FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ELA Curriculum Revision / Wit & Wisdom Adoption

Does this new curriculum replace the 95 Phonics Core Program in grades K-3?

All K-3 teachers will continue using the 95 Phonics Core Program that provides students with high-quality instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics. Wit & Wisdom will provide students with rigorous instruction that will support the development of strong reading, writing, and communication skills. We will also provide all K-2 classrooms with *Geodes* which are books that allow students to practice their phonics and decoding skills while building knowledge for a deep learning experience.

Many of the modules in Wit & Wisdom seem to be heavily focused on science and social studies themes. Is this a science/social studies curriculum?

Our students are curious and excited to learn more about the world around them. Wit & Wisdom is not meant to replace science or social studies instruction. However, it is a knowledge-building curriculum.

Knowledge is necessary to comprehend what we read. Sense-making requires knowledge that must be systematically built through intentional lesson design and curricula that evoke curiosity to learn more. Helping students build strong background knowledge on common topics related to science, social studies, literature and the arts creates a “mental velcro”. It helps new information and learning stick, and increases a student’s understanding of what they are reading.

The curriculum covers topics in these content areas because research shows that students learn best when they are given content-rich topics to explore.

Does Wit & Wisdom align with Ohio’s ELA Standards?

Wit & Wisdom is composed of four modules per grade level. Each artfully explores a specific topic to develop depth of understanding and inspire curiosity. The core of each module is a selection of literary works, informational texts, and visual art. Modules are made up of approximately 30 lessons that are covered in six to eight weeks. All modules integrate reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language instruction that directly align to Ohio’s ELA Standards.

Wit & Wisdom integrates ELA strands so that students read to learn; the curriculum does not systematically teach the youngest students to learn to read. For structured foundational skills instruction, our K-3 teachers will continue to use the 95 Phonics Core Program that provides students with high-quality instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics. Ohio K-5 ELA Standards Alignment Study provides additional information and specific ELA Standards alignment.

Will teachers be provided professional development and implementation support?

Professional development has already begun with our K-5 classroom teachers, Intervention Specialists, EL Teachers, and other support staff focusing on current research and best practices in literacy instruction. Ongoing teacher support and professional development will continue throughout the 23-24 school year during the first year of implementation.

How does Wit & Wisdom support the unique needs of our learners?

All of our students deserve access to rich, engaging learning opportunities that allow for maximum student participation in multiple ways. The instructional design of Wit & Wisdom lessons supports a range of learners through:

- Deliberate sequencing
- Predictability of structures
- Exploration of content in multiple forms
- Strong models of writing
- Ongoing, sequential, explicit writing instruction
- Frequent feedback
- Extensions and scaffolds for differentiation

This curriculum resource will serve as a foundation and anchor for all of our elementary teachers and students, and allow for more seamless collaboration between classroom teachers and support teachers to meet the needs of all students.