



Standards-Based Curriculum Mapping Resource Packet

Ventura Unified School District
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Facilitator:

Karen Beeman TeachingForBiliteracyKB@gmail.com

VUSD Mapping Resources in Google

VUSD Mapping Folder	 https://bit.ly/3QymN9a
VUSD Overview of the Mapping Process	 https://bit.ly/3QqVYUr
Yearlong Storylines	 https://bit.ly/4tF5H8i
Step 1B Audit: Record, Reflect and Revise	 https://bit.ly/42vp0or

Unpacking the Common Core State Standards

Foreword (of the CA Common Core State Standards – CCSS)

Two very important recommendations must be taken into account on implementing these standards:

1. The abilities listed here are not developed independently of each other, but rather sequentially and concurrently. It would be a serious mistake to try to teach skills in isolation, making difficult to understand, and in many cases, students would not be able to apply the skills with rigor.
2. Once the abilities have been presented within a meaningful context that will make them understandable, it will be important to recognize that these skills are not an end in themselves, but rather an instrument to reach an end. The desired goal is to develop the expressive, interpretive, and critical abilities of all students, in order that they may reach a level of mastery.

Ada, A. F., & Campoy, F. I., (2012). Common core state standards: English/Spanish language version. Retrieved from: <https://commoncore-espanol.sdcoe.net>

(CCSS) Key Shifts in English Language Arts: Introduction

The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy build on the best of existing standards and reflect the skills and knowledge students will need to succeed in college, career, and life. Understanding how the standards differ from previous standards—and the necessary shifts they call for—is essential to implementing the standards well.

The following are key shifts called for by the Common Core:

1. Regular practice with complex texts and their academic language

Rather than focusing solely on the skills of reading and writing, the ELA/literacy standards highlight the growing complexity of the texts students must read to be ready for the demands of college, career, and life. The standards call for a staircase of increasing complexity so that all students are ready for the demands of college- and career-level reading no later than the end of high school. The standards also outline a progressive development of reading comprehension so that students advancing through the grades are able to gain more from what they read.

Closely related to text complexity and inextricably connected to reading comprehension is a focus on academic vocabulary: words that appear in a variety of content areas (such as *ignite* and *commit*). The standards call for students to grow their vocabularies through a mix of conversation, direct instruction, and reading. They ask students to determine word meanings, appreciate the nuances of words, and steadily expand their range of words and phrases. Vocabulary and conventions are treated in their own strand not because skills in these areas should be handled in isolation, but because their use extends across reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Because the standards are the roadmap for successful classrooms, and recognizing that teachers, school districts, and states need to decide on the journey to the destination, they intentionally do not include a required reading list. Instead, they include numerous sample texts to help teachers prepare for the school year and allow parents and students to know what to expect during the year.

The standards include certain critical types of content for all students, including classic myths and stories from around the world, foundational U.S. documents, seminal works of American literature, and the writings of Shakespeare. The standards appropriately defer the majority of decisions about what and how to teach to states, districts, schools, and teachers.

2. Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from texts, both literary and informational

The Common Core emphasizes using evidence from texts to present careful analyses, well-defended claims, and clear information. Rather than asking students questions they can answer solely from their prior knowledge and experience, the standards call for students to answer questions that depend on their having read the texts with care.

The reading standards focus on students' ability to read carefully and grasp information, arguments, ideas, and details based on evidence in the text. Students should be able to answer a range of *text-dependent* questions, whose answers require inferences based on careful attention to the text.

Frequently, forms of writing in K–12 have drawn heavily from student experience and opinion, which alone will not prepare students for the demands of college, career, and life. Though the standards still expect narrative writing throughout the grades, they also expect a command of sequence and detail that are essential for effective argumentative and informative writing. The standards' focus on evidence-based writing along with the ability to inform and persuade is a significant shift from current practice.

3. Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction

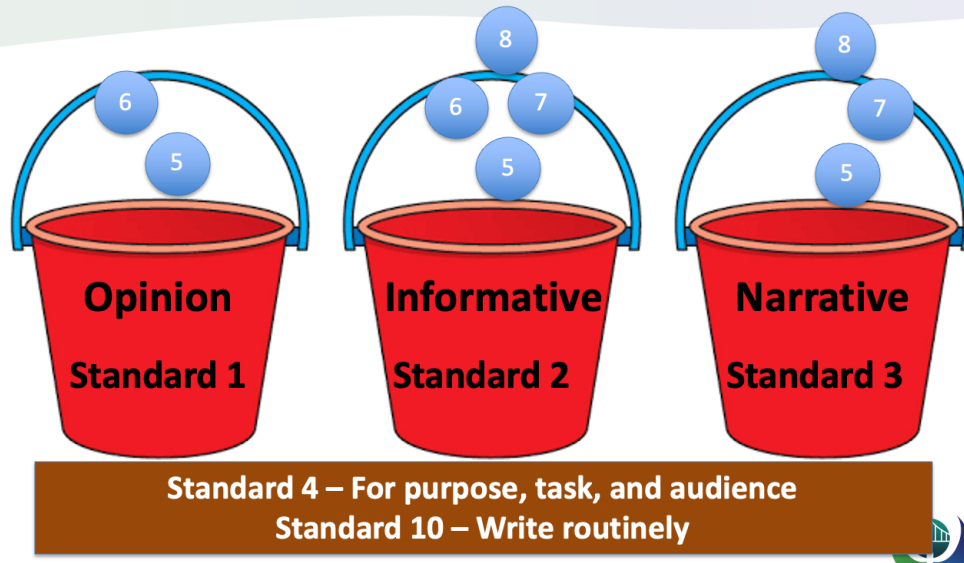
Students must be immersed in information about the world around them if they are to develop the strong general knowledge and vocabulary they need to become successful readers and be prepared for college, career, and life. Informational texts play an important part in building students' content knowledge. Further, it is vital for students to have extensive opportunities to build knowledge through texts so they can learn independently.

In K-5, fulfilling the standards requires a 50-50 balance between informational and literary reading. Informational reading includes content-rich nonfiction in history/social studies, sciences, technical studies, and the arts. The K-5 standards strongly recommend that texts—both within and across grades—be selected to support students in systematically developing knowledge about the world.

In grades 6-12, there is much greater attention on the specific category of literary nonfiction, which is a shift from traditional standards. To be clear, the standards pay substantial attention to literature throughout K-12, as it constitutes half of the reading in K-5 and is the core of the work of 6-12 ELA teachers. Also in grades 6-12, the standards for literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects ensure that students can independently build knowledge in these disciplines through reading and writing. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening should span the school day from K-12 as integral parts of every subject.

Key Shifts in English Language Arts. (2019). Retrieved from <http://www.corestandards.org/other-resources/key-shifts-in-english-language-arts/>

Organization of the CCSS Writing Standards



Writing genres within each bucket

(Source: Pathways to the Common Core)

Persuasive/Opinion/ Argument	Informational/ Functional/Procedural	Narrative Writing
Persuasive Letter Review Personal Essay Literary Essay Historical essay Petition Editorial Op-Ed Column	Fact Sheet News Article Feature Article Blog Website Report Analytic Memo Research Report Nonfiction book How-to-book Directions Recipe Lab Report	Personal Narrative Fiction Historical Fiction Fantasy Narrative Memoir Biography Narrative Nonfiction

The Reading Ladder

Ladder of Common Core Anchor Standards for Reading

1. Close Reading	9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.	10. Text Complexity
	8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence. (Not applicable to literature)	
	7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.	
	Integrate Knowledge and Details	
	6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.	
	5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.	
	4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.	
	Craft and Structure	
	3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.	
	2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.	
	Key Ideas and Details (also includes #1)	

The Biliteracy Unit Framework, 2nd ed.

