

Curriculum Implementation 2025-2026 FAQs

English Language Arts:	2
It is a challenge to complete all 4 modules of Wit and Wisdom.	2
Since I have to teach using whole group instruction, does that mean I can't differentiate?	2
Can supplemental poetry lessons happen with Wit and Wisdom?	2
We created art activities that supplement texts in W&W. Can this continue?	2
If we can only use Wit and Wisdom texts and materials, should I get rid of my classroom library?	2
I'm concerned about the lack of repeated writing practice and foundational skills in Wit and Wisdom.	3
I thought Module 0 was just for Kindergarten.	3
Some of us understood that the first 6 weeks of school would focus on classroom routines to build a positive classroom environment.	3
Why do students need to learn to spell Trick Words?	3
Are we still able to take time to read with kids in small groups?	4
The grade before us didn't finish the Scope and Sequence in Foundations. Where should we start?	4
Can the Essential Question, Focusing Arc Question, and Content/Craft Questions be on slides?	4
Can students still use Learning Ally?	4
Why can't I just plan from slides?	4
Can I use TPT slides?	5
Mathematics	5
How will ST Math fit into schedule?	5
Who is aligning ST Math with IM?	5
I don't think I have enough time for centers, ST Math, and IM instruction!	5
Can IM be used in a workshop model?	6
Where do I find the district provided trackers?	6
Why can't I plan from the slides? Why do I need to use the IM manuals to plan?	6
Why doesn't the pacing cover all standards before the MCAS?	7
Why do we have to incorporate IM Centers? Are they really that important?	7
OK, we need to incorporate IM centers. Was this considered in this pacing?	7
I have other games that I like better than the IM games. And I haven't even set up the IM Centers yet. Can't I just use the other games?	7
Pacing	8
Why are we starting so early? I need to establish routines, expectations, and classroom culture.	8
Why do some grades have more flex days than others?	8
Am I going to get in trouble if I'm not on a certain lesson on a certain day?	8
This pacing guide requires content and skill teaching after MCAS. I try to get all of the standards taught and mastered before MCAS.	8
I can't possibly teach one lesson per day. Lessons take 2 or more days.	9
Why was the 3-5 ELA Pacing Guide created by a K-2 Literacy Coach?	9
Will the assessment schedule change?	9
How does the pacing work with assemblies, SEL, "Start with Hello," band etc. all the extras that happen at schools?	9
Wait, I've already been teaching these materials for a year or more. I have pacing that works. What does this mean for me?	9

English Language Arts:

It is a challenge to complete all 4 modules of Wit and Wisdom.

We realize there is a lot of content in Wit and Wisdom. If you are struggling with pacing, utilize the ["Learn Anywhere Plan"](#) to help make informed decisions about priority lessons. Or, if you have a Literacy Coach at your school, reach out for support.

Since I have to teach using whole group instruction, does that mean I can't differentiate?

Of course not! We need all students to be able to access grade level skills and content, and we need you to use your expertise as instructional specialists to create the scaffolds (like a scaffolded graphic organizer), accommodations, or adaptive tech (such as Learning Ally or Google Read and Write), as well as other supports to ensure that students have equitable access. You can utilize UDL, and provide these to all students, and/or you can meet individual student needs through differentiation. What we are not doing is modifying the curriculum--that means significantly changing it--unless it is specifically stated in a child's IEP. That includes giving students "leveled text" or using [guided reading](#). If pacing allows, small group work can still occur, as long as students are in flexible groups based on skills they are working on--not based on "[reading ability](#)."

Can supplemental poetry lessons happen with Wit and Wisdom?

Thankfully Wit and Wisdom includes poetry. If you'd like to incorporate more poetry, you can use flex days. You can also find times to incorporate poetry into your day, such as during snack time.

We created art activities that supplement texts in W&W. Can this continue?

If they don't affect your pacing, you are welcome to bring in more art! Another suggestion is to have these available when students have completed work, such as answering a Focusing Arc Questions.

If we can only use Wit and Wisdom texts and materials, should I get rid of my classroom library?

Of course not! We are asking that you use Wit and Wisdom texts and materials for instructional purposes. Kids can read whatever they want for independent reading! We do encourage using

the Volume of Reading texts available for this as well. You can read what you'd like for snack time or community circle read-alouds or during any moments of extra time.

I'm concerned about the lack of repeated writing practice and foundational skills in Wit and Wisdom.

