texts

| Component | Recommendation |
|--|------------------------|
| Literature Big Book | Always use (two days). |
| Reading/Writing Workshop: Shared Read | Always use (one day). |
| Interactive Read Aloud | Always use (one day). |
| Literature Big Book: Paired Read | Option for Day 5. |
| Reading/Writing Workshop: Shared Read - Second Text (Units 1 - 3 only) | Option for Day 5. |

Literature Big Book (TE Days 1 & 2 - use on Days 1 & 2)

|  Rule of Thumb | Rationale |
|---|---|
| First Read (from TE Day 1) | |
| <p>Model Concepts of Print quickly before reading, or skip if your students have mastered the skills mentioned in this lesson.</p> <p>Read the Literature Big Book all the way through without stopping. If possible, post the Retelling Cards and allow students to discuss the gist of the text in partnerships, using the retelling cards as a visual prompt. Listen in to help guide your reread.</p> <p>Reread the text, stopping to ask questions to support understanding. Use the areas of complexity mentioned in “Access Complex Text” to guide your questioning, in addition to what you’ve heard during student retells after the first read. Consider adding vocabulary from the English Language sidebar. Do not use this text to model reading comprehension strategies.</p> <p>Use the “Respond to Text” discussion wrap up activity.</p> | <p>While consistent showcasing of concepts of print is important (especially for early Kindergarten), the primary focus of time is to engage with complex text.</p> <p>Reading this text all the way through allows students to enjoy and get a sense of the “whole.”</p> <p>This rich text is a prime opportunity for students to make meaning by using comprehension strategies, instead of talking about them.</p> |

Second Read (from TE Day 2)

Reread the Literature Big Book and ask the “Reread” Comprehension Questions.” Consider using Think-Pair-Share or other discussion protocols that involve more student voices and thinking.

After reading, use the Close Reading Companion. Select only the Close Reading Companion page that best deepens understanding of this text, cutting others or assigning them during independent work time.

Don’t let comprehension strategies bog you down! Instead, leave time for listening to complex text and enjoying rich discussion.

Reading/Writing Workshop: Shared Read*

*Can also be used for second Shared Read text in Units 1-3
(TE Days 2 & 4 - use on Day 3)

|  Rule of Thumb | Rationale |
|---|--|
| Materials | |
| <p>Read the Shared Read text whole class for only one day. You may reuse this text during small group time or assign for independent reading. If rereading this text, check for more rigorous comprehension questions in the <i>Wonders</i> Day 4 TE during Units 4-10.</p> | <p>Students get multiple reads during the Day 1 lesson and will also get a chance to revisit this text during Writing Workshop.</p> |
| Instructional Focus | |
| <p>Before Reading Quickly model Book Handling/Concepts of Print that are new, or have not been mastered. Skip predictions.</p> <p>During Reading Read the selection chorally (I read, you repeat) using the lesson plan in the Teacher Edition. Complete the “Focus on Comprehension” section together, adding Think-Pair-Share for at least one question.</p> <p>After Reading Ask students to reread in partnerships, retell and engage in the “Make Connections” discussion. Pair struggling readers with those able to offer support</p> | <p>Spending too much time before reading takes away from instructional time! Don’t forget that you are constantly modeling Book Handling and Concepts of Print when you read texts whole class. Prediction takes away from time within the text and is not a comprehension strategy with a strong research base.</p> <p>Using choral reading gives students confidence, allowing everyone in the room to participate and log vital practice time. Be sure to leave time for the comprehension discussion! Leaving this out signals</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>and/or pull a small group of your students who need the most attention.</p> | <p>to students that this type of reading isn't for meaning-making.</p> <p>Thoughtful student pairings help support everyone in your room during rereading time - leaving you free to carefully observe, strategically jump in to support or pull a group of your own!</p> |
|--|---|

Interactive Read Aloud

(TE Days 4 - use on Day 4)

|  Rule of Thumb | Rationale |
|---|--|
| <p>Before Reading If using the Interactive Read Aloud this week to build knowledge, spend no more than a few minutes previewing the text. Skip previewing the Strategy and Genre, unless you are introducing either for the first time this week or it has not been addressed recently.</p> <p>During Reading Do not pause to model the strategy, unless you are introducing it for the first time this week. As you read, pause to ask the “Oral Vocabulary” questions that ask students to use these words in relation to what is in the text, or change the questions so that they apply (<i>e.g., Vocabulary word: appearance. Scripted question: How would you describe your appearance? “I’ll change this to ‘How is the appearance of the baby calf different than the appearance of its mom?’ so that students can use text evidence.”</i>).</p> <p>After Reading If you have time, use the Guided Retell Questions on the last card. If not, use the “Make Connections” prompt to allow students to discuss what they learned in partnerships. Prompt students to use the Oral Vocabulary.</p> | <p>The Interactive Read Aloud lets students hear the Oral Vocabulary they have been practicing this week in context, helping to further cement their understanding of them and providing an exciting opportunity for an “I know that word!” moment. Combine your goals of students using academic language with building knowledge about the world by prompting them to use <i>Wonders’</i> Oral Vocabulary in your questions and discussions.</p> |

Literature Big Book: Paired Read
(TE Days 4 - option for Day 5)

|  Rule of Thumb | Rationale |
|---|---|
| <p>Before Reading If using the Paired Passage this week to build knowledge, spend no more than a few minutes previewing the text.</p> <p>During Reading Do a whole class first read, skipping teacher think alouds or turning them into questions for students.</p> <p>If using the Close Reading Companion activity, select one question and preview it as the thinking job for rereading. Have students complete a second read in partnerships. Pair struggling readers with those able to offer support and/or pull a small group of your students who need the most attention.</p> <p>After Reading Ask students to use the Close Reading Companion after reading, or move this to an independent activity.</p> <p>Skip the “Integrate” discussion unless it is deeply grounded in the text.</p> | <p>This text should be used to build knowledge around this week’s topic and, at times, as exposure to an additional genre called out in your grade level’s standards.</p> <p>Narrowing your focus to one Close Reading Companion activity will allow students ample time to discuss and find evidence, while leaving energy for accurate decoding.</p> <p>Many of the “Integrate” activities do not require students to use the text or texts in question. Your students worked too hard to build understanding to leave it behind now!</p> |

Text Evidence

The ability to find, evaluate and present evidence is a critical skill in college- and career-ready standards. That’s because it is a vital skill in life. Providing lots of practice, and a variety of ways to help children strengthen the ‘evidence-seeking muscle’ needs to be baked into every lesson.

The good news is students really like to find evidence and present their arguments/sets of reasons why they have the right insight into something they have heard or read for themselves. It’s an investigation that is deeply satisfying.

Chances to practice recognizing and presenting text evidence are all over *Wonders*. Perhaps the most essential place to get practice is when students are asked to write down their evidence in an organized way, whether that is in a short response to a text-specific question or in a longer piece, or after doing independent discovery through research. Writing is complicated and needs lots of practice. Writing about evidence and learning to stay focused is even harder. The guidance offered regarding all the writing scattered across the week in a given *Wonders* lesson and unit works to focus your attention on the highest value and most focused opportunities.

Volume of Writing

| Component | Recommendation |
|-----------|-------------------------|
| Day 1 | Use with modifications. |
| Day 2 | Use with modifications. |
| Day 3 | Use with modifications. |
| Day 4 | Use with modifications. |
| Day 5 | See Day 5 Menu. |

|  Rule of Thumb | Rationale |
|---|--|
| Repeated Readings | |
| Use Writing Workshop as an opportunity for an additional readings of this week’s text(s). | Repeated readings are vital to developing foundational skills, including reading fluency, and ensure understanding before writing. In addition, MAP guidance recommends only spending one day on the Reading Writing Workshop text during whole class reading lessons, instead of the <i>Wonders</i> ’ recommended two reads. Writing Workshop gives students a chance to revisit these texts with a true purpose. |

| Grammar Lesson | |
|--|--|
| <p>Use the grammar mini-lesson to reinforce grammar concepts in the context of student writing, whenever possible. This can be done as a quick (5 minute or less) mini-lesson with time for students to apply the skill within their writing using the “Link to Writing” prompt. Pre-plan where you might “plant” a mistake to later correct during the grammar wrap up (e.g., incorrectly use the possessive in your model and then go back to fix after covering possessive nouns during the grammar mini lesson).</p> <p>Alternatively, the lesson can be folded into normal writing instruction for the day if it is familiar content.</p> | <p>Grammar instruction in service of quality writing is ideal. Opportunities for students to try new grammar learning in their own writing helps them see its value immediately.</p> <p>You should make sure to always hold students accountable for grammar they have already been taught and gotten some chance to apply.</p> |
| Evidence-Based Writing | |
| <p>Use weekly writing prompts as an opportunity to reinforce evidence-based writing. Make the primary focus finding and writing about text evidence that supports student responses to the prompt.</p> | <p>College- and career-ready standards demand that students provide text-based evidence for their thinking. This should especially be highlighted when student texts have readability and students can revisit the text to find their evidence right on the page.</p> |
| Self-Reflection | |
| <p>Make the “My Writer’s Checklist” from ConnectEd available to students during independent writing time. You can also create your own rubric using the “Writer’s Workspace Rubric Generator.”</p> | <p>This resource calls out genre-specific goals for students to keep in mind as they write and revise. Imagine multiplying your teaching power by helping students to reflect and coach their peers!</p> |
| Oral Rehearsal | |
| <p>Use <i>Wonders</i> planned opportunities for oral rehearsal and consider bulking these up throughout the week. The oral rehearsal using sentence stems with Shared Writing on Day 1 (see below) can be used as a model.</p> | <p>Kids, especially young kids, need lots of practice to rehearse ideas aloud to get the writing juices flowing.</p> |
| Shared Writing (Day 1) | |
| <p>Keep the modeling portion of your lesson brief and invite students to participate in thinking for the Shared Writing. For example, if students are gathering evidence from the Reading/Writing Workshop text, ask them to return to their seats to work with a partner or small group. Then convene again as a group to share out and finish the model together.</p> | <p>This allows the work of actively thinking through and preparing for what they will write with the students themselves. Giving students opportunities to plan and think with peers is a supportive scaffold. It also gives students additional chances to speak and listen to one another, essentially letting them rehearse their thoughts before committing them to writing.</p> |