K-5 BUF Templates

Unit Theme: - Content Area Standards - Spanish Language Arts Standards - Spanish Language Development Standards - Content and Literacy Big Ideas - Summative Assessment			Formative Assessment
Building Oracy, Background Knowledge: Language Comprehension - Academic listening and speaking necessary for content instruction and literacy development. - Developed at the beginning of the unit and whenever new language or concepts are introduced throughout the unit.			
Reading Comprehension - Oracy, background knowledge, and language comprehension - Comprehensive literacy routines, strategies and reading behaviors.	Content Area Instruction - Oracy, background knowledge, and language comprehension - Inquiry - Investigations - Experiments - Experiences		
Writing - Oracy, background knowledge, and language comprehension - Comprehensive literacy routines, strategies writing behaviors.			
Foundational Skills and Fluency: Word Recognition - Oracy, background knowledge, and language comprehension - Phoneme Awareness, Phonics, Decoding, Encoding, Orthography - Vocabulary background knowledge, syntax, and semantics			
Summative Assessment			
Bridge – Transfer - Illustration - Side by Side or - Así se dice	Bridge – Transfer and Practice. Practice the new language (includes Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing in the other language)	Bridge: Contrastive Analysis Phonology Morphology Syntax and grammar Pragmatics.	

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PreK/TK BUF Templates

Unit Theme:			Formative Assessment
• Early Learning Standards • Spanish Language Development Standards • Content and Literacy Big Ideas	- Language, Content and Literacy Outcomes - Formative Assessments - Summative Assessment		
Building Oracy and Background Knowledge • Interactive, hands-on activity to initiate the theme/unit • Vocabulary Development – naturally introduced as part of the experience			
Whole Group activity: Read Alouds, Shared Writing • Setting the stage for centers and play (turn taking, introduction of props and realia, sharing what students have done in centers)			
Centers: Guided Play (changes based on the theme): • Examples of themes: School, Restaurant, Home, Workplace (Airport, Office, Laboratory, Construction site), etc. • Centers include listening, speaking, developmentally appropriate writing and reading, fine and gross motor skills and often are focused on: drama (house), art, writing, blocks, math, theme based (firefighters, teachers, mail carriers, etc.) • Skills: problem solving, turn taking, planning, self-regulation, inferencing, predicting, role playing etc.			
Bridge – Transfer Illustration Side by Side or Así se dice	Bridge – Transfer Practice - Extension (includes: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing in the other language)	Bridge: Contrastive Analysis While the teacher plans a specific metalinguistic teaching point in advance of the Bridge, the teacher also accepts and highlights other areas of metalinguistics noticed by the students.	

Beeman, K. and Urow, C. (2013). Teaching for Biliteracy: Strengthening Bridges between Languages. Philadelphia, PA: Caslon Publishing
 Dual Language Summer Institute, 2014, Beeman & Urow

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Content Rubrics

Next Generation Science and Language Arts Units			
Element	3 (Meets)	2 (Almost There)	1 (Needs Improvement)
Standards: Performance Expectations for NGSS and Language Arts	The NGSS Performance Expectations are all accounted for at the grade level (tallied on NGSS Theme or Topics page or a combination of the two). There is strong evidence of the NGSS bundles (thematic or topics, or a hybrid) and there is a rationale for the bundling.	The NGSS Performance Expectations are mostly accounted for the grade level (tallied on NGSS Theme or Topics page, or a combination of the two). Units are bundled but the rationale is unclear or the bundling does not represent all the standards.	The NGSS Performance Expectations are not all accounted for (tallied on NGSS Theme or Topics page or a combination of the two). There is little to no evidence of bundling. A rationale for how units were organized and sequenced is missing.
	Writing buckets are selected for each unit (W standards 1, 2 or 3) and the “bucket fillers” (W standards 4-10) are also present. Either informational texts or literature is indicated. The reading “ladder” is present for each unit, with standards 1 and 10 always included. The “rungs” on the ladder are carefully selected based on how they support the writing standards and how they support each other.	The writing buckets are selected (1, 2 or 3) and there are some bucket fillers present as well. Either informational texts or literature is indicated. There is a reading ladder for each unit, representing standards 1 and 10 (sides of the ladder) as well as several standards from 2-9. The relationship between reading and writing is evident.	Some, but not all of the writing buckets are selected (standards 1, 2 or 3). Bucket fillers, standards 4-10 are inconsistently represented. Either informational texts or literature is indicated. Some of the reading standards are represented, but the relationship between reading and writing is not evident.
Yearlong and unit storylines	The yearlong story line describes the scientific focus of the year, including a brief description of each unit and a rationale for how they are related. The unit level story line describes the relationship between the science and language arts standards in the unit, how they will be taught, and how they are connected to the year-long storyline.	The yearlong storyline describes the science focus for the year and includes the units. The unit level story lines sometimes describe the relationship between the science and language arts standards and how they come together in each unit, but not always.	The yearlong storyline is present, but it is brief and the connection between the units is unclear. The unit level story lines are either not present or they are hard to understand; how the standards will be taught and how they are connected is unclear and hard to discern.
Rigor and Science Practices	An inquiry question is included for every unit, and inquiry practices are evident in every unit. The inquiry practices build across the year and match the concepts of the unit. The organization of the language arts standards, and the order in which students experience them, reflect a plan for rigor for the school year.	Some units include questions or some of the questions fit the characteristics of inquiry, but not all. The language arts standards are sprinkled throughout the units without careful regard for rigor.	Either there are few or no questions for each unit and there is little evidence of inquiry practices within units or developed across the school year.

Additional resource rubric from NGSS <https://www.nextgenscience.org/sites/default/files/EquiPRubricforSciencecv3.pdf>