Foundations and Heggerty are our foundational skill programs. Wit & Wisdom develops students' language comprehension skills by building knowledge using complex texts. Wit & Wisdom teaches key writing skills through their [Craft Stages](#). These skills are built upon [at each grade level](#). If we find that students need more writing practice, and there is time for this with our current pacing, we can discuss this as grade-level teams and make decisions collaboratively with the Director of Curriculum.

I thought Module 0 was just for Kindergarten.

The first year, Module 0 was for all grades. This year, it was not required for grades K-5 and was optional for Kindergarten. It will continue to be optional for Kindergarten.

Some of us understood that the first 6 weeks of school would focus on classroom routines to build a positive classroom environment.

*Thankfully our HQIM writers took this into consideration. The beginning lessons in IM, Foundations, and W&W are all designed to help develop classroom culture, establish expectations, practice routines, and assess students' skills. You can focus on classroom culture **AND** teach content simultaneously. The expectation is that you begin by the start date outlined in your pacing guide.*

Why do students need to learn to spell Trick Words?

In Kindergarten, the Foundation goals for trick words is to be able to read 75% of the first 100 high frequency words. In first grade, the Foundation scope and sequence states that students will be able to read and spell the first 100 high frequency words, including irregular words (Trick Words).

In the first and second grade manuals, under differentiation, it does say that teaching the spelling of these words can be difficult for some students. Students can be taught to copy or check their student notebooks, as needed. However, it also states that more advanced students can write them from memory. In second grade, the goal increases to reading and spelling the first 200 high frequency words.

We will naturally have some students who find learning to spell the trick words to be challenging. However, for the majority of our students, teaching them how to read and then spell the trick words will help them [orthographically map](#) those words and go into each subsequent grade

level with a stronger sight word vocabulary. Foundations does provide a procedure for teaching trick words in the manual. Using [Heart Word Magic](#) is another proven method to help students orthographically map these words.

Are we still able to take time to read with kids in small groups?

Providing time for students to apply their phonics skills in reading is essential for their learning. Incorporating some small group reading instruction can still happen. It will take some clever planning within your pacing. You may take the last 10 minutes of your Foundation block to work with small groups using decodable books.

The grade before us didn't finish the Scope and Sequence in Foundations. Where should we start?

Based on where we are in the scope and sequence, it is expected that you start at your grade level next year. Foundations has taken into account that not all units will be taught, and starts with in-depth review. For more information specifically on Grade 3, please click [here](#).

Can the Essential Question, Focusing Arc Question, and Content/Craft Questions be on slides?

You are welcome to put these on slides, but you also need to display the posters that ELPS provided you in plain view.

Can students still use Learning Ally?

Yes! All students should have access to Wit and Wisdom texts on Learning Ally, and they are welcome to read for pleasure using Learning Ally as well. Google Read and Write is another tool that should be made available to **all** students so that they can access grade level content.

Why can't I just plan from slides?

When you plan from slides, you miss important information from the Teacher Manual. Plus the [preparation protocols](#) “guide teachers to prepare for instruction with a deep analysis of the module that includes completing key writing tasks from the module. By doing so, teachers have a clearer understanding of what students will learn and what skills and knowledge students will need to complete tasks successfully. Teachers can then anticipate what may challenge students and what scaffolds may be needed to support them to succeed.”¹

¹ <https://greatminds.org/english/blog/witwisdom/writing-to-learn-and-learning-to-write-with-wit-wisdom>

Can I use TPT slides?

While the W&W slides are guaranteed to be aligned with the learning goals and activities of the lesson, TPT slides are not. As long as your TPT slides are aligned, which you will be able to determine when planning your lesson using the manual, you can use them.

Mathematics

How will ST Math fit into schedule?

ELPS believes in the power of ST Math to [boost students' understanding in mathematics](#), and we also know that time is an issue. One way to fit in ST MATH is to focus on the total puzzles each week versus the total minutes. Helping students to set goals can help them to get the most out of their ST Math time. Currently many teachers are able to fit it in using a variety of ways. This is a conversation we need to continue regularly during CPT time to address roadblocks as they come. The focus should be on getting as close to goals as you can.



Research shows that test scores increase as students collect more puzzles in ST Math. More time = more puzzles = more results!



Each puzzle in ST Math is a math problem. After correctly solving a group of similar puzzles, the student collects them. ST Math contains a vast library of puzzles - tens of thousands in total! To ensure that students problem-solve all year long, and to cover the critical areas of their grade level, try these recommended weekly goals:

Pre-K/TK:	30 minutes	20 puzzles
K-1:	60 minutes	40 puzzles
2-8:	90 minutes	60 puzzles

Who is aligning ST Math with IM?