Interactive Writing (Day 2)

When analyzing the prompt, select one focus that makes the most sense given the needs of your students. Leave other foci as options for conferencing during writing time or things to highlight during student work shares.

Consider letting students go back to write on their own after you have set them up with the beginning of “Write to the Prompt” instruction. For example, write the opening sentence together and let students complete the task before reviewing it together.

Skip additional practice with the writing trait or move to independent work.

It’s hard to teach one thing well during a lesson - let alone three! Choosing one will focus your and your student’s energy on what matters most for this lesson.

Adequate time to practice writing, as with any complex skill, is essential for getting better and better at it. This guidance is aimed at giving students more time actually practicing and less time watching and listening to the teacher.

Independent Writing (Day 3)

Be sure to leave the majority of lesson for writing time on this day!

After reading the prompt, ask students to quickly tell a peer what the prompt is asking them to do.

Review your instructional focus from Day 2 (see above for guidance). Let students discuss with a partner during “Prewrite” time.

Instead of doing this work yourself, ask students to think about what the question is asking. This will be important practice for doing this kind of thinking on their own!

Keeping the same instructional focus for two days allows students multiple “at-bats” with the same skill. This will also allow for more student writing time! Oral rehearsal allows students to work out their ideas out loud before committing them to paper.

Independent Writing (Day 4)

Depending on the needs of your class, consider using this day to continue writing and selecting Revise/Proofread/Edit as a Day 5 activity.

Address this week’s focus by either highlighting its use in student work from the first lesson, or addressing misconceptions. If most students have demonstrated use of this skill, you may choose to introduce on one of this week’s other writing foci.

Highlighting a skill’s use in student writing is a sure-fire way to inspire your students!

Foundational Skills

Following *Wonders* as written will address many of the needs of K students in regards to foundational skills. With some adjustments to time and types of tasks, your lessons will meet the needs of all learners.

The guidance provided here is primarily aimed at assisting you to make solid, research-based decisions on every aspect of teaching your children how to read.

There are two key messages for kindergarten foundational skills:

1. **Spend at least 45 minutes each and every day on foundational skills activities** - even if you only have a half-day kindergarten! Giving your children their reading foundation is your number one job. The time can and should be scattered across your day. It should be active and involve a mix of types of activities.
2. **Phonemic awareness and mastery for every student is your primary target.** If you achieve that, you will send your student to first grade in good reading shape!

For more information on why these are so critical, see the [Foundational Skills Guidance Document for Kindergarten](#).

The guidance below is divided into early to mid-kindergarten recommendations and then mid- to late-kindergarten recommendations. There is also a section giving you ideas for enhancements designed to ‘spice up’ the learning for your students by teaching in the form of games, riddles, movement and other lively enhancements. Learning to read should be fun for every student! You know they’re all excited about becoming readers!

A word on assessing your students’ foundational skills mastery: *Wonders* offers a ton of assessments, but they are often time consuming and cover too many parts of reading at a time. It is of course *very* important to know *weekly* what your students have mastered and where they need additional exposures and practices. Because of this, there are simple, easy-to-do assessment protocols offered at the end of this guidance.

Early Kindergarten Recommendations

Note: These time recommendations represent *all* class time spent for *each* student - including whole group direct instruction, small group learning and independent work. The recommended time does *not* need to be happen in one chunk and can be broken up throughout the school day.

| Foundational Skills Component | Early Kindergarten Recommendation* | <i>Wonders</i> Alignment |
|---|---|--|
| Phonemic Awareness | 20 - 30 minutes | Not aligned to time recommendations- needs modifications (see below) |
| Other components (letter recognition, letter formation, high frequency words, etc.) | 5 - 10 minutes | Aligned to time recommendations. |
| Phonics | 15 - 20 minutes* <i>*This time includes Wordless or Decodable Readers in early K</i> | Aligned to time recommendations |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Decodable Readers | See above. | Not aligned to time recommendations- needs modifications (see below) |
| Reteaching | As needed. Goal is mastery of each component by ALL students. | <i>Ensure you are using small group time to meet the needs of your students.</i> |
| <i>Note: Phonemic Awareness will take the highest allocation of time before phonics instruction begins.</i> | | |

Mid- to Late-Kindergarten Recommendations

Note: These recommendations represent *all* class time spent for *each* student - including whole group direct instruction, small group learning and independent work. The recommended time does *not* need to be happen in one chunk and can be broken up throughout the school day.

| Foundational Skills Component | Mid- to Late-Kindergarten Recommendation* | Wonders Alignment |
|---|---|--|
| Phonics (and related Phonemic Awareness Tasks) | 20-30 minutes | Phonemic Awareness tasks are aligned to time recommendations. Phonics tasks are not aligned- needs modifications (see below) |
| Decodable Readers | 15 - 20 minutes | Not aligned to time recommendations- needs modifications (see below). |
| Other components (letter recognition, letter formation, high frequency words, etc.) | 10 - 15 minutes | Tasks are aligned to time recommendations. |
| Reteaching | As needed. Goal is mastery of each component by ALL students. | Ensure you are using small group time to meet the needs of your students. |
| <i>**Note: These tasks can move to transitions and/or small group instruction as needed in mid- to late-Kindergarten.</i> | | |

*Notes for Instruction: Flexibility Within Structure

- Direct Instruction in phonics, high frequency words, and work with Decodable Readers can be: **Whole Class** or **Small-Group**
- Student Practice can be: **Independent** or **Teacher Monitored**
- Small Group Instruction can include: **Observing and Practicing a Current Skill** or **Re-teaching and Remediating a Past Skill**

Wonders Foundational Skills Program

|  Rule of Thumb | Rationale |
|--|---|
| Scope & Sequence | |
| <p>Follow <i>Wonders</i> outlined scope and sequence for foundational skills.</p> | <p><i>Wonders</i> uses a research-based scope and sequence. Instructional materials provided take the work out of planning a carefully sequencing phonics progression so that your students can build on their understanding each week - far too much work for you to attempt to do on your own!</p> <p>If you notice the pace of the program is too fast for your students, know that teaching to mastery is better than moving quickly through a phonics progression without ensuring student progress. However, also note that this problem will only compound itself as the <i>Wonders</i> pacing moves on without you! If a large portion of your students are struggling to gain mastery, find a way to add additional time for foundational skills daily so they can succeed.</p> <p>On the other hand, if you feel that <i>Wonders</i> is moving too slowly for your students (and have the data to back it up), consider adding in additional opportunities for independent reading or read alouds aligned with your weekly topics and continue to follow the pacing within foundational skills.</p> |
| Components | |
| <p>Use all <i>Wonders</i> components for Word Work instruction from the Teacher’s Edition, including those listed as “Options.”</p> | <p>There is nothing more important than building a strong foundation for our readers and writers in kindergarten - they are called <i>foundational</i> skills after all! None of this work should be considered optional.</p> |
| 45 Minutes Daily for Foundational Skills | |
| <p>Your instruction must include <i>at least 45 minutes</i> daily for foundational skills. This time includes whole group and small group instruction as well as related independent work activities.</p> <p>Be creative about scheduling. The block does not have to happen in one chunk. Many related games and tasks take just minutes, making them ideal for small chunks of time throughout the day. Many of the oral activities can be done as you take your students through the many</p> | <p>Foundational skills <i>cannot</i> be shortchanged if students are to become proficient readers! Consider this the most sacred part of your day.</p> |

transitions they make every day. Sprinkle things throughout your day to make this recommendation fit your setting.