Social Studies and Language Arts Units

Element	3 (Meets)	2 (Almost There)	1 (Needs Improvement)
Social Studies Year-Long “Storyline” Every grade level includes a summary of what students will learn with regard to the grade level theme.	The grade level summary of SS learning reflects that grade level content, inquiry, real life application, and describes how the concepts build on one another.	The grade level summary of SS learning reflects the grade level content. Some of the concepts described build on one another. Inquiry is lightly addressed.	The grade level summary of SS learning do not reflects the content for the year. The concepts do not build on one another and inquiry is not mentioned.
Social Studies Standards A “storyline” is written for each unit.	The Disciplinary Concepts and tools are mapped and grouped in a way that build on one another. The unit level story line describes the relationship between the social studies and language arts standards in the unit, how they will be taught, and how they are connected to the grade level’s theme and storyline.	The Disciplinary Concepts and tools are mapped in a way that somewhat build on one another but an outside reader may not understand the reasoning behind the bundles. The unit level story lines sometimes describe the relationship between the social studies and language arts standards and how they come together in this unit, but not always.	The Disciplinary Concepts and tools do not build on one another or are not all present. The unit level story lines are either not present or they are hard to understand; how the standards will be taught and how they are connected is unclear and hard to discern.
Language Arts Standards (Writing and Reading)	Writing buckets are selected for each unit (W standards 1, 2 or 3) and the “bucket fillers” (W standards 4-10) are also present. Either informational texts or literature is indicated. The reading “ladder” is present for each unit, with standards 1 and 10 always included. The “rungs” on the ladder are carefully selected based on how they support the writing standards and how they support each other. The title of each unit has a clear connection to the year theme and reflect the standards. The compelling question for each unit is “meaty” and written in student-friendly ways.	The writing buckets are selected (1, 2 or 3) and there are some bucket fillers present as well. Either informational texts or literature is indicated. There is a reading ladder for each unit, representing standards 1 and 10 (sides of the ladder) as well as several standards from 2-9. The relationship between reading and writing is evident. The titles of some of the units have a clear connection to the year theme and reflect the standards. Not all of the compelling questions fit the definition of “meaty” and student-friendly.	Some, but not all of the writing buckets are selected (standards 1, 2 or 3). Bucket fillers, standards 4-10 are inconsistently represented. Either informational texts or literature is indicated. Some of the reading standards are represented, but the relationship between reading and writing is not evident. The titles for the units are more general and vaguer and do not have a clear connection to the year theme or standards. There are few if any compelling questions.
Rigor	The inquiry standards in the units clearly build in rigor from the first through the last unit. The organization of the language arts standards, and the order in which students experience them, reflect a plan for rigor for the school year.	The inquiry in the units somewhat builds in rigor from the first unit through the last one. The language arts standards are sprinkled throughout the units without careful regard for rigor.	The inquiry in the units does not build in rigor from the first unit through the last one.

Yearlong Storylines

The yearlong and unit storylines are critical elements for implementing the standards-based maps and units. They are crucial for the curriculum writing team to document their work, and they are a lifeline for teachers who may not have been involved in creating the map and units. At the yearlong level, storylines give a broad picture of the themes and topics that will be taught in each language and within each content area across the year, explaining connections between units and how rigor grows throughout the school year.

- **Purpose of a Yearlong Storyline:** The yearlong storylines explain the connections of the units within a particular content area, including the strategic placement and order of standard bundles across the year and how rigor increases. Yearlong storylines provide a description of how literacy (both reading and writing) is integrated within the content areas as well as connections across the content areas. They are a narrative of the scope and sequence provided by the biliteracy map that focuses on a specific content area (science or social studies) while also making connections across languages.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that there is a yearlong storyline for Spanish instruction and a yearlong storyline for English instruction that matches the biliteracy map.
 - It can be helpful to describe the yearlong plan via the content areas including content (science, social studies, or a universal theme) AND language arts, and include
 - unit themes
 - essential questions
 - connections between and across units
 - The storyline should follow the order of the map, beginning with the start of the school year.
 - Ensure that the yearlong storyline for each content area (science/social studies) includes how literacy is integrated within and across languages.
- **The Yearlong Storyline Process:** The yearlong storyline process begins as the map is built. Teams note how the standards (or standard bundles) fall on the map and document their justifications. As the team's understanding of the standards deepens, it is important to go back and revise the storylines. Typically, storylines have at least three sections:
 - Section 1:
 - Briefly explains the connection of past learning in that content area (for grades one and up) and the yearlong theme of the new grade level.
 - It may describe particular behaviors expected of students in that grade for the content area, or it may begin to describe the units and themes across the year.
 - Some grade levels choose to explain each unit in its own paragraph, including the theme, essential question, how each subsequent unit builds on the previous.
 - It also includes a brief description of how literacy (reading and writing) will be integrated within the unit.

- Section 2:
 - Summarizes how reading is balanced across the content areas over the course of the year and across languages.
 - It may mention literacy routines that would be expected within the units.
- Section 3:
 - Summarizes how writing is balanced across the content areas over the course of the year and across languages.

These final two sections will help to justify how the yearlong map meets the instructional shifts recommended by the CCSS for language arts.

As the map is reviewed and revised, updates are also made to the yearlong storyline.

- **Consistency Across Yearlong Storylines:** Across curriculum developers, it is important for there to be consistency in structure and formats. Yearlong storylines should offer a clear explanation of how content instruction progresses across the school year as well as how reading and writing are integrated and exposure is addressed across the year. Therefore, it is important to read all the storylines to edit them to ensure consistency and alignment.

Collaborative creation of the yearlong storylines creates opportunities for groups of teachers to both deepen their understanding of the map itself and to deepen their understanding of how the standards have been bundled and can be taught in an integrated fashion. Before beginning to write your own storylines, take some time to read the sample yearlong storylines provided in the resources, and reflect on how the yearlong storylines serve to provide a robust introduction and understanding of the biliteracy map.

An in-depth explanation of **unit storylines** is provided during Step 2 of the Curriculum Development Process.

Sample maps and yearlong storylines in google:

<https://bit.ly/4cNopmP>



Record, Reflect, Revise - Guidance Document

The first draft of your map is completed! Congratulations! It has taken time, work, collaboration, and a lot of reading of the standards to get here. At this point in the process, it is critical to take the opportunity to review the document you have created and make the revisions, adjustments, edits, and tweaks that are a natural part of the biliteracy mapping process. This step in the process is called: Auditing: Record, Reflect, and Revise. As the name implies, this step involves looking closely at your map, engaging in critical discussion about the map, rereading the standards, consulting district and other resources, and finally going back to the map to make revisions and adjustments to ensure that the map does what it is designed to do: provide a comprehensive guide that organizes and orders the content, writing, and reading standards in a way that facilitates unit writing and robust instruction.

The outline below will guide you through the Audit process - Record, Reflect, and Revise.

1. Gather the materials needed:

- **The biliteracy map** – on butcher block paper. It's important to engage in this process with a physical map, rather than a digital one. It's critical that everyone in the group can see and touch the map.
- **Four separate tally sheets, digital version** (make sure to copy and download these documents that can be found in this folder: [2. Digital Tally Sheets for Recording, Reflecting, and Revising the Biliteracy Map:](#)
 - Informational Texts Reading Standards tally sheet
 - Literary Texts Reading Standards tally sheet
 - Writing Standards tally sheet
 - Genre tally sheet
- **Three separate tally sheets, on chart paper** (you will need to make these):
 - Informational Texts and Literary Text Reading Standards tally sheet (you may choose to put this on two different charts)

Grade _____ Percentage Sp _____ % / Eng _____ %
(Language Allocation)

Literacy Standards Tally
Informational Texts

Español — %	English — %
	1
	2
	3
	4
	5
	6
	7
	8
	9
	10

Literary Texts

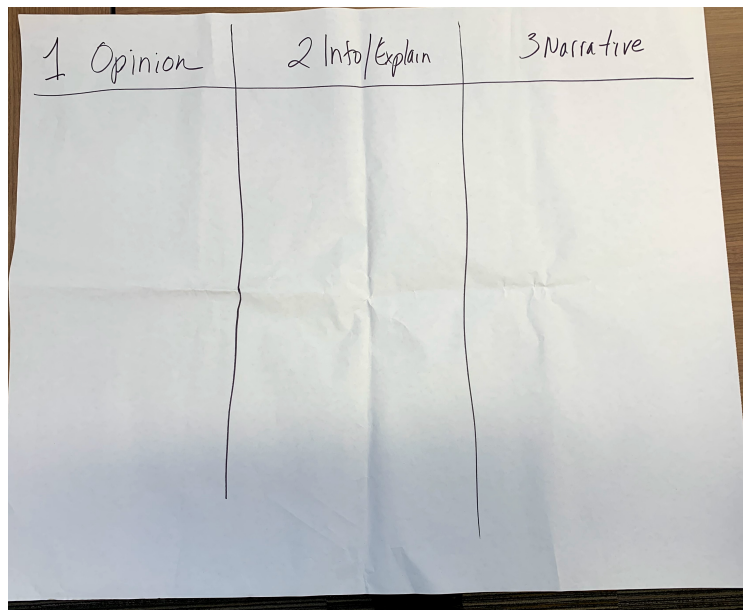
Español — %	English — %
	1
	2
	3
	4
	5
	6
	7
	8
	9
	10

