Green Lights & Red Flags

For CCSS Literacy Implementation

BUILDING KNOWLEDGE

- ☐ **Scientific & historical texts** are given the same time and weight as literacy text.
- ☐ **Informational text** is more than 50% of what students read throughout the day.
- ☐ **Information texts** are selected to help students **deepen their understanding** of topics and themes over time.
- ☐ Students are **asked questions** that give them the opportunity to share **evidence from text**.
- ☐ Activities strengthen students' **listening skills** as well as their **speaking skills**.
- ☐ Students **write frequently** about what they are reading and learning, drawing from **evidence in the text**.
- ☐ **Multiple texts**, presented in diverse formats, are used to **integrate information** on a given topic.
- ☐ **Primary sources** of information are used widely
- ☐ **Reading & writing strategies** are presented consistently across all content areas
- ☐ All content area teachers explicitly teach reading & writing strategies essential to **learning and communicating** in their discipline.

- ☐ Literature is the sole or vast majority of text used in ELA classes.
- ☐ All or majority of text is narrative in structure.
- ☐ Texts do not logically develop learning about a specific topic or theme.
- ☐ Teachers present the information in the text rather than expecting students to read for understanding.
- ☐ Text is used as a reference rather than a source of information.
- ☐ No connection between the reading and writing assignment.
- ☐ No instruction is provided in reading or writing strategies appropriate to the content area.
- ☐ A single text is used for all reading assignments.

Adapted from Sue Z. Beers, 2012

EXTRACT & EMPLOY EVIDENCE

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- ☐ Rich & rigorous **conversations are based on text**.
- ☐ Students **closely analyze text** with **evidence** to back up their claims and conclusions.
- ☐ The majority of **text-based questions** focuses **conversations & writing** and require students to utilize **information from text** in their answers.
- ☐ Questions are of high value – they are **worth thinking about** & answering.
- ☐ Questions move beyond what is directly stated and ask students to make nontrivial **inferences from evidence in the text**.
- ☐ **Background knowledge** is used to illuminate the text and not replace it.
- ☐ Students explore how **specific words, details, structure**, **& organization** of text impact the meaning of the text as a whole.
- ☐ Students are required **to use more than one source** of information in their writing, in addition to writing in response to a single text.
- ☐ Students engage in **multiple short research projects** as well as more sustained research.
- ☐ Students can **independently conduct research**, without direction from the teacher.
- ☐ **Evidence from text** is required in writing assignments and oral discussions.
- ☐ The majority of writing emphasizes the use of **evidence to inform or make an argument.**
- ☐ Student writing **analyzes and synthesizes sources** of information and present their findings that include **careful analysis, well-defended claims** & clear information.
- ☐ **Students must have read and analyzed a text** in order to respond appropriately to a prompt.
- ☐ There is a consistent and prevalent focus on **argument, opinion and informative writing.**
- ☐ Frequent, short, constructed-response to **text-dependent questions**.
- ☐ All analytic writing requires the **use of evidence** as students paraphrase, infer and integrate ideas from text.

- ☐ The bulk of questions regarding the text can be answered without reading the text, either because it is not directly related to the text or because students can answer by referencing teacher comments.
- ☐ Questions are primarily centered on students' own experience and background.
- ☐ Students do not have to make connections within the text in order to answer questions.
- ☐ Students write primarily from their own experience or viewpoint.
- ☐ Students do not use a structured process for conducting research.
- ☐ No or little instruction is provided in how to support a claim or conclusion.
- ☐ Writing assignments are not tied to reading.
- ☐ Writing is not routine and continuous.

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Text Complexity

- ☐ All students encounter and are engaged with the **same, grade-appropriate, high-quality text.**
- ☐ **Appropriate scaffolding** is provided to help students understand complex text, based on their individual needs, building toward the goal of independent reading.
- ☐ **Reading strategies are embedded** in the activity of reading rather than as a separate body of material.
- ☐ Students are **required to think critically about the text**.
- ☐ Instruction is often centered on **multiple close readings** in order to develop **deep understanding**.
- ☐ **Teachers are aware** of resources and know how to identify and **evaluate** the complexity of text in their content areas.
- ☐ Students read complex texts from a **wide variety of text structures** (narrative, cause and effect, compare and contrast, etc.)
- ☐ Focus on **words** which are prevalent in complex texts across content areas (those words that constitute the vocabulary of a mature reader), as well as content-specific words **to make meaning from text**.
- ☐ Instruction is provided on how to use **context clues** in the text to determine the meaning of words.
- ☐ **Direct instruction/support** for understanding words students may not be able to figure out on their own using solely the text.
- ☐ **Varied contexts, different meanings** for the same word, are provided for teaching word meaning.
- ☐ Instruction causes students to **think about words** – why / how specific words are used, how words change the meaning of text, varied meanings based on context, and word choice.
- ☐ Instruction is driven by **addressing the diverse vocabulary levels** of students.
- ☐ Students are expected to apply **appropriate academic vocabulary** in writing and in discussions.

- ☐ Students always receive different levels of text based on their reading ability.
- ☐ No instruction is provided for reading strategies to approach complex text.
- ☐ Students are given a summary of the text prior to reading it.
- ☐ No support is provided for students who read below grade level.
- ☐ Majority of text uses a single text structure.
- ☐ Vocabulary instruction is limited to students copying definitions from dictionaries.
- ☐ Vocabulary instruction is disconnected from the text under study.
- ☐ Vocabulary tests simply ask students to match the word with its definition.
- ☐ Words selected for vocabulary work are not related to the content or text being studied.

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