Instructional Modifications for Foundational Skills

|  Rule of Thumb | Rationale |
|--|---|
| Add Effective Enhancements | |
| <p>Use effective enhancements to bring more joy and energy to your foundational skills instruction (see section below for a full list of ideas).</p> <p><i>Example:</i> When we blend words with /a/ today, we'll use "Head-Shoulder-Toes" and touch each body part for each sound.</p> | <p><i>Wonders</i>-planned Word Work activities are often dull and rely on the same routines each week. Foundational skills instruction can use routines and still be fun! This time should feel engaging and enjoyable for students, offering them a chance to learn crucial skills through movement, songs, chants and high-energy activities. Keep the planned content, but use every chance to add in the FUN! There are ideas below for how to achieve that.</p> |
| Additional Phonemic Awareness Instruction (Early to Mid-Kindergarten) | |
| <p>Use additional whole group phonemic awareness instruction to supplement <i>Wonders</i> in early to mid-kindergarten.</p> <p>The following <i>Wonders</i> resources can provide these activities. Remember that time for phonemic awareness can occur throughout the school day and in any setting (whole group, small group or independent) to meet the recommended 20-30 minutes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Additional Wonders Phonemic Awareness Resources:</i></p> <p>Tier 2 Intervention Phonemic Awareness Teacher's Edition, Differentiated Small Group Instruction in <i>Wonders</i> (Approaching Level, On Level, Beyond Level, English Learners), <i>Wonders</i> Adaptive Learning Program (interactive games & activities to review and reteach foundational skills)</p> <p>If you are still in need of supplemental resources for phonemic awareness, consider purchasing the excellent resource <i>Phonemic Awareness in Young Children: A Classroom Curriculum</i> by Marilyn Adams, Barbara Foorman, Ingred Lundberg, and Terri Beeler to supplement the <i>Wonders</i> program. This text is chock full of fun and easy to implement activities that support phonemic awareness.</p> | <p>Think of phonemic awareness as setting the stage for reading later on. Before children see sounds written down in words, they need to learn to hear them and manipulate them orally. For the first half of kindergarten, you will lean heavily on phonemic awareness activities during foundational skills time. Your kids should feel like they get to engage in wordplay all day long!</p> <p>Adjustments will need to be made, as the <i>Wonders</i>-allocated time for phonemic awareness remains relatively constant throughout kindergarten. This requires keeping a close eye throughout the year, as you shift from adding additional phonemic awareness practice to additional phonics practice (see below) to meet your students' needs.</p> |

Additional Phonics Instruction (Mid- to Late-Kindergarten)

Ensure that your students are receiving a total of 20-30 minutes of focused phonics instruction and time for application each day. Remember that the minutes allocated on the clock in the Teacher's Edition do not always accurately reflect time for any given activity, nor do they include time for related practice outside of direct instruction.

Always use *Wonders*-planned whole group phonics and spelling instruction from the Work Work section of the Teacher's Guide. Also plan instruction in small group settings and activities for independent work that support the current sound and spelling patterns.

Additional Wonders Phonics Resources:
Tier 2 Intervention Phonics Teacher's Edition, Differentiated Small Group Instruction in *Wonders* (Approaching Level, On Level, Beyond Level, English Learners), *Wonders* Adaptive Learning Program (interactive games & activities to review and reteach foundational skills).

While phonemic awareness will require lots of time in the first half of kindergarten, you will need to give phonics the same love in the later half of the year!

In mid- to late-kindergarten, *Wonders* falls short of 20-30 minutes of daily instruction without careful planning. Don't fret - *Wonders* has an abundance of resources at your fingertips! You'll have to get familiar with them in order to access the extra resources easily.

Try to invest that time before you need to use the resources so you can decide for yourself which are the best ones to tap into regularly for your students.

Phonics Practice Opportunities

For every taught-phonics skill, students should have *at least five practice opportunities*. Use phonics pages in the Your Turn practice book to support the goal. You can also supplement with *Wonders* Adaptive Learning Program, Go Digital activities or phonics-based Workstation Activity cards.

Feel free to create additional practice opportunities by pulling outside resources or crafting your own, but keep in mind that the primary goal is for students to get practice with the current and previous phonics patterns. Outside materials may not align directly with the *Wonders* scope and sequence and should be used thoughtfully.

Mastering new phonics patterns requires practice, practice, practice! While students do not need endless workbook pages to complete, they do need time each day to secure their new learning.

Don't forget to 'spice these up' to make them more fun for your students. Try to include movement, songs or games as much as you can so your students can learn more actively and enjoy the learning.

Effective Enhancements for Foundational Skills Instruction

Stand Up/Sit Down: Turn word sorts into an opportunity for movement. “Stand up if you hear a word with ----” or “sit down if you see the sound ----” can add movement to a basic task.

High-Five Your Neighbor: Same as above, with the task to high-five a neighbor if they hear (phonemic awareness) or see (phonics) the given sound.

If You’re Happy and You Know It: Turn a task into a song by setting it to the lyrics of kid-friendly tunes. *“If you hear /s/ and you know it, clap your hands.” “If you think you know the word, yell it out!”*

Do You Speak Robot? Turn your blending routine into a game by teaching students that you (or a puppet!) speak robot - one sound at a time. Students must listen to the segmented sounds and blend them together to understand the words.

Do You Speak Snail? Turn your blending routine into another game by teaching students to “speak snail”. Say words *slowly*, sound by sound. Students have to “guess” the word or “translate snail speak” by blending them together.

Let’s Hear It For: Teach students to spell high frequency words, or to learn word parts, by cheering for each letter, cheerleader style. *“Give me an A” “I’ve got your A, I’ve got your A!”*

Head, Shoulders, Toes: Blend or segment words with a physical activity - students touch their heads for the first sound, their shoulders for the middle sound, and their toes for the end sound of 3 phoneme words. (note: this task can be adapted for syllables, or more parts can be added for more sounds)

Whisper It, Shout it: Vary any oral activity by simply varying the volume level for students when they are responding. Alternating between whispering and shouting, or adding other silly additions -- say it like you’re underwater, say it in slow motion, mouth it with no sound -- can bring the fun to a simple task.

Snap/Clap/Stomp When You Hear: Give students a physical activity to do when they hear a sound and spelling pattern, rhyming word, or other stated task.

Freeze Dance: Play music and let students dance. Have them freeze when they hear a given sound and spelling pattern, rhyming word, or other stated task.

Note: these enhancements should be added to lessons that reflect current skills. Students do not need to repeatedly practice what they have already mastered. So, either retire an old favorite or repurpose it to reflect new learning.

Decodable Readers

Wonders' decodable readers are controlled texts that only feature words already taught either as high-frequency words or words containing phonics patterns that were previously taught or currently being learned. Decodables can be used for whole-class or small-group work, in centers, or for independent reading. They should be read many times!

Decodable readers connect phonics to fluency and comprehension. They are the opportunity for students to practice learned sound/spelling patterns and words learned as wholes *in context*. This means students will be taking what they have learned during your phonics lessons and getting the chance to use these same skills in the context of a book! The important thing is that they be used as a regular and frequent part of instruction and practice.

|  Rule of Thumb | Rationale |
|--|--|
| Instructional Time | |
| <p>Use the pre-decodable and decodable resources daily.</p> <p>In early to mid-kindergarten, use the pre-decodable and decodable readers as part of your daily instruction (whole group, small group or for independent reading). These texts are extremely short - quick but powerful reads!</p> <p>In mid- to late-kindergarten, use decodable readers for 15 to 20 minutes each and every day (whole group, small group or for independent reading).</p> <p>Consider also using the “Take-Home Book” from the Your Turn Practice Book an additional text to practice sight-words.</p> | <p>Decodables are a vital part of securing knowledge of new sound and spelling patterns. Your instruction will first let kids hear these new sounds (“Phonemic Awareness” TE instruction), then see them (“Phonics” and “Spelling” TE instruction) and finally use new patterns in a book (Decodable Readers). If your students are not asked to use newly learned phonics patterns while reading, they will not see this learning as a useful tool while reading!</p> |
| Decodable Reader Protocol | |
| <p><i>See the next section for a full description of the Decodable Readers Protocol.</i></p> <p>Use this protocol to plan your instruction weekly with the two decodable readers included in <i>Wonders</i>. Note that you will often use each decodable reader on more than one day.</p> <p>Ask a handful of comprehension questions after the first and second reads of any decodable text. Questions after the first read should get at the main idea, while questioning after the second read can get at any deeper meaning.</p> | <p>Reading and rereading decodables, with decreasing support from you, will build the independence and confidence you want to see in your students while reading words with new phonics content.</p> <p>These texts are meant to be reused. You’ll see your students’ excitement after being able to read “all by myself!” Don’t forget that this feeling will be made possible by controlling these texts for only phonics content that your students have learned and by providing lots of practice opportunities.</p> <p>While this time is certainly intended to focus on accurate decoding, that doesn’t mean comprehension has to fall by the wayside. Make sure your kids know that they are also expected to read for meaning during this time by asking quick comprehension questions after reading.The</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| After several reads of a decodable reader, create games and riddles that make revisiting this text fun and simultaneously support your instructional goals. | controlled nature of the decodable text makes revisiting the text for opportunities to practice related content easy and fun for students. |
|---|--|

Decodable Readers Protocol

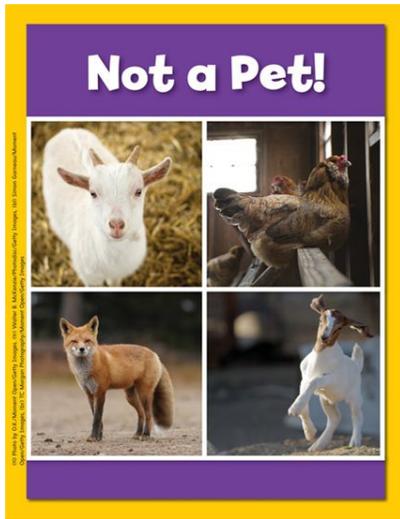
Decodable Readers offer a wealth of learning opportunities for students. The protocol demonstrates the varied ways in which these texts can be used in your classroom. A sample has been provided.