○ Writing Standards tally sheet

Grade _____ Percentage Sp _____ % / Eng _____ %
Writing Standards Language Allocation

	1 OPINION		2 INFORMATIVE		3 NARRATIVE	
	Español	English	Español	English	Español	English
U1						
U2						
U3						
U4						
U5						
U6						
U7						
U8						

○ Genre tally sheet



5th Grade 1st grade Percentage (Sp/Eng) 0-100

WRITING STANDARDS

	1 OPINION Esp ENG	2 INFORMATIVE Esp ENG	3 NARRATIVE Esp ENG
U1	V1 5/8	N/A	N/A
U2	?	?	U2 5/8
U3	?	U3 5/8	U3 ?
U4	U4 ?	U4 ?	?
U5	?	?	U5 5/8
U6	?	U6 5/8	U6 ?
U7	?	U7 ?	U7 5/8
U8	U8 5/8	?	U8 ?
U9	✓	✓	✓
U10	✓	✓	✓

Writing Standards 7.14

- It is also noted digitally.
- The process continues until all the Spanish writing standards have been recorded. Then the English writing standards are recorded on the chart paper (in blue marker) and digitally.
- Record the sub-genres of writing by unit – making sure to use green and blue- like this:

1- Opinion	2- Info/Explain	3- Narrative
U2 Personal Essay U1	U4 How to book U3	U3 Narrative non-fiction U2
U5? Petition U4	U7 Fact sheet U6	U6 Personal Narrative U5
Persuasive letter U8	U1 Directions/Routines U2	U8 Historical Fiction U7
U5?		

Then record the reading standards

- The assigned person reads out the Spanish reading standards by unit and type of reading (informational or literary). For example, “Unit 1 – Literary – standards 1, 3, 6, 7, & 10.”
- This is noted on the chart paper in green marker (to indicate Spanish) like this
 - Note: Tally the units in columns – for example, unit 1 to the left, unit 2 just the right of unit 1, etc. (See below)

Grade 1st grade Percentage 80/20
(Sp/Eng)

LITERACY STANDARDS TALLY

Informational Texts

Español 80%					English 20%				
U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	1	2	U3	U4	U5
U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	2	3	U3	U4	U5
U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	3	4	U3	U4	U5
U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	4	5	U3	U4	U5
U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	5	6	U3	U4	U5
U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	6	7	U3	U4	U5
U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	7	8	U3	U4	U5
U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	8	9	U3	U4	U5
U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	9	10	U3	U4	U5
U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	10		U3	U4	U5

Literary Texts

Español 80%					English 20%				
U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	1	2	U3	U4	U5
U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	2	3	U3	U4	U5
U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	3	4	U3	U4	U5
U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	4	5	U3	U4	U5
U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	5	6	U3	U4	U5
U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	6	7	U3	U4	U5
U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	7	8	U3	U4	U5
U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	8	9	U3	U4	U5
U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	9	10	U3	U4	U5
U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	10		U3	U4	U5

- This information is also noted digitally
- The process continues until all the Spanish reading standards have been recorded. Then the English reading standards are recorded on the chart paper (in blue marker) and digitally.
- You have now finished the **Record** part of this step and are ready to move on to **Reflect**.

4. Reflect: This is the opportunity to look critically at the data in the tally sheets.

Reflect on Writing

- Open reflection: Look at the **writing** charts. What do you notice? Make sure to digitally record what you notice for later discussion. This is the opportunity to take a critical look at how the standards have been mapped. Note all reflections for further discussion.
- Focused reflection: After the initial open reflection, take some time to make sure to reflect on the following, and take notes on the reflections (at this point – you are noting the reflections, and not yet making any changes to the map):
 - Are any buckets missing? How many times is each bucket taught in each language? There should be a balance of the three buckets within each language. In other words, the goal should be to have the same number of opinion, narrative, and informational units in Spanish, and the same number of opinion, narrative, and informational units in English.
 - Is one bucket taught in one language, but absent from the other language? There should be a balance of buckets across the languages. In other words, you should not see all the opinion units in Spanish, and all the narrative units in English.
 - In what order are the buckets taught? Does it make sense to teach opinion in the beginning of the grade level you are mapping? Should there be four narrative units in a row?

- How are the buckets distributed within the content areas? For example, is narrative always taught with Social Studies, and informative with Science?
- Is the same writing bucket taught in both Spanish and English simultaneously? How does that reflect the biliteracy guideline that indicates that the same standard should not be taught in both Spanish and English at the same time? (See Part 1A, Step 2 of the google doc.)
- In what language is the writing bucket introduced? Should students first engage in opinion writing in Spanish or English?
- Are there a variety of sub-genres taught? In what language is the sub-genre introduced?

Now that you have taken all this time to reflect on the writing standards, it is time to go back and look at the standards!

- Before making any changes to the map, take the time to review all of your noted reflections.
- Then, return to the primary source – the standards. What do the standards actually say? What do the standards say, for example, the expectation is for an opinion piece at the grade level you are mapping.
- Set goals for revising the writing, but don't make any changes to the map yet. For example, goals might be:
 - We need to add more informative writing in Spanish social studies.
 - We need to alternate the writing buckets in our units.
 - We need to move opinion to later in the year, given the demands of the standards.

Reflect on Reading

- Open reflection: Look at the **reading** charts. What do you notice? Make sure to digitally record what you notice for later discussion. This is the opportunity to take a critical look at how the standards have been mapped. Note all reflections for further discussion.
- Focused reflection: After the initial open reflection, take some time to make sure to reflect on the following, and take notes on the reflections (at this point – you are noting the reflections, and not yet making any changes to the map):
 - Where are the holes? Which standards are missing? Indicate missing standards with a red dot on the physical chart and in the digital chart. If the standard is missing in BOTH languages, indicate that with a red dot with a circle around it. See below:

Grade 1st grade Percentage 80/20
LITERACY STANDARDS TALLY (Sp/Eng)

Standard	Spanish	English
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4
5	5	5
6	6	6
7	7	7
8	8	8
9	9	9
10	10	10
11	11	11
12	12	12
13	13	13
14	14	14
15	15	15
16	16	16
17	17	17
18	18	18
19	19	19
20	20	20

- Which standards are repeated the most? In which language(s) are these standards repeated?
- In what order are the standards taught? Does the order in which the standards are taught reflect the development of reading skills for the grade level you are mapping? Do certain standards need to be taught before other standards?
- How are informational text units and literary text units balanced? Should there be multiple fiction units in a row in one language? Should Spanish and English focus on literary or informational text at the same time?
- How many standards are taught in each unit? Can students in the grade level you are mapping focus on 5 standards (half the total standards) in the beginning of the year? What about at the end of the year?
- Are all the standards taught in both languages? Is that possible in a grade level that is 80/20, and where there is significantly more time in Spanish than in English? What about if you are mapping 70/30? 60/40? 50/50?