Within the pacing guide you will see the ST Math objectives that address the same standards as the ones addressed in the IM unit. ST Math created a document for this. ([Textbook correlations](#)) You can assign these objectives during the unit to bring to surface content that you want them to work on during the unit. You could also assign objectives for the upcoming unit to preview standards.

I don't think I have enough time for centers, ST Math, and IM instruction!

Grades 3-5 should have at least 90 minutes daily for math, which is the ideal and provides enough time for everything. K-2 is continuing to work on the schedule issues to increase math instructional time. However, your time for centers, and ST Math doesn't need to be fixed in terms of amount of time or when they occur. You can be flexible daily/weekly on how time is being distributed between ST Math and Center games.

Can IM be used in a workshop model?

ELPS and DESE are moving away from a workshop model that traditionally groups students by ability in all subjects. [If students are not given access to grade level assignments, they will never master grade level content and skills.](#) That said, we can still provide scaffolds and accommodations to help students access the grade level standards.

While it is beneficial for teachers to work with small groups of students working on specific skills, in a flexible and temporary way, having fixed groups is not. For this reason, [IM's vision does not align with this model.](#)

Several other districts who also use IM have shared with us that during flex days, teachers do re-teaching in small groups, but the majority of teaching should be as IM was designed: students working individually, in pairs, or in heterogeneous groups problem-solving collaboratively and actively. The teacher is observing and facilitating conversations and ultimately leading a student-led synthesis.

Teaching and Learning Mathematics	Sounds Like and Looks Like
 Students learn mathematics by making sense of problems	Students share mathematical explanations, state assumptions, make conjectures, construct mathematical arguments, and listen and respond to the ideas of others.
 Students have access to grade-level mathematics	Students have multiple means and opportunities to engage in the lesson through embedded structures that activate prior learning, make key concepts explicit through the synthesis of each other's ideas, and deepen connections.
 Students play with mathematical ideas before formalizing them	Students make use of what they already know about mathematics and see what they can notice and figure out about an activity before having concepts and procedures explained to them.
 Students learn language as they develop mathematical understanding	Students have repeated, strategically optimized, and supported opportunities to articulate mathematical ideas into linguistic expression and to communicate their ideas to others.
 Students learn by collaborating with each other	Students have multiple opportunities to negotiate meaning with others, make connections among strategies, and integrate strategies to create a group solution to a problem.
 Students listen to, respond to, and value each other's thinking	Students pose and answer questions, clarify what is asked and what is happening in a problem, build common understandings, and share experiences relevant to the topic.

Where do I find the district provided trackers?

They will be shared with you at the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year.

Why can't I plan from the slides? Why do I need to use the IM manuals to plan?

The teacher manuals were written by the creators of IM and contain more material and information than the slides. The ILC platform created the slides which is a for-profit company. We have learned from many districts that they have seen much more success from planning with the manuals by digging in deeply to components that are not included on the slides.

Why doesn't the pacing cover all standards before the MCAS?

In most cases the unit(s) that come after MCAS are not considered the [major work](#) of the grade. [Not all standards are assessed equally on MCAS](#), and many of these non-priority standards are addressed in HQIM towards the end of the year because of this. Also, with MCAS happening as early as March, there is no way we can teach all that we need to before MCAS. After MCAS, we can rest assured that if we continue to teach students the content and skills in the HQIM, they will be prepared to succeed in the following school year. If we all do our part, students should have some background knowledge to be able to attempt an MCAS problem without becoming overwhelmed. We also need to shift our culture from teaching kids how to solve particular problems to supporting kids to use what they know to find an entry point to any problem; this is the heart of IM.

Why do we have to incorporate [IM Centers](#)? Are they really that important?

Centers “provide a uniquely engaging, gamified opportunity for students to do math! Center play creates opportunities for students to engage in mathematical practice standards while developing their conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and precise language.” If you skip centers, you are depriving students of this opportunity. You are also affecting teachers in subsequent grades who are depending on students learning the game rules and routines in previous years.

OK, we need to incorporate [IM centers](#). Was this considered in this pacing?

Yes! Centers are embedded into the lessons in grades K-1 but will need designated time in grades 2-5. In grade 2, there are also built-in center days in the units. Remember, centers don't have to take a lot of time. Many of the games can be played in 10 - 15 minutes or less. Keep in mind centers are not the same as a math workshop model with a teacher table. Rather than setting up rotating stations, we can allow students voice and choice when choosing centers.

I have other games that I like better than the IM games. And I haven't even set up the IM Centers yet. Can't I just use the other games?