Note: More than one read can happen in a given lesson or day.

| Read # | Format | Notes | Instructional Purpose |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|--|---|
| 1st Read | Choral | Lead choral reading <i>Note: Which students are struggling? Which words present hesitations?</i> Follow with basic comprehension questions. | Students can hear a fluent read. Teacher can note specific needs for decoding (student or whole group). Reinforces that reading is for making meaning. |
| 2nd Read | Students read independently | Allow time for independent read - monitor for word challenges. Follow with more time for comprehension questions. Cold call for questions, varying who is called on. | Allows students to all work independently. Teacher can monitor individual needs. Gives time to assess any and all comprehension needs - it is important that all students are fully comprehending before moving on. |
| 3rd read | Echo or Choral | Teacher models fluent reading of the text. Echo reading (teacher, then student) or choral reading to follow. | Echo read if more support is needed. This time allows the students to hear fluent models, and the teacher to monitor accurate decoding and automaticity. <i>Note: Do not expect student reading to sound as fluent as the teacher model. Fluency should be prioritized in late first grade and all of second grade as decoding with automaticity is solid.</i> |

| | | | |
|--------------------|--|---|--|
| 4th read | Buddy/ Paired Reading | <p>One student reads, one follows along, and then switch.</p> <p>Whole group reviewing challenges that come up from sight words or sound spelling patterns during the student reading time.</p> | <p>Reading work is on the students. Teacher can listen to each pair and note any challenges (what and where). Patterns (sight words, sound/spelling patterns, etc.) can be noted and shared whole group.</p> <p>Buddy reading can also be a center activity.</p> |
| Later reads | Foundational Skills Games and Activities | Text-based games and tasks that reinforce phonics patterns and support student fun with language. | See sample below. |

Decodable Readers Foundational Skills Games and Activities Sample



Source: McGraw-Hill *Wonders*



A hen can sit in it.
Not a pet!

Page 20



It can sit in a den.
Not a pet!

Page 21

Grade K, Unit 5 Decodable Reader

| Page | Question/Tasks | Instructional Purpose |
|------|---|---|
| 20 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I'm thinking of a word that rhymes with something you write with. Hint: It's not a pencil! If you switch the first sound of this word to /v/ you get a person who is a doctor for animals. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize and produce rhyming words Substitute phonemes |
| 21 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I'm going to say some words from this page. High-five your neighbor if you hear the /e/ sound like in 'egg'. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> den sit can pet not I'm going to say two word parts. Point to what you get in the picture when you blend these parts together: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> pl + ant d + irt n + ose | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolate the medial vowel in three-phoneme words Blend onsets and rimes of single-syllable spoken words |

Foundational Skills Assessment

|  Rule of Thumb | Rationale |
|--|--|
| Daily Informal Assessment | |
| <p>Use a checklist or note taking system to monitor students daily (sample below). Small group instruction is an ideal time to collect this information!</p> <p>Remember to cold call students and offer a range of tasks to gauge mastery. For example, when learning a new phonics skill, be sure you are asking students to write words with this sound and spelling pattern , identify words orally that contain this pattern, and make the associated sounds in words.</p> <p>Check the "Monitor and Differentiate Quick-Check" on the margins of the Teacher's Edition for prompts to determine if students need additional support. This is also followed by reference to related Small Group Differentiated lessons.</p> | <p>You will catch red flags more quickly if you are carefully observing your students any time they are engaged in learning connected to foundational skills. This is your chance to pounce on those gaps with extra instruction and support as soon as they appear!</p> |
| Weekly Dictation Assessment | |
| <p>Wonders does not include a weekly assessment of foundational skills in kindergarten. Once your students have learned enough sounds and spelling patterns to produce consonant-vowel-consonant words, use a weekly dictation to assess mastery of new phonics patterns. A full description of this protocol is in the section below.</p> <p><i>Note: Before your students are ready for the dictation listed above, use the activities from the "Placement and Diagnostic Assessment" but substitute new content for a weekly gauge of progress with Phonemic and Phonological Awareness.</i></p> | <p>While careful observation of your students is key, you need more formal data to truly determine who is mastering new skills.</p> <p>Reading new phonics patterns is typically easier for students than producing them in writing, so this dictation should provide actionable data on which of your students need more support. You will act swiftly and decisively based on this assessment to close gaps during the following week!</p> |
| Unit Assessments | |
| <p>Use the foundational skills portion of <i>Wonders</i> Unit Assessments after every three weeks of instruction.</p> <p>Consider adding an extended dictation (after you have taught a sufficient number of sound and spelling patterns) to the unit assessment as a measure of mastery for all sound and spelling patterns taught.</p> | <p>Unit assessments are yet another opportunity to collect data on which students need your support! You should also use this as an opportunity to widen the lens and gather information about <i>all</i> taught skills.</p> |

Observation Daily Checklist

Weekly Phonemic Awareness or Phonics Skill(s): _____

Weekly High-Frequency Words: _____

Notes from previous week → whole group practice needed in: _____

Key:

✓ = mastery

? = inconsistent

X = area of challenge, more practice needed

| Student Name | Extra support needed with <i>(provide skill)</i> | Weekly skill notes | Decodable Readers: Accuracy | Decodable Readers: Automaticity | Decodable Readers: High-Frequency Words |
|--------------|---|--------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
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Weekly Dictation

Use a weekly dictation to determine which of your students have mastered this week's focus sound and spelling patterns.

- **Dictate 10 words orally**
 - 7-8 words should focus on the weekly sound and spelling pattern.
 - 2-3 words can focus on previously taught sound and spelling patterns, based on errors or student concerns the teacher has noticed since instruction, or re-teaching goals from previous weeks.
 - Include a mix of make believe and real words (using real words along with pseudowords allows students to apply the sound and spelling pattern and ensures a lack of memorizing word lists, for an authentic assessment).

- **Dictate one sentence**
 - The sentence should include 2-3 words that focus on the skill of the current week, along with a mix of new and previously taught high-frequency words.

- **Grade weekly**
 - If students make errors on more than one of the words from the current week's sound and spelling patterns, re-teaching must happen the following week.
 - If only a few students make these errors, re-teaching can happen in small groups.
 - If a large number of students make these errors, address them in whole class instruction.

Knowledge

Reading and Writing (Speaking and Listening) to Build Knowledge

Building knowledge is an accelerator for literacy gains for all students. We talk often of ‘accessing background knowledge,’ but not frequently enough about how to build it through what we do with students in school. Knowledge gains carry vocabulary gains. Words are the names we use to talk about what we know. Increasing word and world knowledge accelerates students’ comprehension. Providing students the chance to read on a topic of interest to them, or one necessary to master for content standards, is a well-researched pathway to improving reading.

Being able to figure out what words mean in context is a vital part of becoming a reader who can learn from what she reads. When a student has a comfort level—expertise—with a topic, they can figure out lots of words they don’t know because they have a confidence in what they do know about that topic. Students can use what they know to figure out the few new ideas or words. Once they knows lots of words, and lots of different knowledge, students can read whatever they want and learn from anything.

The best way to do this for all your students in the early grades is to read aloud, and read aloud some more, deliberately and systematically.

Wonders offers the chance to build knowledge in stylized ways, but this is an area that can’t be shirked and where you should pull in what you know your students need and love from any source you can. What you can’t do, or skip at your students’ peril, is to neglect building knowledge through reading aloud daily. Read about the world! About science! About cool people and cool places! About children like your students and children very unlike them! Reading aloud is the window from your classroom out to the wide world.

Wonders offers some opportunities to build knowledge (and read aloud) in several ways, but teachers need to really apply judgment and be willing to hunt through the resources in this arena, since there are variations in how they are organized and uneven quality from week to week. These are laid out in the Rules of Thumb for the *Wonders* components that support knowledge building:

- [Text selections](#) that come together to make a text set
- [Integrate ideas/research](#)
- Volume of reading (see below)

Volume of Reading

Every performance-based task improves through practice opportunities. The more complex the task, the more it benefits from lots of practice opportunities. There is almost nothing we ask of our students more complex than learning to read and write. It is a fun thing to learn how to do and to practice when you’re young. Because it is so vital to lay a strong foundation, many of the recommendations for volume of reading in K-2 have to do with letting students read and re-read their Decodable Readers. Once they are smooth readers there, they can move on to Leveled Readers and experiment with word patterns they may not be as familiar with.