Now that you have taken all this time to reflect on the reading standards, it is time to go back and look at the standards!

- Before making any changes to the map, take the time to review all of your noted reflections.
- Then, return to the primary source – the standards. What do the standards actually say? What do the standards say, for example, the expectation is for determining the central message of a story at the grade level you are mapping.
- Before setting goals for the reading standards, make a decision on how to prioritize reading standards. By this point in the reflection, you have most likely seen some holes (some standards that may have been missing from one language or both) and some standards that have been prioritized over others (standards that are repeated the most in one language or the other). Therefore, it is time to engage in making explicit decisions about which standards should be the priority standards.

5. Revise: Begin the second draft of your map.

Mapping is a recursive process, and revision at this point is critical to creating a robust map that organizes and orders the content, writing, and reading standards in a way that facilitates unit writing and robust instruction.

Go back to the goals you have created and reorganize the standards. This will also require revising some of the storylines. Make sure to re-tally and re-reflect on the standards before moving on.

6. Record, Reflect, and Revise Across Grade Levels

- As you create multiple maps for multiple grade levels, you will want to engage in this process vertically, to reflect on how standards are being addressed and prioritized across the grade levels. You can find a cross-grade level tally sheet in: [2. Digital Tally Sheets for Recording, Reflecting, and Revising the Biliteracy Map:](#)

Step 1B Audit: Record, Reflect and Revise	 https://bit.ly/42vp0or
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WRITING BILITERACY UNITS: BACKWARDS PLANNING

Unpacking Standards into Outcomes:

The purpose of creating outcomes is to use the standards to **identify** the **focus of instruction and formative assessments (created from the outcomes)** that build in increments to get to the deeper understandings set by the standards. In other words, the outcomes establish the path that students follow to show evidence that they have met the standards by the end of the unit.

When we create outcomes, we are creating lists of lesson foci that will allow us to:

- Differentiate
- Scaffold
- Increase rigor slowly and deliberately throughout the unit
- Develop mini-lessons and teaching points
- Develop formative assessments

Process:

1. Select a template in the Google folder based on the language of your unit:
 - a. [Plantilla: Cómo convertir los estándares en resultados](#)
 - b. [Template in English: Unpacking Standards into Outcomes](#)
2. Complete the “**What does it mean**”, and “**What it is not**” portions of the table.
 - When working on Reading or Writing standards: read the same standard for the grade above and below to be sure you reflect your grade-level standard and not those above or below you.
 - When working on SS or NGSS standards, look at the grade-level maps of grades below and above you, as well as [the table describing the progression of the NGSS standards](#), to determine where this standard fits vertically.

For “**What does it mean**”?

- First, focus on the verbs and make sure you know what they mean in this context.
- Look up keywords of the standard to make sure your definition reflects that of the field (for example in reading, the meaning of “theme”; the difference between “retell”, “recount”, and “summarize”).
 - Read the standard objectively and check to make sure you are not assuming you know what the standard means.
 1. For example, in kindergarten there are 2 standards related to the needs of plants and animals (see below). Yet teachers can misinterpret these standards in 2 ways: 1) not including humans as animals; 2) assuming these standards are about living and nonliving things when they are not.
- Example: K-ESS2-2: Construct an argument supported by evidence for how plants and animals (including humans) can change the environment to meet their needs
- K-LS1-1: Use observations to describe patterns of what plants and animals (including humans) need to survive.

iv. Read the specific words in the standard carefully. For example, if the standard uses the word “including” (as in the example in the table below), it does not mean you only do what is included, you should go beyond what is stated.

iv. Describe how students will be engaging with the standard (as opposed to how you will teach it).

For “What it is not”?:

- Interpret carefully what the standard is saying, and state clearly what it is NOT saying.
- Research will help. For example, with the example below in the table, since the standard says students will “recount” versus “retell”, use the meaning of each ([see this website for more information](#)) to write, “not retelling the story again out of order”. You could also write, “not summarizing”
 - Address the instructional shifts of the standards (integration and inquiry) by stating what the teacher should not do, such as lecture, use 1:1 question and answer, etc.

Template for Unpacking Content Standards

Standard: - (1) On Hess’s Cognitive Rigor Matrix, this standard:	
What this standard means	What this standard does NOT mean
- (2) In other words, this standard is about: - (4) This standard expects students to:	- (3) In other words, this standard is not about: - (5) It does not require/expect students to: - (6) Instruction should NOT include: - (7) Comparison to the previous and subsequent grade level (in this strand): For science, use the NGSS Standard Progression
(10) Language students will need (and thus, language to build oracy on):	
Content-obligatory language (domain specific, tier 3)	Content-compatible language (tier 2 language used to connect tier 3 words)
(11) Outcomes (in order from most concrete to most abstract): Students will be able to... •	

Example:

*RL.1.2 Retell stories, including **key details**, and **demonstrate understanding** of their **central message** or **lesson**.*

RL.2.2 Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and **determine** their central message, lesson or moral. *(Add the standard for 1st grade above and the standard for 3rd grade below. [Use this vertical progression chart to help you](#)).*

*RL.3.2 Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; **determine** the **central message**, **lesson**, or **moral** and **explain** how it is **conveyed** through **key details** in the text.*

What does it mean?

- Students will use a more formal approach in **recounting** than they did with retelling.
- Students will sequence events in order. (new to 2nd).
- Students will use precise language, concise word choice, and transition words
- Students will **determine** the central message (big idea of the story), lesson, or moral.
 - The expectation that they determine the [moral](#) of a lesson is new in 2nd grade. A **moral** is a type of message that teaches a reader a life lesson - how to treat people, right or wrong....
- Students will read stories in which there is a central message.
- Students will read stories in which there is a lesson and a moral
- Students will read and explore fables and folktales from diverse culture
- Students will identify and determine a central message or moral with any literary text.

What is it not?

- Not retelling the story out of order
- Not using oral language only to recount
- Not summarizing
- Not explaining the central message or moral of a story. (3.2)
- Not using key details to determine the central message or moral. (3.2)
- Not reading only fables and folktales
- The teacher telling the students the central message, moral or lesson of a story.

Notes on the process:

What does it mean?

1. I first read the 2nd grade standard. Then, I read FL.K.2, RL.1.2 and RL.3.2 and added them to the table.
2. I did some research on the difference between “retell, recount and summarize” and I found the following: ([this website was helpful](#))
 - a. Recount is in the K and 1 standards
 - b. Retell is in the 2 and 3 standards
 - c. Summarize is in the 4 and 5 standards
3. I focused my first 3 bullets on what recount means
4. Then I focused my next 3 bullets on “determine the central message, lesson, or moral”. I researched the difference between the 3 and found that the main differences are between

central message (big idea of the story) versus lesson or moral (lesson the story teaches, like right and wrong, honesty, etc.).

5. In reading the standard, I realized that “including fables and folktales” does NOT mean that is the only thing they read to learn to recount and determine the central message and moral of a story. And so I added that to both “what it is” and “what it is not”.

