

Grade 3 ELA Curriculum

Subject	Language Arts		
Grade/Course	Grade 3		
Unit of Study	Unit 3: Reading to Learn: Grasping Main Ideas and Text Structures (Book 2)/The Art of Information Writing (Book 2)		
Pacing	November - January This content unfold over 19 and 21 sessions each, with a suggested timeline of approximately 4 uninterrupted weeks of instruction. In order to ensure that all students master unit/lesson objectives, the actual pacing may vary to include appropriate embedded enrichment/intervention. Teachers should plan for 2-3 days of additional time for schedule interruptions and run-over in order to address all teaching points.		
Unit CT Core Content Standards			
<u>Reading Foundational Skills</u>			
<u>RF.3.3</u> : Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words			
<u>RF.3.4</u> : Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension			
Reading <u>Literature and Informational</u>	<u>Writing</u>	<u>Speaking/Listening</u>	<u>Language</u>
<u>RI.3.1</u> Ask/answer questions referring explicitly to text <u>RI.3.3</u> Describe connections of events, ideas, concepts in text using time, sequence, cause & effect <u>RI.3.5</u> Text features and search tools to find information <u>RI.3.6</u> Distinguish own point of view from author	<u>W.3.2</u> Informative text with topic, group information, develop, use linking words, conclusion <u>W.3.4</u> Produce writing with assistance with development, organization appropriate to task, purpose <u>W.3.5</u> Planning, revising, editing <u>W.3.7</u>	<u>SL.3.2</u> Main ideas from text read aloud or from diverse media, formats <u>SL.3.3</u> Ask questions offering appropriate elaboration, detail <u>SL.3.4</u> Tell a story/experience with facts, details, appropriate pace	<u>L.3.1</u> Conventions: functions of parts of speech, regular/irregular/plural/abstract nouns, regular/irregular verbs and tenses, agreement, superlatives, conjunctions, simple/compound/complex sentences <u>L.3.2</u> Capitalize words in titles, commas in addresses/dialog, possessives, spelling patterns and generalizations, consult references

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<p>RI.3.7 Use images, diagrams, maps to demonstrate understanding</p>	<p>Short research to build knowledge</p>		<p>L.3.5 Word meaning/nuances, literal and non-literal, real-life connections of words, shades of meaning for states of mind or certainty</p> <p>L.3.6 Use words/phrases acquired through conversation/reading conversational, academic, domain-specific words</p>
Essential Questions		Corresponding Big Ideas	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do I read information/nonfiction text to learn and grow ideas? 2. How do I make my information writing strong? 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Readers read informational/nonfiction texts with interest and fluency to identify the main ideas and key supporting details and use text structures to organize thinking. Readers prepare for and engage in text-based conversations to grow ideas. Readers also navigate narrative nonfiction texts and learn to shift between reading with a lens of story and reading with a lense of gleaning information from texts. 2. Information writers use writing to teach others about a topic. They put information into their own words and pay attention to the authors of mentor texts to draw on a wide array of possibilities for their own writing. Writers use text structures and features, organize information logically, use domain-specific vocabulary, and elaborate using facts, definitions and important details. 	