We already know that vocabulary grows faster when words are learned in context, and we already know that students are more interested and learn more when they can stick with a topic that is of interest to them for a while. So it is essential that we provide opportunities for students to hear high-quality texts read aloud, and for teachers to choose texts that stay on a topic so students can accelerate their knowledge and vocabulary growth. Don’t neglect the volume of reading that comes from reading aloud to primary grade students! See more in the section just above.

Leveled Readers for Small Group Use

|  Rule of Thumb | Rationale |
|--|--|
| Text Selection | |
| <p>Allow students to read more than just their assigned Leveled Reader in small groups each week.*</p> <p>When there are a variety of Leveled Reader titles for the week, start with the assigned Leveled Reader and then use the “Level Up” resources for the rest of the week.</p> <p>When the Leveled Readers are the same title, use “Level Up” and consider using other resources instead of spending too much time with the Leveled Readers. There are many options: the Paired Read (to get some social studies or content reading in), the Reading/Writing Workshop text, more time with the Decodable Readers for students who need it, the ELD resources, or Literature Anthology as additional sources of differentiated small group reading opportunities.</p> <p>Note: For students who are working to secure foundational skills, primarily use the Decodable Readers for additional readings during this time. Do not rely on the Leveled Readers until foundational skills are more secure.</p> <p><i>*Grade 2 Note: If using the Leveled Readers to build knowledge this week, you may already be using multiple Leveled Readers with the whole class.</i></p> | <p>Small group time is an opportunity for students to have access to a volume of reading with lots of teacher support!</p> <p>Use the support you can provide in small group structures to provide students access to increasingly complex texts. You may also use this opportunity to revisit texts that that were introduced whole class in order to closely monitor student progress and provide additional strategic support.</p> <p>If you can think of the Leveled Readers as ‘staircases’ where students can climb more than one step in a week, rather than a fixed platform, you will accelerate students’ growth and confidence and give them access to a greater volume of reading. <i>Wonders</i> assists you in this by offering the “Level Up” resources. The many <i>Wonders</i> resources listed to the left will help you meet the needs of each of your students when the Leveled Readers are not particularly good during any given week.</p> |
| Lesson Plan: Level Up | |
| <p>Use the “Level Up” lesson plans in place of the Leveled Reader lesson plans in the Teacher Edition. Focus instruction on building understanding through text-specific questioning and supports.</p> | <p>The “Level Up” lessons use text-specific questions to support student understanding about key areas of complexity for each Leveled Reader. These lessons also suggest teacher supports in reading more complex texts within small groups.</p> |
| Time with Groups | |
| <p>Create a schedule that allows your most struggling readers to receive the most small group reading support.</p> | <p>Students with the greatest need should be provided more intense attention and support in order fuel growth and close gaps. You should see these students more frequently than groups of students that are achieving mastery.</p> |

Independent Reading

|  Rule of Thumb | Rationale |
|---|--|
| Text Selection | |
| <p>Consider all texts from each week fair game for independent reading including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rereading any text introduced whole group Reading unused weekly texts Digital inquiry space on Connect Ed (articles, video and audio) Unit Bibliography texts (made available to all readers) <p>Always preference reading of topically-linked texts and make them available to students to read throughout the unit and beyond. For example, leave last week’s readers in a bin by the library for students to access during independent reading time. This effectively creates a mini text set for students.</p> | <p>A volume of reading done independently should be at a variety of text complexity levels. This allows students to feel like they can enter at any point they feel confident or find a book they are interested in reading. If available, use books and other text sources that are conceptually related to the unit themes and topics that have appeal to students from beyond <i>Wonders</i>.</p> <p>Reading on a conceptually-related topic is research-proven to best grow knowledge and vocabulary. When students read within a conceptually-related topic, they build knowledge and can access higher level texts. As they are linked to weekly topics, <i>Wonders</i> resources already do a lot of this work for you!</p> |
| Time for Independent Reading | |
| <p>Ensure you have built time into your daily schedule for independent reading beyond whole class instruction. This can be assigned from the resources available above or other selections from your class library, or students can choose from these resources themselves.</p> <p>You may choose to make independent reading an independent activity while you meet with small groups to meet this recommendation. See more about options for independent activities in K-2 Independent Work Activities.</p> | <p>Students need to read (and read a lot!) to become proficient readers. Making time for reading within the school day is essential.</p> |

Text Evidence

The ability to find, evaluate and present evidence is a critical skill in college- and career-ready standards. That’s because it is a vital skill in life. Providing lots of practice, and a variety of ways to help children strengthen the ‘evidence-seeking muscle’ needs to be baked into every lesson. The good news is students really like to find evidence and present their arguments/sets of reasons why they have the right insight into something they have heard or read for themselves. It’s an investigation that’s deeply satisfying.

Chances to practice recognizing and presenting text evidence are all over *Wonders*. Perhaps the most essential place to get practice is when students are asked to write down their evidence in an organized way, whether that is in a short response to a text-specific question or in a longer piece, or after doing independent discovery through research. Writing is complicated and needs lots of practice. Writing about evidence and learning to stay focused is even harder. The guidance offered regarding all the writing scattered across the week in a given *Wonders* lesson and unit works to focus your attention on the highest value and most focused opportunities.

English Language Development Resources for All Students

The English Language Development (ELD) Resources are a formidable strength of the *Wonders* California/2017 program. The ELD offers well-planned routines and scaffolds for English Learners (EL), and often those resources represent opportunities to enhance or support discussion for all learners. This guide strongly endorses these resources and their benefits for students. The ELD meets the needs of different profiles of EL students: Emerging, Expanding and Bridging. They provide crystal clear direction for how to use these resources alongside of, or in place of, the *Wonders* curriculum. Most impressively, these resources provide adjustments for *each* activity and text in the program for all three levels of EL learner. Several of the most helpful specific resources are suggested below, but if you have EL learners in your classroom, or are interested in better supporting the language development of any of your students, be sure to dig into these plentiful resources for yourself!

|  Rule of Thumb | Rationale |
|---|---|
| Use the Collaborative Conversation sentence starters as a framework for whole class discussion. | Sentence starters and other supports in gaining proficiency in academic English syntax are particularly helpful for students without a solid English base. |
| Check ConnectEd for additional multimedia resources and engaging activities (e.g., songs and chants in the Language Warm Up). | Because the ELD resources follow best practices research for ELLs, they are more concrete and clear than some of the core activities in the <i>Wonders</i> ELA materials. This makes them invaluable for students who may be struggling with expressive language or in accessing text meaning no matter what their primary language is. |
| Use text-specific questioning, often available in the EL sidebar, with small groups who are struggling with any individual text as option for more intensive support. | There are additional good text dependent/specific questions in <i>Wonders</i> that can help scaffold comprehension of the gist of complex text selections. Tap into these when the text is not accessible for too many of your students. |

| | |
|--|---|
| Use Differentiated Texts as student work options that are aligned to weekly topic. These offer lower level texts aligned to the weekly topic. | These are particularly good for older grade students who might otherwise not be able to access the ELA text selections initially. They can also be tapped as extra resources for building knowledge in weeks that have a topical focus. |
| Consider unpacking text structure in a small group with a more simple text (Reading Writing Workshop or Interactive Read Aloud) before students encounter it in a whole group lesson. Also, build in additional work with text features for ELs. | Lighten the load by helping ELs understand text structure before encountering a more complex text later on. |
| In Grades 2-6, revisit the Vocabulary Strategy lessons with EL students in a small group. | The Vocabulary Strategy lessons help to unlock transferrable knowledge about the English language. They also come with practice opportunities from the “Your Turn” book. |
| In Kindergarten and Grade 1, the “My Language Book” offers language supports that are text-specific (e.g., sentences frames, graphic organizers) for student independent work. These can be printed from ConnectEd. | These are excellent resources for promoting close study of syntax. The added supports allow students to gain more independence than they might otherwise have. |

Evidence-Based & Rich Classroom Discussions

Evidence-based discussion is an essential component to *any* literacy program meeting college- and career-ready benchmarks. *Wonders* incorporates discussion opportunities while tackling texts; directions often push students to use text evidence during discussions.

Time for student work (orally and in writing) is vital to any classroom. While there are many chances to let students engage in text-based discussion outlined in the *Wonders* program, there are also missed opportunities to allow student voices to shine. It is recommended to always seize opportunities for students to do the thinking and work, and to shy away from *Wonders*-scripted time for teacher talk and modeling.

Please note that in general, recommendations for discussion topics are carefully linked to texts hear read or read for themselves and discussions are avoided when they are decontextualized ‘warm-ups’. This is because of the time pressures *Wonders* users face every day. Time needs to be preserved for what makes students stronger in the most powerful components of ELA. Being able to recognize and discuss the evidence base for assertions when speaking and listening is vital.