There are wonderful math games out there, even some that we purchased, like the Graham Fletcher Fluency kits. That said, we will only use IM games next year for the same reasons we will use materials with fidelity: we need to learn the IM games, and students need to learn them and internalize them as well. These games are used again and again in different grade levels, and we don't want teachers to have to use instructional time to teach games that students could have learned previously. That said, the visuals from Graham Fletcher can be used as supports for students. In terms of setting up IM Centers, you will receive materials at the beginning of the

school year that will help minimize the work that is necessary to get IM centers up and running. And you will have a Math Coach at CPT times to support your team with this implementation.

Pacing

Why are we starting so early? I need to establish routines, expectations, and classroom culture.

Thankfully our HQIM writers took this into consideration. The beginning lessons in IM, Foundations, and W&W are all designed to help develop classroom culture, establish expectations, practice routines, and assess students' skills.

Why do some grades have more flex days than others?

Flex days were determined based on the number of required lessons. Some grades have more lessons than others.

Am I going to get in trouble if I'm not on a certain lesson on a certain day?

No! This is not a micromanaged pacing guide. You are just given a date on when the unit/module should be completed, and you can use the flex days as you see fit. If you are behind on pacing, your principal might ask if you need support.

We don't have a What-I-Need Block. What do I do about students who need additional time on a skill or a concept?

Thankfully, many HQIM are spiraled, so if a student doesn't master something immediately, most likely they will be reintroduced to a skill again. [Not all students will master every concept](#), but every student should show progress towards mastery. IM center time is a great time to work with small groups of students. But thankfully, the flex days are also in the guide to account for this.

This pacing guide requires content and skill teaching after MCAS. I try to get all of the standards taught and mastered before MCAS.

[Not all standards are assessed equally on MCAS](#), and many of these non-priority standards are addressed in HQIM towards the end of the year because of this. Also, with MCAS happening as early as March, there is no way we can teach all that we need to before MCAS. After MCAS, we can rest assured that if we continue to teach students the content and skills in the HQIM, they will be prepared to succeed in the following school year.

I can't possibly teach one lesson per day. Lessons take 2 or more days.

If this is the case, it will be important to work with a coach or your team on micropacing within the lesson, using [timestamps in W&W](#), and making educated decisions on which activities to utilize in the lesson in IM.

Why was the 3-5 ELA Pacing Guide created by a K-2 Literacy Coach?

The K-2 Literacy coach has a great deal of experience teaching Foundations and is a [Wit and Wisdom Leader](#). She utilized grade level ELPS pacing guides, publisher pacing guides, and other districts' tried-and-true pacing guides to create our guides. Remember, this is a working document, and we will collaboratively make necessary changes if needs be.

Will the assessment schedule change?

Yes. Here is the [3-5 Assessment Calendar](#)

Here is the [K-2 Assessment Calendar](#)

How does the pacing work with assemblies, SEL, "Start with Hello," band etc. all the extras that happen at schools?

This is how flex days can be used for some situations like assemblies, most interruptions do not take the entire day. If it appears that a lot of instructional time is being interrupted, these are conversations that can be had at the building level to find solutions.

Wait, I've already been teaching these materials for a year or more. I have pacing that works. What does this mean for me?

What this means is to treat this year as year one and pace yourself with this guide. If there were changes you made that were approved by the Director of Curriculum, then those are fine (and they shouldn't affect your pacing) but other than those, we will use our Common Planning Time to dig into the materials and plan collaboratively so that the content and skills that our students are learning will be horizontally--and ultimately vertically--aligned. This is to ensure equitable access for all students in ELPS.

We're only tracking FTQs, EOM, and End of Unit Assessments. Is that the only information we can put on the report card?

The short answer is no. If you are tracking any additional information (such as cool downs, Checks for Understanding, or even observational data), you can certainly use this. As a reminder, any report card grade

you enter should be backed by data. The trackers include just *some* of the assessments provided with these materials. We certainly didn't want to require everyone to track *every* assessment, but some teachers do just that so that they have one place to collect all of the information on a student. A standards-based grade book can allow you to do this, and you can set this up through PowerSchool.

With standards-based grades, the more information we have, the better. Unlike traditional grades, where we are plugging in every assignment, standards-based grades are more nuanced--*did the student master the standard or not?* At the beginning of the year, it is hard to determine mastery, both because we haven't given a lot of assessments, and because most kids won't have mastered many, if any, standard . A lot of these standards are assessed again and again throughout the year, so you will have information as the children grow to report on this growth.

Also remember, if you don't have enough information to determine where a child is, we do have N/A. You can explain to any inquiring parent that you don't have enough information yet to report on how that child is doing on that particular standard.