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Reading Bends	Writing Bends
<p>Bend 1: In this bend, students learn to approach texts like informational/nonfiction readers: previewing the text, identifying main idea(s) and supporting details, using text features to organize understanding of the text, and summarizing learning routinely in conversations. Students also learn to draft and revise their idea of a text’s main ideas as they read on and learn more.</p> <p>Bend 2: In Bend 2, students grow their own ideas in response to what they read, and think and talk back to the texts they are reading. Students prepare for text-based conversations by looking over their reading for interesting parts and trying to think more about those parts, and students engage in conversations to discuss the text. Students learn to identify an author’s perspective on a topic.</p> <p>Bend 3: In this bend, students pay attention to text structure and learn that narrative nonfiction texts are organized around story elements, which tell the story of people and their achievements. Students will use strategies to help them figure out challenging vocabulary. Students will also read biographies for the purpose of understanding the story and learning new information. Once students have learned to read expository nonfiction one way and narrative nonfiction texts another way, there will be time for them to switch strategies for “hybrid” texts that include a bit of each. This unit ends with a celebration in which students are invited to make a monument to their reading lives.</p>	<p>Bend 1: In the first bend, students will choose at least one animal they will be writing about during this unit. Students will be writing texts that aim to teach others about their animal. Students will learn to write with authority, for real audiences, by actually doing some teaching on their subjects. Students will learn the power of a table of contents to structure their expository piece. They will rehearse various structures to organize their piece of writing before drafting.</p> <p>Bend 2: In bend two, the emphasis is on drafting and revising. Students will revise by learning concrete strategies and using those strategies to lift the level of their work. Students will learn newer, more complex revision strategies such as using grammar with meaning, and tapping research for elaboration.</p> <p>Bend 3: In bend three, students will prepare for publication with an emphasis on the importance of being aware of one’s audience. Students will use text features, fact checking, and grammar and conventions.</p> <p>Bend Four: In the final bend, there is a push towards independence and transference. Students will learn how they can write informatively in a variety of genres about a topic they have been studying at school. Students have an opportunity after publishing to teach their peers about their animals as their form of celebration.</p>
Teaching Points	
Reading	Writing

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<p>Bend I:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preview informational/nonfiction text 2. Summarize important information 3. Organize information to identify main ideas and subtopics 4. Teach others what you know 5. Revise the main idea to be more specific or general as you continue to read 6. Reflect on reading, set goals, and make plans for improving reading <p>Bend II:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Read information/nonfiction to learn (e.g., monitor text for significant meaning, find something interesting, etc.) 8. Gather thoughts and prepare during reading for discussions about a text 9. Distinguish your own opinion from that of the author (e.g, Sometimes a reader says, “I see what you are saying, but I see things differently.”) 10. Think deeply and talk about texts <p>Bend III:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Identify and use text structure to organize understanding of the text (e.g., readers of narrative nonfiction use their knowledge of how stories go to understand the text, etc.) 12. Summarize narrative nonfiction (e.g., recognize important details that contribute to the overarching storyline and synthesize secondary details and storylines into the larger story) 13. Use strategies to figure out challenging words 14. Read biographies to learn information 15. Identify the main idea or reason to tell the 	<p>Bend I:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organize information while writing. 2. Brainstorm different ways to organize information writing. 3. Structure writing in various ways. 4. Write fast and furiously using all collected information. 5. Plan chapters using a table of contents. <p>Bend II:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Use mentor texts to learn about elaboration and apply to own writing. 7. Connect information using transitional strategies and phrases. 8. Enhance writing by including facts and ideas. 9. Research information to enhance informational books. 10. Revise using a checklist one section at a time. 11. Study introduction strategies of mentor texts. <p>Bend III:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Make a plan for revision using a checklist. 13. Use revision strategies to clear up confusion in writing work. 14. Enhance writing using text features. 15. Check major facts for accuracy. 16. Edit writing with regards to paragraphing. <p>Bend IV:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Plan and draft for a content-specific information text. 18. Assess their writing to see what works and what does not work. 19. Use skills of elaborating, structuring, introducing, and closing to create all sorts
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<p>story (e.g., Ask: “What did the main subject learn?”)</p> <p>16. Use strategies for reading biographies on any text that is narrative nonfiction (e.g., like when reading stories, think about the main character’s traits, wants and struggles, etc.)</p> <p>17. Use authors’ signals to shift between using narrative nonfiction and expository strategies</p> <p>18. Self-assess and set goals for improving reading</p> <p>19. Celebration</p>	<p>of information texts.</p> <p>20. Draw on all they know as they finish up their projects.</p> <p>21. Celebrate by holding an “Expert Fair.”</p>
Word Study Topics	
<p>Unit 6 (3 weeks)*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Open syllable review ● Y as a vowel: long i and long e ● Schwa in an open syllable with a ● Schwa in an open syllable with i ● Open syllable exception ● Soft c: ce, ci, cy - reading ● Soft g: ge, gi, gy - reading ● Sample words: music, relate, cry, giant, Alaska, indicate, champion, recent ● Sound-alike words: hi, high, by, bye, buy, oh, owe <p>Bonus Unit (2 weeks)*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review of closed syllable with emphasis on nonsense words ● Concepts of prefixes and roots ● Review of syllable division for multisyllabic words ● Closed and open syllable prefixes: con, dis, un, en, em, ex, in, im, il, ir, mis, non, sub, trans, de, e, pre, pro, re, ● Closed syllable roots: dict, duct, fect, fract, ject, junct, lect, min, scrib, sist, spec, struct, tract <p>Foundations Unit Test Scoring Guidelines</p> <p>Discrete foundational reading skills are also practiced during reading and writing instruction. Student assessments will be used to determine foundational skills that need to be taught, re-taught and/or reinforced to individual students from the previous units during conferring and small group instruction workshop time.</p> <p>*Units referenced come from Foundations Program. For additional sample words refer to the unit resource pages at the end of each unit in the Foundations</p>	