Text-based opportunities are highlighted separately in many of the Rules of Thumb for each *Wonders* component. See additional guidance for successful and meaningful discussion below.

|  Rule of Thumb | Standard/Rationale |
|--|---|
| Turn Teacher Talk into Student Talk | |
| <p>Turn teacher modeling into questions for students, whenever possible. Look for the blue “Teacher Think Aloud” and challenge yourself to turn these models into questions for students.</p> <p><i>Note: Consider modeling a strategy or skill the first time it is introduced and then use this guidance for the remaining lessons.</i></p> <p>Example: <i>Wonders instruction</i> Skill: Main Topic and Key Details Teacher Think Aloud: “Remember, the main topic is what the selection is all about: animals that live in the pond. Let’s add this to our chart.”</p> <p><i>Modification</i> “Quickly tell your partner what you think the main topic of this text is.” (Listen in and invite a student to share, ask kids to vote thumbs up/thumbs down to show agreement/disagreement) “Let’s add this to our chart”</p> | <p>While teacher modeling is <i>sometimes</i> appropriate, <i>Wonders</i> includes too much teacher talk. Teachers are often given the most interesting questions to think about, which robs the students of those interesting discoveries and epiphanies.</p> <p>Loosen the reins and let kids try their hand at the thinking! Even if every student in your class can’t model clear comprehension of the text for the class <i>yet</i>, student voices inspire confidence in their peers, and provide you clarity on the level of student mastery in your room.</p> |
| Ask all Students to Engage | |
| <p>Allow students time, individually or in partnerships/small groups, to locate evidence before sharing out whole class. Insert peer discussion time to make this time come alive!</p> | <p>Letting students do the work for themselves, instead of you modeling, or one student demonstrating, flexes the muscle kids need to do this work on their own.</p> |
| Highlighting Discussion-Rich <i>Wonders</i> Components | |
| <p>Ensure you are preserving time for <i>Wonders</i> components and the lesson portions that invite discussion. <i>Always</i> leave time for the “Guided Practice/Practice” section of a lesson.</p> <p>Of note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Oral Language vocabulary activities ● Anywhere the “Collaborate” icon appears <div data-bbox="386 1669 560 1789" style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Source: McGraw-Hill <i>Wonders</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Integrate Ideas ● Day 5 activities (see Menu) ● Independent Activities (make discussion-based) | <p>While it may be tempting to cut discussion time in favor of teacher-led instruction or reading/writing - resist! Many discussion-rich components of <i>Wonders</i> are there for the taking and students need these chances to talk to build language skills. This is especially important for our youngest students and ELs, as their oral language abilities far outpace their written ones. Think of the discussions as rehearsal times so students are more prepared to put their thoughts into writing.</p> |

Day 5 Activity Menu

Day 5 is an opportunity for you to create your own schedule of instruction, selecting activities from a menu based on the quality of the week's *Wonders* resources and the needs of your students. *Always* make it a priority to work with students who you noticed over the week need additional support. In addition, Day 5 should highlight student reading, writing, and collaboration! Do not use this time to complete *Wonders* weekly assessments, outside of assessing foundational skills (see guidance on [assessment](#) for more).

Day 5 Structures

Consider Day 5's activities flexible to a variety of classroom structures. When reading text, you might consider introducing that text whole group or assigning it to proficient readers while you work more closely with a small group. You may also choose to have different students working on different activities at the same time, then rotating. Adding options for student choice is also a great way to close out the week! Ultimately, you will need to select some activities that allow students to work independently while you meet with small groups.

Core activities:

- *Wonders*-planned Day 5 Work Work instruction.
- Assess this week's foundational skills (see [foundational skills guidance for more](#)).
- Meet with students who need additional support (see section below on Working with Small Groups).
- (Grade 1, Units 1-3) Read the Interactive Read Aloud.

Optional activities:

Can be completed whole group, small group, in partnerships, or individually.

- **Complete additional foundational skills activities based on data and observation.**
- Read the Interactive Read Aloud, if it builds knowledge* (Core Activity for Grade 1 in Units 1-3).
- Read the Paired Read, if it builds knowledge.
- Extend writing instruction to newly introduced texts.
- Reread the Shared Read, Literature Anthology, Literature Big Book or Interactive Read Aloud.
- Complete the Integrate Activity in the Close Reading Companion.
- Use quality "Make Connections" questions as discussion or drawing prompts.
- Make all Leveled Readers available to all students (especially if this week's Leveled Readers connect deeply with the weekly Essential Question)
- Complete Research & Inquiry project, if it builds knowledge (more information below).
- (Kindergarten, Units 1-3) Additional Reading Writing Workshop Text.
- (Grade 2) Fluency/public speaking performances using read and reread text.

Optional weekly wrap up activities:

Can be completed whole group, small group, in partnerships, or individually.

- Text Connections: Essential Question discussion.
- Write about the Essential Question using text evidence (if not already completed).
- Publish and share independent writing (Revise/Proofread/Edit).
- Research & Inquiry share (if project completed on Days 4/5).

Working with Small Groups

Use this gift of time to ensure that you are providing extra support to students who have shown—based on classroom observation or student work—that they need an extra push. For all students K-6, you should *always* preference meeting with students who need additional help with foundational skills (see below for more).

Working with small groups to support foundational skills on Day 5:

- Continued work with Decodable Readers (in addition to time during Word Work).
- Additional decodable passages from ConnectEd aligned to target skill.
- Reviewing skills with Approaching Level Phonemic Awareness lesson in the Teacher’s Edition.
- Reviewing skills with Approaching Level Phonics lesson in the Teacher’s Edition.
- Tier 2 Intervention: Grade K-2 Phonics resources on ConnectEd.
- Tier 2 Intervention: Grade K-2 Phonemic Awareness resources on ConnectEd.

Integrate Ideas

|  Rule of Thumb | Rationale |
|---|--|
| Optional Weekly Research and Inquiry | |
| <p>You may sometimes choose to complete the weekly Research & Inquiry project to close out the week. It is recommended that you choose no more than one research project per unit in Weeks 1-5.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only select projects that are most connected to: • The theme or the topic of the unit • The texts students have read • Conducting research of information beyond what has already been learned | <p>Some projects do not require true research or are only loosely connected to the unit theme or topic. While important for students to regularly engage in research, weekly engagement takes too much instructional time.</p> |
| Text Connections | |
| <p>Use Text Connections as one way to wrap up the week with focused discussion around the weekly Essential Question and learning from texts (see above for additional options).</p> | <p>Students should have opportunities to synthesize their learning from the week and engage in collaborative conversation using text-evidence with peers.</p> <p>See <i>Wonders’</i> notes on Speaking and Listening in this section for grade-specific guidance to build these skills and habits of discussion.</p> |

Independent Work Activities (K-2)

There are *many* options for independent work activity materials within *Wonders*, so you won't likely need to create additional materials from scratch. Several options are called out below; however always consider the following values when selecting independent work activities:

1. In K-2, independent work should *very often* highlight current or spiraled foundational skills content, as outlined by the *Wonders' Scope & Sequence*. Consider this a priority until you are certain that all students have mastered a given sound-spelling pattern.
2. Direct student choices toward options that will have maximum payoffs for strengthening students' literacy outcomes.
3. Independent work can be completed in partnerships or small groups. Whenever possible, student talk and collaboration are encouraged!
4. Independent work should need no or minimal or direct teacher support, allowing your teacher-led small groups to happen seamlessly. Repeating activities but replacing content is highly suggested.
5. Less is more. The Keep It Simple doctrine should be uppermost in your mind when planning. It's okay to only have 2-3 options for your students. Allow #1 above to guide your decision-making and design for success!

Recommended Independent Work Tasks

- Additional readings and retell with Decodable Readers (see [Decodables Protocol](#)).
- Buddy rereading and retell with Shared Read. (Consider lightweight accountability named in the Decodables Protocol.)
- Unused workbook pages or tasks practicing current foundational skills content
- Computer/tablet content from *Wonders* online (*if available*)
 - Adaptive Learning Games (match your current/previously taught foundational reading skills).
 - Listen to the Interactive Read Aloud.
 - Listen to the Literature Anthology text while following along.
- Workstation Activity Cards
 - Use cards that draw on the knowledge that students are building throughout the week; offer opportunities to talk, write and draw about texts; and use weekly and previously taught foundational skills. Avoid activities that are purely Skill or Strategy-based, unless using these activities for lightweight accountability of student-led tasks (e.g., write main idea and key details of an independently read text). Lean most heavily on "Phonics/Word Study" practice cards.
- Writing, drawing, or talking about Visual Vocabulary Cards
 - Consider working with word categories by brainstorming additional connected words and using words or drawings to show student thinking.
- Independent Reading
 - Consider adding lightweight accountability in the form of response journals, discussion prompts, or book talks (see Recommended Writing Tasks below).

