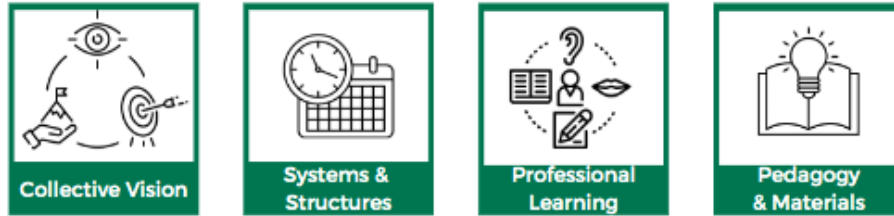


Notes on Implementation: Humanities Accelerator Course (HAC)

IMPLEMENTING HAC



When preparing for, launching and implementing the Humanities Accelerator Course (HAC) model, the work is most effectively supported by a commitment to staying curious, flexible, and collaborative. And still, no single school or district will approach the work in quite the same way.

Collective Vision

It is imperative that all stakeholders involved in the HAC model inform the vision for and implementation of the model. This includes teachers, support staff, school and district leadership, students, and families. The work of creating this collective vision includes:

- Defining a shared vision and impact for the course
- Identifying participating schools/teachers
- Gathering input from and potentially collaborating with students and families
- Building community, trust, and collaboration among participants
- Determining the scope of the course for initial implementation year and for the subsequent years
- Co-designing pilot expectations with participating schools
- Creating a plan & process for design and implementation of the pilot that addresses technical and adaptive considerations such as no-tracked scheduling, new pedagogical approaches, credit alignment, common prep time, etc.
- Determining how the team will prove that the course achieves intended results

Resources to support this work include:

- [Racism and inequity are products of design. They can be redesigned.](#) by equityXdesign
- [Changing the Way We Change: Adaptive vs Technical Challenges](#) by Katrina Marshall Dyrting

- [Future Protocol](#) from School Reform Initiative
- [There Is Time: How A False Sense Of Urgency Gets Us In Trouble](#) by Beth Tener

Systems & Structures

The HAC model has structural requirements to support literacy acceleration. To successfully implement a HAC model, schools or districts might need to change the current structure. Changes include:

- *Eliminating Tracking*: Critical to the success of the design, implementation, and sustaining of the HAC model is not tracking students in any way. Tracking doesn't work for students. It pre-sorts students into academic winners and losers. It is systemically racist and destructive. Rather than continuing this practice, HAC provides a restructuring for 9th or 6th grades to support all students without tracking. Students should be enrolled in HAC and assigned courses heterogeneously.
- *Multiple Class Periods*: The HAC model is structured with the luxury of time, covering two core subjects and a third period block to substantially increase time and attention to a cohort of students' needs and to build trusting relationships.
- *Cohort of Students and Teachers*: A team of ELA, History-Social Studies, ESL, SPED, and paraprofessional teachers would team or co-teach a cohort students for this extended block of time. A Framework for the Third Period can be found [here](#).

Course Structure		
English Language Arts	History-Social Studies	Third Period
<i>Course materials and instruction focused on building identity, community, literacy, content knowledge, and criticality through a focus on grade-level humanities content.</i>		<i>Extend humanities course materials and instruction to build identity, community, and content knowledge, and to give opportunity to build research and needed reading/language skills.</i>

Supportive Professional Learning Structure and Content

Teacher Collaborative Learning

To successfully implement and support a HAC model, teachers and leaders will need to engage in ongoing collaborative learning. It is essential that these educators have high-quality learning experiences and protected collaborative time to learn and work together over time (e.g., daily/weekly planning and deeper engagements). This

learning might focus on building understanding, problem solving, and growing as a team of educators. It might take the form of independent learning modules, group-based professional learning sessions, cycles of inquiry focused on a problem of practice, peer observation, etc. In any format, educators can commit to engaging with evidence-based practices and resources, trying and retrying implementation, and peer collaboration. In this way, teachers are able to do for themselves, and in community with other teachers, the work students are asked to do in the course (build identity, community, literacy, and criticality).

Resources to support professional learning structures and content include:

- Instruction Partners' [Seven Conditions for Effective Professional Learning](#)
- Student Achievement Partners' [Principles for High-Quality Professional Learning](#) and the PL Core Content for [ELA/Literacy](#)

Teacher Content and Pedagogical Knowledge

The existing resources for the HAC model assume educators already have a certain depth of content and pedagogical knowledge. This knowledge includes culturally relevant pedagogies, language learning, and foundational literacy—areas in which teachers may have less knowledge, experience, or training. Therefore, each implementing school or district will have its own set of particular professional learning needs. Professional support plans should focus on supporting local educators' needs and leveraging resources from colleagues, reading specialists, literacy coaches in younger grades, local universities, and education support organizations that teachers will find helpful.

Assumed knowledge and some aligned resources include:

Culturally Relevant Pedagogies

- [But That's Just Good Teaching! The Case for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy](#) and [Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy](#) by Gloria Ladson Billings
- [Why We Can't Afford Whitewashed Social-Emotional Learning](#) by Dena Simmons
- [Independent versus Dependent Learners](#) from Facing History and Ourselves
- [Start with Responsive](#) by Zaretta Hammond

Evidence Based Literacy Practices

- [Placing Text at the Center of Instruction](#) by Susan Pimentel and Meredith Liben
- [Struggle Is Not a Bad Word: Misconceptions and Recommendations About Readers Struggling With Difficult Texts](#) by Sara Lupo and John Z. Strong

Foundational Literacy

- [Improving Reading for Older Students](#) or [Early Reading Accelerators](#) content collection course from Student Achievement Partners. (The ERA content

collection is geared toward learning for younger students but is rooted in the same reading science as the IROS course.)

- U.S. Department of Education IES Practice Guide, [Providing Reading Interventions for Students in Grades 4–9](#), has many excellent practical recommendations and includes the research behind each. A brief, readable guide from the Tennessee Center for the Treatment of Dyslexia, [Reading Intervention for Students in 4th-9th Grades](#), though designed for dyslexic students, addresses any student needing literacy support.

Language Learning

- [ELA Best Practices, Must Haves, and Pitfalls](#) from English Language Success Forum

(Note: further resources for foundational literacy and language learning can be found in the [Third Period Framework](#).)

Pedagogy and Instructional Materials

In order to support a HAC model, instructional materials and pedagogical practices will need to support a humanities-centered curriculum and align to the HAC model [tenets](#): identity, community, literacy, and criticality. An initial step to ensuring materials alignment might be for implementing educators to use this [Unit Analysis Template](#) to better understand the extent to which existing materials support necessary content and practices as well as which areas need adaptation.

Resources to support work beyond this initial analysis include:

- [Cultivating Genius: An Equity Framework for Culturally and Historically Responsive Literacy](#) by Gholdy Muhammad
- [Textured Teaching A Framework for Culturally Sustaining Practices](#) by Lorena Germán
- [Planning and Reflecting with Culturally Relevant Pedagogy](#) from Student Achievement Partners