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teacher's manual. This provides examples for drill sounds/warm-up, echo sounds, review and current unit trick words, review and current unit words/nonsense words, and unit dictation sentences.

Evidence of Learning - Assessment

[TC High Leverage Reading Assessment](#)

**See Heinemann Online Resources for copies. District may designate the use of another version of assessment.*

Smarter Balanced Assessment Resources

The following links will provide rubrics to use in the holistic scoring of narrative, opinion, and informational writing:

[Smarter Balanced Brief Write Rubrics](#) (3-11)

[Smarter Balanced Narrative Performance Task Writing Rubric](#) (Grade 3-8)

[Smarter Balanced Informational Performance Task Writing Rubric](#) (Grade 3-5)

[Smarter Balanced Opinion Performance Task Writing Rubric](#) (Grade 3-5)

Smarter Balanced Interim Blocks

Interim assessment blocks may be used for a variety of assessment purposes, including: pre/post, interim and formative (additional evidence of learning).

The items on the interim assessments are developed under the same conditions, protocols, and review procedures as those used in the summative assessments. Therefore, they assess the same Common Core State Standards, adhere to the same principles of Universal Design in order to be accessible to all students, and provide evidence to support Smarter Balanced claims in mathematics and ELA/literacy. The interim assessment items are non-secure but non-public. This means that educators may view the items, however, they should not be made public outside of classroom, school or district use.

Unit-aligned Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment Block (IAB)*:

**IAB -ELA Grade 3-Read Informational Text and IAB-ELA Grade 3- Listen /Interpret-
[CSDE Comprehensive Assessment Portal](#)** (Click on *Smarter Balanced Assessment* - tab on left; then, click on *Assessment Viewing Application*)

**Some interim blocks show clear, strong alignment to priority standards within the unit. Other blocks have been placed in one specific unit but could be aligned to the priority standards of several units. Blocks have been spread out over the course of all units for a more balanced approach to assessment throughout the school year. These interim blocks, used in partnership with the [Style Guide](#), will support the creation of unit- and standard-aligned items for instructional use.*

Pre/Post Assessment	Interim Assessment	Additional Evidence of Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Foundations unit test <p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teacher Instructions* ● Preassessment* ● Preassessment Sample Responses* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Running Records (including Checklist of Reading Behaviors)* ● WPM rate benchmark chart ● Informational Reading Learning Progression* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Foundations Dictation Check-Ups within Unit <p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conferring notes ● Observation of small group work