Additional focus points for tasks during **early Kindergarten** include:

- Name writing
- Letter recognition
- Handwriting (proper letter formation)
- Uppercase/lowercase match of taught letters
- Retelling read alouds based on pictures
- Creating storylines for wordless books based on pictures

Additional focus points for tasks during **mid- to late-Kindergarten** include:

- Letter/sound recognition
- Handwriting/letter formation
- Practice tasks and activities reviewing high-frequency words taught as wholes
- Retelling read aloud based on pictures

Additional focus points for tasks during **first and second grade** include:

- Practice tasks and activities reviewing high-frequency words taught as wholes
- Retelling read aloud texts based on pictures and words
- Decodable games from Decodable Readers (see [Decodables Protocol](#))
- Writing center connected to current Read Aloud, Writing instruction, or Research
- Sentence-making tasks with high-frequency words and phonics patterns
- Late first grade/second grade: Fluency work (buddy reading or previously read Reader's Theater text) for those students with decoding accuracy and automaticity

Recommended Writing Tasks for First Grade

Below are several options for writing tasks that can provide support while still allowing students to work independently. Choosing writing tasks that are repeated and familiar will allow them to become a friendly routine, ideal for tasks that happen during small group instruction and are largely completed independently.

- Generic text-dependent questions, such as (but not limited to):
 - Narrative:*
 - What was your favorite part of this story?
 - Who was your favorite character and why?
 - What was the problem and how was it solved?
 - Where did this story take place?
 - Informational Texts:*
 - What is something new you learned in this text?
 - What was this text mostly about?
 - What did you find most interesting and why?
- Text-Specific Tasks (These will vary based on the anchor text)
 - Write a letter to the main character about an event from the narrative.
 - Using the provided picture from the text, write a caption for it.
 - Write a letter to a friend explaining what you learned from the informational text.

Assessment

If there is a universal (and justified) concern among elementary school teachers, it is that their students are assessed too much. *Wonders* offers tons of assessments and serves them up weekly on Fridays. Doing even half of them would consume that one day a week. During week 6 of every unit in Grades 1-6, there is an entire week devoted primarily to assessing students on every aspect of ELA imaginable. You will see suggestions below in the Week 6 Rule of Thumb, for high-value ways to use all that time to accelerate your students' literacy growth.

One overarching rule is to be picky, and pare everything down so it's manageable for your students and for you. If your school or district is test-crazed, then you may not have freedom to do this. But try to be an advocate for your students and for common sense when you can.

For example, *Wonders* includes released items from both Smarter Balanced and PARCC. Those will generally be better designed than passages and items developed just for *Wonders*. But you don't need to do more than one or two passages. You may also find that some of the passages in the weekly assessments are better aligned to the work you've been doing than the unit ones. Feel free to swap them out to give your students a valuable experience and to give you useful and actionable data.

Where does assessment yield valuable data about your students and where does it not?

There are clear answers. In the primary grades, diagnosing through frequent assessment is essential while children are learning the sound-symbol relationships that allow them to unlock reading. Teachers need to know exactly which students know each phonics pattern and which students don't. They need to know this after every new pattern is introduced so students can be worked with immediately to overcome confusion and get the practice they need to progress swiftly toward knowing how to read. The Foundational Skills Maps for K-2 offer focused guidance on what to assess, how to assess it, and what to do with the results. It also offers protocols for regular weekly assessments of student progress. *Wonders* does a good job with assessing foundational reading skills after every unit. It offers the additional practice children need based on the results of weekly diagnostic assessments for teachers who use the Data Dashboard on ConnectEd.

It is also useful to hold students accountable for spelling accurately, since it helps solidify those same patterns of the English language as they get more complex all through the elementary grades.

Other than these two areas, the only other reason to formally assess students is to get a periodic snapshot of their reading comprehension and their ability to express themselves in writing, and how well they are stacking up against their peers in their grade regionally or nationally. Neither reading comprehension or writing ability progress quickly, so these sorts of assessments can be infrequent. Most settings already have protocols in place for more than enough of these kinds of assessments.

This does not mean that you aren't responsible to know how your students are doing with all things literacy and addressing any gaps. You are! But that information comes from careful, regular observations of your students during class and diagnosing student work in various forms on an ongoing basis. Further, any gaps need to be filled by offering more class time in the authentic tasks of reading, writing, listening and speaking to high-quality texts, not engaging in cycles of testing or test prepping.

| Assessment | Recommendation |
|--|--|
| Weekly <i>Wonders</i> Assessments | <p>K: No <i>Wonders</i> weekly assessment. Add weekly dictation.</p> <p>1: Use only foundational skills portions of weekly assessment. Modify weekly dictation assessment.</p> <p>2: Do not use except as a source of substitution in Unit Assessments (for passages that exhibit superior quality or alignment). Modify weekly dictation assessment.</p> <p>3-6: Do not use except as a source of substitution in Unit Assessments (for passages that exhibit superior quality or alignment).</p> |
| Unit <i>Wonders</i> Assessments | Use with significant modifications or as your school requires. |
| (Grades 2-6) Process Writing Performance Task | Use in Units 3, 4, 5. |
| (Grades 3-6) Spelling Tests | Consider using. |

Note: For more information on foundational skills instruction/assessment see here.

|  Rule of Thumb | Rationale |
|---|--|
| Unit Assessments | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use only the highest quality <i>Wonders</i> passages as unit assessments. These can be taken from unused weekly assessments. In grades 3-6, lean on retired Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium passages most heavily. Strongly consider eliminating some passages to shorten the assessment, especially in the lower grades. Eliminate the grammar passage. Instead pay close attention to student writing samples. Ensure that the writing prompt for assessment matches your instruction. Consider reading aloud one passage with below grade level students to assess comprehension. | <p>While there are many resources available to you for assessment, not all of these are high quality. Nor are you likely to see significant growth in your students in areas of reading other than the foundational skills in increments this short.</p> <p>Be clear if you are asking students to spend too much time taking assessments instead of in learning situations that you've entered into the arena of test prep and have left assessing to inform instruction behind. Test prep does not pay off in better student results. Time spent reading and learning to read do pay off for students and will show up in annual high stakes assessments!</p> <p><i>Wonders</i> assessments are one measure of student progress and if taking time away from instruction, should be the best they have to offer.</p> |

| Grades 1 - 2 Weekly Assessments | |
|---|---|
| <p>Grade 1: Only use the foundational skills portion of weekly assessments (phonemic awareness and phonics).</p> <p>Grade 2: Do not use weekly assessments. Ensure that you are using the weekly assessment protocol outlined in the foundational skills guidance section.</p> | <p>See the foundational skills guidance for a full explanation of why weekly assessment of phonics mastery is vital.</p> <p>An especially strong feature of <i>Wonders</i> is that ConnectEd points teachers toward additional practice opportunities after you record your students' assessment results on foundational reading each week. The types of practice offered match errors from each student's assessment.</p> |
| Grades 3 - 6 Weekly Assessments | |
| <p>Do not use <i>Wonders'</i> weekly assessments.</p> <p>Use the Unit Assessments in each unit (or substitute with your school's selected formative/summative assessments) as one measure of student progress. Do not use the Writing Performance Task component unless you recently completed a Process Writing cycle (Grades 2-6, Units 2-4).</p> <p>Exception: Spelling Tests Consider using the weekly spelling test, especially at the lower end of this grade band, to monitor student mastery in this area.</p> | <p>Comprehensive weekly assessment takes far too much instructional time. Secondly, students rarely make observable progress on most aspects of reading proficiency over the course of a week (or even unit)!</p> <p>Instead, constant diagnostic, informal assessment of students' comprehension skills and appropriate strategy use, their mastery of specific vocabulary and grammar should occur from frequent teacher observation during lessons and reviewing student work.</p> <p>These assessments provide good reinforcement of phonetic patterns previously taught and gives students a reason to focus on mastering the encoding of English word patterns.</p> |

Smart Start (K-6)

Smart Start is an annual orientation to how *Wonders* is structured and to all its routines. While setting routines is important, and necessary for children in the youngest grades (K-1), *Wonders* spends multiple weeks at every grade level. Unless *Wonders* has just been adopted and is baffling to everyone, that is too much time to spend spinning children's wheels on practicing routines instead of focused on content and actually learning through doing those same routines with substantial content. We recommend cutting back on the Smart Starts as children go up through the grades.

| Grade | Smart Start Recommendation |
|-------|--|
| K - 1 | Use Smart Start as planned |
| 2 - 3 | Use Week 1 of Smart Start Move to Unit 1, Week 1—taking 2 weeks if needed |
| 4 - 6 | Start with Unit 1, Week 1—taking 2 weeks if needed |

|  Rule of Thumb | Rationale |
|---|--|
| Kindergarten - Grade 1 | |
| Use all 3 weeks of the Smart Start lessons to introduce essential Phonemic Awareness and Phonics in kindergarten and for review in first grade. | Phonemic Awareness and phonics sequences would be missed otherwise. There is lots of embedded assessment that yields important information about your young students' skills and gaps. Younger students need repeated exposure to routines. |
| Grades 2-3 | |
| Move into regular instruction more quickly by doing only Week 1 of Smart Start in Grades 2-3. Then take two weeks to work through Unit 1, Week 1 content. | <i>Wonders</i> has two weeks of Smart Start in second grade and up. This is simply too much time spent on review material and lower quality texts. Create additional time to teach routines and get to know your class by extending the Unit 1, Week 1 instruction to two weeks. |
| Grades 4-6 | |
| Skip Smart Start altogether. Take up to 2 weeks to acclimate your students to the routines through Unit 1, Week 1. Use the extra week this leaves for high-value activities that strengthen student literacy. | <i>Wonders</i> has two weeks of Smart Start every year to introduce routines. This is too much time spent on review material and lower quality texts. Skip Smart Start in these grades and create additional time to teach routines and get to know your class by extending the Unit 1, Week 1 instruction to two weeks. This puts you a week ahead of your scope and sequence, which could be used similarly to a week six for extending worthwhile learning about a topic, compelling research, or going deeper into a complex text. |