What it is not:

1. I documented a lot of what I learned about the difference between “retell”, “recount”, and “summarize”.
2. I also referenced what is done in K and 1 with this standard, and what is done in 3rd grade with this standard.

3. Complete the portion of the graph where you brainstorm [content-compatible language](#) associated with this standard. See the example below:

Content-obligatory language students need in English:

- Sequence
- Order
- Transition words (first, second, third, fourth, finally)
- Recount
- Central Message
- Lesson
- Moral

4. Create a list of outcomes students will meet as they work on this standard.
 - Start by determining the depth of knowledge of the key verbs in the standard. While the verb is important, it’s not just about the verb ([as described here](#)), but also the context of the verb in action. In the example we are using, there are 2 key verbs: **recount** and **determine**. ([Use these DOK resources](#), especially the [Hess Matrix of Rigor](#), [Bloom’s Taxonomy](#); and [Bloom’s to write learning objectives](#)).
 - i. **Recount:** Finding the DOK level for “recount” was hard because it is open to interpretation. [But this resource helped](#) and suggests that “recall” is a level 2 in DOK because of knowledge needed to be able to recount.
 - ii. **Determine:** [This document](#) lists “determine” as a level 2 DOK.
 - Consider the skills inherent in this standard. In this example some of the skills include:
 - Using oral language to sequence events in a story
 - Using transition words to narrate sequential events in a story
 - Identifying a central message, or moral

- Using the DOK level of the verbs, create a list that starts with the lowest level of rigor (consult your resources), building up to the actual standard.
 - In this case, because both verbs are a DOK of 2, I will start listing outcomes with verbs from level 1 such as identify
 - I added “with familiar stories” as a scaffold to the first few outcomes, knowing that their success with the first outcomes will lead them to success with the following outcomes.
 - Each of the key parts of the standard has at least one outcome (e.g., using transition words)
- The first 4 outcomes lead up to “recount”, and the remaining outcomes lead to “determine central message, lesson or moral”.
- All the verbs are listed in terms of how they grow in rigor.

Standard	Outcomes
RL.2.2 Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson or moral.	• <u>Identify</u> examples (from familiar stories) of a central message, lesson or moral • <u>Identify</u> examples of recountings of familiar stories • <u>Recount</u> a familiar story using language to indicate the sequence of events chronologically (e.g., at the beginning, the next thing that happened, the story ends when...) • <u>Recount</u> a story, fable and/or folktale with a clearly sequenced ordering of events • <u>Use</u> transition words to indicate the sequence of events in a recounting of a story, fable and/or folktale • <u>Reference</u> key details of the story, fable and/or folktale explicitly in the recount (<i>preparing students for 3rd grade</i>) • <u>Identify</u> the central message, lesson or moral of a story, fable and/or folktale read aloud from given options • <u>Describe</u> how key details of the story, fable and/or folktale relate to/contribute to the central message, lesson, or moral of the story (<i>preparing students for 3rd grade</i>) • <u>Determine</u> the central message, lesson or moral of a story, fable and/or folktale

Resources:

- [Vertical Progressions of the Reading and Writing Standards](#)
- [Deconstructed Language Arts Standards](#)
- [Depth of Knowledge - Rigor Resources](#)

Bloom's Taxonomy

		ANALYSIS	
		Analyze	
	APPLICATION	Appraise	
	Apply	Categorize	
COMPREHENSION	Compare	Communicate	

Guidance Document for Writing Big Ideas: Unit Backwards Design

This guidance document will focus on how to write big ideas for each unit. Before we begin.... a word about language. We highly recommend that you write the unit in the language of instruction. [In your resources here](#), you will find Spanish and English versions of all the Big Idea templates. Match the language of instruction to the language of the templates so that your unit writing is authentic to the language in which you will teach.

What are big ideas and why do we need them?

The biliteracy mapping process we have undertaken is standards based. Standards can be interpreted in different ways, and depending on how they are interpreted, they can be rigorous. In writing big ideas, we will interpret the standards, build a meaningful frame, or context for learning, and succinctly state what students will learn in the unit. While big ideas come from standards, they are different from standards and have a different purpose. Let's explore what they are, why we use them and how to write them.

What are big ideas?

Big ideas are understandings that students develop throughout a unit. These understandings reflect connections made over time that help students organize their thinking. Big ideas are “the important understandings that we want students to ‘get inside of’ and retain after they’ve forgotten many of the details.” (Wiggins and McTighe, 1998, p. 10). The current standards-based era we are in prioritizes critical thinking and problem solving over learning facts and details. Big ideas help us organize and focus our teaching so that

students experience meaningful learning that will endure. Big ideas move us away from activity-based planning to understanding based planning.

In his book titled *Unwrapping the Common Core* (2014), Larry Ainsworth describes the role of big ideas this way (p.55):

Big ideas originate with the educator who thinks deeply, in advance of any instructional planning, about what the end learning goals for students should be for a particular unit of study. The educator then guides students during the unit to discover these Big Ideas for themselves by the end of the unit. This backwards-planning approach to standards-based unit design is an intentional way of aligning standards, assessment, curriculum and instruction.

Although extremely beneficial to educators, ultimately Big Ideas provide the greatest benefit to students because:

- Big Ideas represent those “aha” realizations, discoveries, or conclusions students reach on their own either during or after instruction.
- Big ideas are key generalizations students can articulate in their own words after their “I get it” moment
- Big ideas bring relevancy to students by answering their unspoken mental question: “Why do I have to learn this anyway?” Or “When will I ever use this in real life?”
- Big ideas endure in students’ minds and help them apply those insights to future learning. That is why they are often referred to as enduring understandings”. (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005)

Big ideas, or essential understandings, are statements that describe what students will learn. They are not details, but rather, they are understandings that endure and travel with students into their future learning. Wiggins and McTighe developed the idea of the big idea in their work on *Understanding by Design* (1998), and we are using their work on big ideas to shape this part of unit writing.

Big ideas can be characterized by the following:

- They are enduring understandings (not details)
- They are answers to essential questions
- They establish a rationale for why the learning is important
- They include academic language and are rigorous and worthwhile
- They need at least 2 examples to be big ideas
- They must complete the prompt; **I want my students to learn that....**

Let’s examine some examples and non-examples of big ideas:

Examples	Non-examples
Plants and animals are interdependent.	Birds spread seeds through their beaks.

When reading literary texts, it is important to describe how a narrator's point of view influences how events are described.	One type of first-person narratives is biographies.
Fractions, decimals and percentages are all ways of expressing the relationship of a part to the whole.	Fractions, decimals and percentages.
Geography, climate and the topography of a region influence the life of a community.	The Pueblo Indians constructed homes made of adobe.

Why do we need two types of big ideas?

In our integrated biliteracy units that plan for language, literacy and content, we will write 2 types of big ideas: 1) content (social studies, science or universal theme) and 2) language arts (reading and writing).

Content based big ideas:

The meaningful context that frames the entire unit hinges on the content area standards such as the Next Generation Science Standards or your state's Science standards, the C3 Social Studies Framework and your state's Social Studies standards, or universal themes (relationships, right and wrong, survival, prejudice, courage and heroism, individual vs. society, etc.). This meaningful frame is a hallmark of best practices for second language acquisition and literacy instruction, and it reflects the instructional shifts of the common core language arts standards. In addition to providing the meaningful frame, through identifying big ideas, we also identify the linguistic complexity, language forms and conventions, and vocabulary (WIDA 2012 Resource Guide) required for the entire unit, and as such, the big ideas drive the planning for oracy and building background knowledge at the beginning of the unit and the transfer part of the Bridge at the conclusion of the unit.