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Preassessment Student Rubric* ● Postassessment* ● Postassessment Sample Responses* ● Postassessment Student Rubric* ● Learning Progression* <p>Writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On-demand Performance Assessment Prompt for Information Writing* ● Informational Writing Checklist* ● <i>Writing Pathways</i> performance assessments for Informational*: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -writing rubrics -student writing sample -writing developed through the progression <p>Teacher Created Assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Informational Reading Pre-Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Informational Writing Learning Progression* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● F&P Continuum of Literacy Question Stems by GRL ● Exit tickets ● Daily reading log sheet ● Homework has been provided for each session and can be used as a formative assessment <p>Writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Writing process drafts ● Conferring notes and Conferring Scenario Chart for Information Writing* ● Observation of small group work ● Student work: One or more student work samples for each writing session* ● Informational Writing Checklist*
Learning Plan		
Researched-based Instructional Resources and Methods		
<p>The Reading and writing workshop model is a researched-based instructional model:</p> <p>See <i>A Guide to the Reading Workshop Model: Primary Grades</i>, (2015), Calkins et. al. and <i>A Guide to the Common Core Writing Workshop</i>, 2012, Calkins et. al. included in the series component bundle.</p> <p>The Heinemann Online Resources includes a study guide for the <i>Units of Study for Teaching Reading</i> under “Latest News and General Information.” This resource provides step by step instructions for implementing the workshop model, including guiding questions and detailed explanations of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Architecture of the Mini-lesson: connection (teaching point), direct instruction and active engagement, link ● The Architecture of a Conference and small group work: mid-workshop teaching ● Share/whole group processing 		

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- Setting up and Provisioning the Reading Workshop

The Heinemann Online Resource also contains a video orientation that guides teachers through “unpacking the unit” and offers specific tips and demonstrations of best practices associated with delivering reading and writing workshop.

Anchor Charts

Commercially developed Anchor Chart Notes are one of the series components included with the Units of Study bundles for both reading and writing. Teachers may prefer to construct their own or co-construct these charts with students to serve as reference of summarized, illustrated teaching points.

Reading	Writing
REV UP Your Mind Before Reading Nonfiction! Color / B&W To Learn from Expository Texts Color / B&W When Reading Narrative Nonfiction... Color / B&W You may bring back this anchor chart from Unit 1 to support students: Readers Climb the Hurdle of Hard Words by... Color / B&W	Information Writers Try Different Structures on for Size Color / B&W Elaborate Like a Pro, Study Mentor Texts as You Go! Color / B&W Writers Use Informational Writing Skills in Many Genres Color / B&W

Instructional Moves

Bauman, L.; Burke, James (Jim) R. (Robert). 2014. *The Common Core Companion: The Standards Decoded, Grades 3-5: What They Say, What They Mean, How to Teach Them* (Corwin Literacy). SAGE Publications.

Possible Student Challenges	Teacher Moves
Summarizing the text	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a shared summary with the class. Include an opening statement, key details in chronological order from the text, and a conclusion. Post on chart paper for students to refer to. 2. Model explaining the text by writing a summary. Refer back to text to “lift” specific words, phrases, or sentences and embed these into the explanation. 3. Have students write their own summaries, highlighting where they have used specific details and examples from the text.
Describing the overall structure of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Model from a shared text the organizational structure of a text. Begin to create a classroom chart of <i>structures</i> that students can refer to. Add to this chart with successive books-or have students place sticky notes on the chart when they notice a new structure. Some examples of

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	<p>organizational structures are sequential (e.g., chronological description or step-by-step, cause/effect, and problem/solution) and descriptive (e.g., attributes of an object, list of items or attributes, and a comparison of more than one object).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Provide students with a variety of informational texts and have them identify the organizational structure. 3. Provide graphic organizers for each of these structures for students to complete as they read a variety of informational texts.
Reporting on a topic or text in an organized manner using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organize the main ideas in a sequential manner by arranging the note cards or numbering the main ideas to show the order in which they should be presented.
Developing their topic with details, examples, and information	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide graphic organizers, information maps, outlines, and so on to help students organize their thinking. 2. Practice together writing a topic on a sheet of chart paper, then have students generate details, examples, and information on sticky notes. Place these on the chart paper and move them to group relevant facts together.
Using precise language and academic vocabulary	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Direct students to circle any words in their papers that are too abstract, too general, or otherwise ineffective; then have them replace weaker words or phrases. 2. Generate with the class words they might or should use when writing about a specific subject, procedure, event, or person.
Mentor, Demonstration, Read-aloud, Shared Texts <small>*Included in the Grade 3 Trade Pack</small>	
Reading	Writing
<p>May include other similar texts of the appropriate grade level band</p> <p>Demonstration Texts <i>*Gorillas (Living in the Wild: Primates)</i> by Lori McManus <i>The Weird and Wonderful Octopus</i> by Lucy Calkins and Kathleen Tolan</p>	<p>May include other similar texts of the appropriate grade level band</p> <p>Demonstration Texts <i>*Deadliest Animals</i> by Melissa Stewart (National Geographic) <i>VIP Pass to a Pro Baseball Game Day</i> by Clay Latimer</p>