Appendix

Kindergarten – Scope and Sequence

| Week/Essential Question | Read Aloud | Literature Big Book/Paired Selection | Reading/Writing Workshop | Leveled Readers |
|--|--|---|-----------------------------|---|
| Smart Start | | | | |
| Week 1: How is everyone special? | The Ugly Duckling The Three Sisters | ABC Book | I Am Special Look at Me | |
| Week 2: Who is in your family? | Tiki Tiki Tembo Teddy's Week | ABC Book | Family Fun Fun Together | |
| Week 3: What can you do? | Kindergarteners Can We Can Help | ABC Book | At School What Can I Do? | |
| Unit 1 | | | | |
| Week 1: How can we get along with new friends? | The Lion and the Mouse | What about Bear? How to be a Friend | I Can Can I? | A: Soup! O: Mouse and Monkey E: Mouse and Monkey B: Come and Play! |
| Week 2: How do baby animals move? | The Tortoise and the Hare | Pouch! Baby Animals on the Move | We Can I Can, I Can | A: Hop! O: We Hop! E: We Hop! B: We Can Move! |
| Week 3: How can your senses help you learn? | A Feast of the Senses | Senses at the Seashore I Smell Springtime Taste of Purple Rain | Sam Can I Can See | A: The Beach O: At School E: At School B: See it Grow! |
| Unit 2 | | | | |
| Week 1: How do tools help us to explore? | Timimoto | The Handiest Things in the World Discover with Tools | Pam Can See We Can See! | A: We Need Tools O: A Trip E: A Trip B: What Can You See? |
| Week 2: What shapes do you see around you? | Kites in Flight | Shapes All Around Find the Shapes | We Like Tam I Like Sam | A: Shapes! O: Play With Shapes! |

| Week/Essential Question | Read Aloud | Literature Big Book/Paired Selection | Reading/Writing Workshop | Leveled Readers |
|--|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--|
| | | | | E: Play With Shapes! B: Use a Shapes! |
| Week 3: What kind of bugs do you know about? | From Caterpillar to Butterfly | I Love Bugs! Bugs All Around | Pat Tap! Tap! Tap! | A: We Like Bugs! O: The Bugs Run E: The Bugs Run B: I See a Bug! |
| Unit 3 | | | | |
| Week 1: What rules do we follow in different places? | The Boy Who Cried Wolf | How Do Dinosaurs Go to School? Be Safe | Can I Pat It? Tim Can Tip It | A: We Run O: Go, Nat! E: Go, Nat! B: The Birdhouse! |
| Week 2: What are the different sounds we hear? | The Turtle and the Flute | Clang! Clang! Beep! Beep! Listen to the City Sounds Are Everywhere | Nat and Tip Tim and Nan | A: City Sounds O: Farm Sounds E: Farm Sounds B: A Noisy Night! |
| Week 3: What places do you go to during the week? | Field Trips | Please Take Me for a Walk A Neighborhood | We Go to See Nan Can We Go? | A: We Can Go O: Going By Cab E: Going By Cab B: Cal's Busy Week |
| Unit 4 | | | | |
| Week 1: What do people use to do their jobs? | Little Juan and the Cooking Pot | Whose Shoes? A Shoe for Every Job Workers and Their Tools | Tom on Top! | A: You Cook O: On the Job E: On the Job B: The Neighborhood |
| Week 2: Who are your neighbors? | Cultural Festivals | What Can You Do with a Paleta A World Festival | Sid | A: My Neighbors O: Neighborhood Party E: Neighborhood Party B: Parade Day |
| Week 3: How can people help to make your community better? | The Bundle of Sticks | Roadwork A Community Garden | I Can, You Can! | A: We Clean! O: Can You Fix It? E: Can You Fix It? B: Helping Mom |

| Week/Essential Question | Read Aloud | Literature Big Book/Paired Selection | Reading/Writing Workshop | Leveled Readers |
|--|-------------------------|--|--------------------------|---|
| Unit 5 | | | | |
| Week 1: What do living things need to grow? | Growing Plants | My Garden Tommy Maytime Magic The Seed Garden | Hop Can Hop! | A: My Garden O: My Garden Grows E: My Garden Grows B: The Mystery Seeds |
| Week 2: How do living things change as they grow? | The Pine Tree | A Grand Old Tree From a Seed to a Tree | Ed and Ned | A: The Tree O: Many Trees E: Many Trees B: Our Apple Tree |
| Week 3: What kinds of things grow on a farm? | Farms Around the World | An Orange In January Farmers' Market | Ron With Red | A: The Farmer O: Let's Make a Salad! E: Let's Make a Salad! B: Farm Fresh Finn |
| Unit 6 | | | | |
| Week 1: How are the seasons different? | A Tour of the Seasons | Mama, Is It Summer Yet? New Snow Rain Song Covers excerpt from Honey, I Love You | Is It Hot? | A: It Is Hot! O: Little Bear E: Little Bear B: Ant and Grasshopper |
| Week 2: What happens in different kinds of weather? | The Frog and the Locust | Rain Cloud Watch | Kim and Nan | A: The Rain O: Weather Is Fun E: Weather Is Fun B: Kate and Tuck |
| Week 3: How can you stay safe in bad weather? | Rainbow Crow | Waiting Out the Storm Be Safe in Bad Weather | Mack and Ben | A: Bad Weather O: Getting Ready E: Getting Ready B: The Storm |
| Unit 7 | | | | |
| Week 1: How are some animals alike and how are they different? | Baby Farm Animals | Zoo Borns! | A Pup and a Cub | A: Two Cubs O: Animal Bodies |

| Week/Essential Question | Read Aloud | Literature Big Book/Paired Selection | Reading/Writing Workshop | Leveled Readers |
|--|-------------------------|--|--------------------------|---|
| | | Mischievous Goat Over in the Meadow Kitty Caught a Caterpillar | | E: Animal Bodies B: Two Kinds of Bears |
| Week 2: How do you take care of different kinds of pets? | The Family Pet | The Birthday Pet The Perfect Pet | I Hug Gus! | A: My Cats O: Their Pets E: Their Pets B: Will's Pet |
| Week 3: Where do animals live? | Anansi: An African Tale | Bear Snores On Animal Homes | A Vet In a Van | A: We Want Water O: A New Home E: A New Home B: Bird's New Home |
| Unit 8 | | | | |
| Week 1: What can help you go from here to there? | The King of the Winds | When Daddy's Truck Picks Me Up From Here to There | Dad Got a Job | A: I Go Places O: Run, Quinn! E: Run, Quinn! B: Going to Gran's House |
| Week 2: What do you know about our country? | The Best of the West | Ana Goes to Washington, D.C. See Our Country | Pack a Bag | A: See This! O: Places to See E: Places to See B: My Trip to Yellowstone |
| Week 3: What do you see in the sky? | A View from the Moon | Bringing Down the Moon Day and Night Sky | Up! Up! Up! | A: Going Up O: In the Clouds E: In the Clouds B: How Sun and Moon Found Home |
| Unit 9 | | | | |
| Week 1: How can you help out at home? | Helping Out at Home | Peter's Chair The Clean Up! | Jake and Dale Help! | A: Let Me Help You O: How Can Jane Help? E: How Can Jane Help? B: Used to Help Too |
| Week 2: What do good citizens do? | The Little Red Hen | Hen Hears Gossip Team Up to Clean Up | We Can Play | A: Mike Helps Out O: Clive and His Friend |

| Week/Essential Question | Read Aloud | Literature Big Book/Paired Selection | Reading/Writing Workshop | Leveled Readers |
|--|---------------------------------|---|--------------------------|---|
| | | | | E: Clive and His Friend B: Farmer White's Best Friend |
| Week 3: How can things in nature be used to make new things? | Spider Woman Teaches the Navajo | Bread Comes to Life Nature Artists | Look a Home | A: Look Where It Is From O: What's for Breakfast? E: What's for Breakfast? B: Nature at the Craft Fair |
| Unit 10 | | | | |
| Week 1: What can happen when we work together? | The Elves and the Shoemakers | What's the Big Idea, Molly? The Variety Show | A Good Time for Luke! | A: Animal Band O: We Want Honey E: We Want Honey B: A Good Idea |
| Week 2: In what ways are things alike? How are they different? | The Perfect Color | All Kinds of Families! Good For You | We Come on Time! | A: My Box O: Let's Make a Band E: Let's Make a Band B: Going Camping |
| Week 3: What ideas can you suggest to protect the environment? | Protect the Environment! | Panda Kindergarten Save Big Blue! | Who Can Help? | A: Help Clean Up O: Let's Save Earth E: Let's Save Earth B: Babysitters for Seals |