Let's analyze the characteristics of content big ideas by reading through the following three examples. As you read through the statement and its examples, think about how they establish a meaningful context for learning as well as how they identify the academic language required for the unit:

I want my students to understand that all living things have a life cycle that includes birth, growth, reproduction and death. (NGSS 3-LS1-1)

1. For example, plants start as seeds which grow into mature plants that produce flowers. Flowers are fertilized by animals like honeybees or by the wind. Once they are fertilized, plants make seeds in the form of fruit. The seed inside the fruit or flower can be planted and grows into a new plant, and so the cycle starts over again.
2. Animals begin life either from an egg or as a baby. Baby animals grow and change and become adults. Adult animals look for a mate to begin the life cycle all over again with new babies. Each type of animal has their own unique life cycle.

I want my students to understand that when a person uses money for a purchase, they either purchase a good (a thing) or a service (what a person does for you). (CA SS 1.6 1)

1. When a person purchases a good, they purchase a material thing such as food, clothing, entertainment, furniture, cars.
2. When a person purchases a service, they pay for something someone does for them such as a wellness check with the doctor, a dental appointment, a haircut, a meal.

I want my students to understand that prejudice is an idea or opinion that disregards basic facts. Often, prejudice ends in discrimination, or biased treatment based on someone's race, gender, religion, sexual identity, socio-economic background, or other characteristics. (Universal theme in Literature)

1. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, any person of Japanese descent living in the United States was considered suspect. As prejudices against them grew, simply because they had a genetic link to an enemy country, the government rounded them up and held them in internment camps.
2. Bullying is often caused by a prejudice against people who are different. Students who pick on a classmate wearing clothing made by her mother and not a certain brand of clothing would be engaged in bullying.

Language Arts Big Ideas

The second set of big ideas we write for each unit come from the language arts standards that are listed on your grade-level standards-based map. As opposed to the content area big idea which you will research and write from scratch, the language arts big idea is easier to write because its purpose is to illustrate the connections that exist between all three sets of standards. Let's look at some examples, and as we do, look for the connections between the content standards, the writing and the reading standards:

I want my students to understand that when reading **informational texts**, it is important to: (RI.1)

- ask and answer questions about key details (RI.1.1)
- describe the connection between two individuals, ideas, events or pieces of information in a text (RI.1.3)
- use the illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas (RI.1.7)
- identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (RI.1.9)

... in order to write an informative **news article** describing the goods and services available in their community (W.1.2)

I want my students to understand that when reading an **informational text**, it is important to be able to (RI.3):

- Ask and answer questions about to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers (RI.3.1)
- Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea (RI.3.2)
- Distinguish their own point of view from that of the author of a text (RI.3.6)
- Use information gained from illustrations (e.g. maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g. where, when why, and how key events occur) (RI.3.7)

...in order to write a **fact sheet** about the life cycle of living things (W. 3.2).

I want my students to understand that when reading **literary texts**, it is important to be able to (RL.5)

- Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text (RL.5.1)

- Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text (RL.5.2)
- Describe how a narrator's or a speaker's point of view influences how events are described (RL. 5.6)
- Compare and contrast stories in the same genre (e.g., mysteries and adventure stories) on their approaches to similar themes and topics. (RL.5.9)

...in order to write a **narrative memoir** about people who have been the target of prejudice (W.5.3).

How do we write big ideas?

Content Area Big Ideas (Social studies or Science)

To craft rich, rigorous big ideas, we need to research and learn more about the topic so that we can write a good big idea that reflects the standards and matches the developmental stages of the grade level we are writing for. Simply rewording the standards into a big idea, or copying and pasting from other sources, is not going to work. Instead, we need to research to understand what the standard is focusing on, and then we need to write a statement and at least two examples that support it.

Writing Social Studies Big Ideas:

Let's look at a sample instructional focus and think about it in relation to state standards:

Fall holidays. (Kindergarten)

**The first question you want to ask is,
“Do my state standards mention
learning about fall holidays in Kindergarten?”**

State academic standards are not usually so specific. They usually point to more general knowledge, like:

The student understands that holidays are celebrations of special events. The student is expected to: (A) explain the reasons for national patriotic holidays such as Presidents' Day, Veterans Day, and Independence Day; and (B) identify customs associated with national patriotic holidays such as parades and fireworks on Independence Day.

This example was taken from the Texas State Standards, available:

<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter113/ch113a.html>

OR

Explain why individuals, groups, issues and events are celebrated with local, state or national holidays or days of recognition (e.g., Lincoln's Birthday, Martin Luther King's Birthday, Pulaski Day, Fourth of July, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving).

This example was taken from the Illinois State Standards, available:

http://www.isbe.state.il.us/ils/social_science/standards.htm

It is important to note that while both standards mention specific holidays, those holidays are mentioned as examples, rather than as the unique focus of the instruction.

So, in looking at our state standards, the focus must be reworked to:

Holidays

Once you have made sure you are focusing on your state standards, you need to think about creating a **big idea**. Big ideas, or essential understandings, outline what you want all students to know and understand when they reach the summative assessment in the biliteracy unit framework (BUF).

Big ideas must be able to complete the sentence, “I want my students to understand that...”

As you can see, “**I want my student to understand that *holidays***” is not a complete sentence. As teachers we need to ask ourselves, “Well, what do we want our students to understand about holidays?” At this point, it is important to go back to the standard, and identify what the standard expects. So, in looking at the standards, the big idea becomes

I want my students to understand that...

We celebrate holidays to remember or honor historical events or people, and there are certain customs associated with celebrating some of these holidays.

The next question we ask is, “Is this a big idea or a detail?”

To check if it is a big idea or detail, we see if we can give an example.

I want my students to understand that we celebrate holidays to remember or honor historical events or people, and there are certain customs associated with celebrating some of these holidays.

For example, on Independence Day, we are celebrating the independence of the United States from England. It is typical to celebrate this holiday with a parade and fireworks.

If you can give two or more examples of the big idea, it is indeed a big idea and not a detail.

When we teach big ideas, we want to make sure to have students study several examples of the big idea. For the big idea above, to truly teach to the standard (which mentions holidays in the plural), it would be essential to study several holidays in order for students to understand that other holidays, not just Independence Day, are in celebration of an event or a person.

When children are taught a big idea through one example only (only studying Independence Day) they only understand the big idea through that example, thereby limiting their ability to generalize and think critically. So, in this example, students may learn that Independence Day is in celebration of a historical event but not understand that Veteran’s Day is also in celebration of a historical event. To really make sure children have understood the big idea, children need to study several examples.

While we started with ***Fall Holidays***, we went through the thinking and refining process to come up with the big idea:

I want my students to understand that we celebrate holidays in order to remember or honor historical events or people, and there are certain customs associated with celebrating some of these holidays.