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<p>*<i>Frogs and Toads</i> by Bobbie Kalman Biography of Ezra Jack Keats from the University of Southern Mississippi <i>The Story of Ruby Bridges</i> by Robert Coles <i>Cactus Hotel</i> by Brenda Z. Guiberson <i>George Washington’s Breakfast</i> by Jean Fritz</p> <p>Read-Aloud Texts *<i>Gorillas (Living in the Wild: Primates)</i> by Lori McManus *<i>Frogs and Toads</i> by Bobbie Kalman</p> <p>Suggested Texts and Resources</p> <p>Teacher Resources <i>Nonfiction Chapter in A Guide to the Reading Workshop, Intermediate Grades Teachers’ College</i></p>	<p>Suggested Texts and Resources</p> <p>Information Texts <i>Cats vs. Dogs</i> by Elizabeth Carney <i>Fashion Design: The Art of Style</i> by Jen Jones Great <i>Migrations: Amazing Animal Journeys</i> by Laura Marsh <i>Plants Bite Back!</i> by Richard Platt <i>Tomatoes Grow on a Vine (How Fruits and Vegetables Grow)</i> by Mari Schuh</p> <p>Texts for Struggling Students <i>Talk Tae Kwon Do</i> by Laine Falk <i>Going to a Restaurant</i> by Melinda Beth Radabaugh</p> <p>Resources for Teachers <i>How’s It Going?: A Practical Guide to Conferring with Student Writers</i> by Carl Anderson <i>A Dash of Style: The Art and Mastery of Punctuation</i> by Noah Lukeman <i>If You Want to Write</i> by Brenda Ueland Great Non-Fiction Writers (voice, zeal, wonder): Rachel Carson Clifford Geertz John Muir</p>
Read-Aloud & Shared Reading	
<p>Read-Aloud goals Internalize reading behaviors (preview, make predictions, anticipate) Monitor for sense and re-reading Process the text Whole-class book talk</p> <p>Read-Aloud process: Before You Read (introduce book, title, author, wonder about the title) As You Read (look at pictures, read with prosody, retell) After You Read (whole class book talk)</p> <p>Shared reading goals Practice using meaning, structure, visuals (MSV) to solve new words</p> <p>Shared reading process: Introduce the book and key concepts Cross-checking sources of information Word Study Fluency</p>	

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Vocabulary	
<i>*Vocabulary identified in Smarter Balanced Construct Relevant Vocabulary for English Language Arts and Literacy</i>	
Tier 2 (Academic Vocabulary)	Tier 3 (Domain Specific Vocabulary)
build on charts determine develop distinguish examine explain* facts* generate genre photos/illustration* problem/solution question/answer recount refer structure summary/summarize	biography boxes and bullets captions glossary hybrid text (narrative nonfiction and explanatory) informational*/nonfiction/expository key details* main idea* narrative nonfiction perspective pop-out sentence preview purpose for writing (informative)* revise* root words storyline subtopic support/supporting details * text features (e.g., heading*, subheading, etc.) text structure (e.g., cause/effect, chronologic, compare/contrast, etc.) text-talk
Suggestions for Differentiation, Scaffolding and Intervention	
<p>CT Dept. of Education Evidence-based Practice Guides – These guides provide links to “evidence-based activities, strategies and interventions (collectively referred to as 'interventions').”</p> <p><i>Up the Ladder: Assessing Grades 3-6 Writing Units of Study</i> books and online resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are three units in the <i>Up the Ladder</i> series, and each contains 20-22 sessions. These books have been designed for children in grades 3-6 who may not yet have had many opportunities to practice writing narrative, information, and opinion/argument pieces, or might have not have had those experiences in workshop-style classrooms. The units aim to support students in writing with increasing volume and with growing skill and sophistication. Sessions in the <i>Up the Ladder</i> series are shorter and simpler than those in the writing Units of Study. <p>Use individual student performance data to inform intervention in small group and conferring work.</p> <p>Effective Intervention Strategies for Teachers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use grouping Use feedback, reinforcement and recognition Use similarities and differences 	