Writing Science Big Ideas:

If you teach in a state that has adopted the Next Generation Science Standards, the work in creating big ideas has already been done for you. The **Disciplinary Core Ideas** (the orange box) and the **Crosscutting Concepts** (green box) are already written as big ideas and can be used with the BUF. The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) are available here: <http://standards.nsta.org/AccessStandardsByTopic.aspx>

Let's go through the thinking and refining process that we used for the social studies' big idea above, with another big idea:

I want my students to understand that there are different types of weather in different places.

Climate, rather than weather, is often part of state academic standards. When you are writing big ideas, it is very important to think through the vocabulary and language structures you use, because the big idea helps to determine the vocabulary and sentence structures that are the focus of instruction during the oracy building portion of the BUF. (For this reason, it is important to write the big ideas in the language of instruction. For example, if science is taught in Spanish, it would be important to write the science big ideas in Spanish.)

If we want our students to use academic language in both English and Spanish correctly, we need to use it correctly. Although weather (*tiempo*, in Spanish) and climate (in Spanish, *clima*) may be used interchangeably in informal, everyday speech, in the academic context they refer to two different things. Weather is what is going on today, and can change by the hour: It's raining; it's cold; it's sunny, etc. Climate refers to an overall meteorological description, and is associated with place: arctic, temperate, tropical, etc. So, in looking at state standards, the big idea would become:

I want my students to understand that there are different types of climates in different places.

It fits into the sentence frame (I want my students to understand that...). Is it a detail or a big idea? Can we give an example?

For example, it is cold year-round near the poles and warm year-round near the equator.

We can give an example, so it is a big idea.

I always need 2 examples to big idea so that students can generalize and think critically. A second big idea could be:

For example, states in the north have 4 seasons, in which the climate changes: fall is cool, winter is cold, spring is cool and summer is hot.

For example, states like California, the climate depends on the region. In kindergarten, it would be appropriate to only focus on the region in which the students live:

- *Coast: Mediterranean, mild winters, warm summers, summer fog*
- *Central Valley: Hot-summer Mediterranean, dry summers, wet winters*
- *Deserts: Hot, arid, minimal rainfall, extreme summer heat*

- *Mountains: Alpine/highland, cold winters, mild summers, significant snowfall*
California's climate is highly variable due to latitude, elevation, and proximity to the ocean, offering a wide range of weather conditions from sunny beaches to snowy peaks and scorching deserts.

If the unit is for early elementary (K-2), it is probably important to teach about weather as well. Therefore, a second, related big idea could be:

I want my students to understand that each climate zone includes a variety of weather patterns.

And here are the “For examples,” of this big idea:

For example, while it is always warm near the equator, it may be sunny and warm or rainy and warm, depending on the season.

For example, on the coast of CA the winter is mild, the summer is warm and has fog.

So, this unit would have two, related big ideas:

I want my students to understand that there are different types of climates in different places.

I want my students to understand that each climate zone includes a variety of weather patterns.

The teacher would teach to these big ideas by looking at a variety of climate zones and studying the weather in at least two of them.

Some other big ideas related to climate and weather:

I want my students to understand that human life is affected by climate and weather.

Example number 3

I want my students to understand that the earth rotates on an axis and circles the sun.

While this can be found in many state standards and can complete the sentence prompt, it is difficult to come up with a, “For example...” So, this is a detail. Now, this is a very important detail, and one that can be hard for young students to grasp, so we must ask the next question,

“So what?”

We haven’t really discussed the “So what?” question yet, so let’s look at it. Yes, students need to know this detail, but why? And if you, and more importantly the students, don’t know why they are learning it, it probably won’t be fully comprehended. There could be two different big ideas, depending on the state standards:

I want my students to understand that in our solar system, planets and moons move in two ways: rotation and revolution.

This would be the big idea if the unit were focused on how things in space move. By studying all planets and moons in our solar system (or at least several, not just earth), students are brought to the deeper understanding that this is how many things in our solar system move. It is not a detail, but a big idea that is more widely applicable.

OR

I want my students to understand that the rotation, revolution, and tilt of the earth affect the earth in specific ways.

This would be the big idea to use if the standards were more focused on how life on earth is affected by the rotation and revolution of the earth. And, if you are going to discuss how the earth's revolution causes seasons, you need to teach students about the earth's tilt.

Writing Language Arts Big Ideas

The prompt you will use to write your language arts big idea is this one:

I want my students to understand that, when reading _____ texts (Literature or Informational) it is important to _____ (reading standards – rungs on the ladder), to write _____ (writing genre) about _____ (content or universal theme).

Simply add the standards from your map to the prompt above, and your language arts big idea will be written.

Why are examples important?

Examples force us to truly articulate the big idea we are describing, and they ensure that all teachers who teach that big idea have interpreted it in a similar fashion. Consider this big idea:

I want my students to understand that symbols, icons, and traditions of the United States provide a sense of community across time.

- For example, the eagle on our flag is a symbol that represents freedom and _____.

This big idea comes directly from the California Social Studies Framework. When we went to write examples of a symbol, icon or tradition we realized that each member of the team writing this big idea had a different idea of what “sense of community across time” meant, and we struggled with how to complete the statement for the first detail. So, we decided to research the symbols, icons and traditions of the US and then went back to the big idea and rewrote it to include why this statement is important:

I want my students to understand that across time the U.S. has built an identity that represents all people who live in the country. This identity is exemplified through symbols, icons and traditions that illustrate the values of the country (liberty, justice, respect equality) and how the country has evolved over time (CA SS 1.3)

Once we had rewritten the big idea, it was much easier to write the examples, which are below:

1. I want my students to understand that the Statue of Liberty was a gift from France and is an icon of freedom welcoming and embracing immigrants seeking freedom to the United States. Unveiled in 1886, many immigrant groups have faced prejudice in adjusting to life in the United States, and yet the values of acceptance and welcoming immigrants that are represented by the Statue of Liberty have endured (CA SS 1.3.3).
2. I want my students to understand that since its adoption in 1777, the American flag has represented the values of purity and innocence (white color), hardiness and valor (red), vigilance, perseverance, and justice (blue). Today, Americans use the flag in all 50 states and territories, and it is used at all sporting events and government and public places. Regardless of where Americans are, they use the same flag, and this contributes to a common sense of identity. (CA SS 1.3.3)

As you write your big ideas, be sure that your examples represent an accurate interpretation of the big idea and that they are written using the same characteristics of a big idea (a statement that can fit the prompt, I want my students to understand that....). Examples are not activities, but rather, are ways of unpacking the big ideas to make sure the big idea is understood well by all. The examples matter!

How many big ideas for a unit?

All content standards are represented in the big ideas. The ladder and three buckets are represented in the language arts big idea. You may need three to four big ideas to cover all the content standards, whereas the one big idea for the language arts standards (our sentence prompt) suffices. You can also chunk several standards into one big idea. To make sure you are addressing all the standards, cite the standard in parenthesis at the end of each big idea.

Conclusion:

When you write big ideas, you are synthesizing, evaluating, and analyzing. It is hard work that requires you to think critically. Take your time, write a first draft, and then come back to it and revise. Write big ideas with someone else. It is hard to do alone.

Checklist:

Criteria	Notes
Each big idea lists the standards it is addressing in parenthesis.	
All content standards are represented in the big ideas. The ladder and three buckets are represented in the language arts big idea.	
Big ideas are enduring understandings that include why their study is important.	
Each big idea has at least 2 examples.	

The big ideas and examples are written as statements and not instructional activities.	

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