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- Use advanced organizers such as graphic organizers
- Provide feedback
- Use summary and note taking
- Use hands-on, non-linguistic representations

Meeting Students' Needs Through Scaffolding

- Identify, bold, and write in the margins to define words that cannot be understood through the context of the text
- Chunk long readings into short passages, (literally distributing sections on index cards, for example), so that students see only the section they need to tackle
- Encourage/enable students to annotate the text, or—if they can't write directly on the text—providing sticky notes or placing texts inside plastic sleeves
- Supply sentence starters so all students can participate in focused discussion
- Place students in heterogeneous groups to discuss the text and answer text-dependent questions
- Provide task cards and anchor charts so that expectations are consistently available
- Highlight key words in task directions

Supporting Struggling Readers

- Pre-expose students to the selected text with support (audio recording, read-aloud, peer tutor etc.)
- Have students read a simple article, watch a video, or read student-friendly explanations of key information to help build background knowledge that will aid in comprehension
- Reformat the text itself to include visuals or definitions of key vocabulary
- Provide picture cues with text-dependent questions
- Provide oral rehearsal time (with buddies, small group, or a teacher) prior to writing, and/or provide writing/thinking time prior to oral presentations

Assistive Technology

Writing:

- Use different paper (wide lined, raised lines or darker lines) to increase awareness of lines.
- Use the dry erase board and pens, which requires less force than a pencil (photocopy the results if they need to be turned in)
- Use a copy machine to enlarge worksheets to be completed to provide a larger area to write.

If computers and internet are available: use free text-to-speech software or use spell/grammar check to edit and revise

Reading:

- Increase space between words/lines
- Color code words in text
- Use tools to modify the visual presentation of text
- Use highlighters, color-coding dots, and post-its to identify the main idea, supporting details, and other key words or ideas

English Learners

Colorin Colorado

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CT English Learner Proficiency Standards, Linguistic Supports

- Use visual supports: pictures, illustrations, videos, models, gestures, pointing, realia, graphic organizers (before, during, and after reading or viewing), and acting out/role playing
- Provide explicit academic vocabulary (see glossary) instruction: word walls, personal dictionaries, bilingual dictionaries/glossaries, picture/video dictionaries, graphic organizers, word cards with pictures, word sorts, etc.
- Make connections to students' prior experiences
- Build background knowledge
- Use scaffolding techniques: jigsaws, think-alouds, graphic organizers, sentence starters/sentence frames

Enrichment strategies

P. Wood, 2008. "Reading Instruction with Gifted & Talented Readers."

- Use of more advanced trade books
- Independent reading and writing choices
- Focus on developing higher level comprehension skills, along with higher level questioning
- Opportunities for book discussions – critical reading & creative reading
- Use of technology and the web

Interdisciplinary Connections

Social Studies Grade 3: Connecticut and Local History

The theme of Using Evidence to Learn About the Past could reasonably be applied to content areas such as:

- Indigenous peoples of Connecticut (cultural diversity)
- Human geography and economic development (influence of geography)
- Structure and function of local and state government (creation of Connecticut state identity)
- Connecticut's role in the history of America (using evidence to learn about the past)

Consider opportunities for students to read/write on related topics.

NGSS Grade 3 Science topics include:

- Forces and interaction
- Interdependent relationships in ecosystems
 - Social interaction and group behavior - Being part of a group helps animals obtain food, defend themselves, and cope with changes. Groups may serve different functions and vary dramatically in size.
 - Evidence of common ancestry and diversity - Some kinds of plants and animals that once lived on Earth are no longer found anywhere.
 - Adaptation - For any particular environment, some kinds of organisms survive well, some survive less well, and some cannot survive at all.
- Life cycles and traits
- Weather and climate

If students are reading and writing about animals, consider opportunities to directly align learning with NGSS science topics, or consider other opportunities to read, write, and communicate about related science topics.

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