

Odell Education Texas High School Literacy Program

The Odell Education Texas High School Literacy Program inspires creativity, builds knowledge, and enhances the skills students possess through student-centered and student-led analyses of robust texts and topics. Our instructional units empower students to pose questions, inquire deeply, reflect, and evolve as independent thinkers and engaged participants in a learning community.

Program Design

Classes complete three to four Development Units on long form texts or substantive topics throughout the year. The year ends with a student-led research unit called the Application Unit. All units present a combination of optional lessons and activities teachers may choose from to deepen and extend learning to meet their students' needs. Lessons are designed to span 45-90 minutes, but the total length of a lesson depends on how many activities are chosen.

Units

In each unit, students read a series of texts to explore a common theme or a central topic. Students express their understanding of the core body of knowledge and skills built into the unit in a TEKS-aligned Culminating Task, the final assessment of each unit. Culminating Tasks may be written or oral and may be independent or collaborative. Students will create a product (e.g., a video or podcast) or write an essay (e.g., a literary analysis).

Unit Structure

Units are made up of sections, lessons, activities, teaching notes for activities, texts and student materials.

Sections

Each unit is made up of several sections, which generally consist of five to ten TEKS-aligned lessons. Each section has a TEKS-aligned Section Diagnostic formative assessment in which students have the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge. Section Diagnostics include, but are not limited to, writing a paragraph or multiple paragraphs, delivering a presentation, or engaging in an academic discussion, such as a Socratic Seminar.

As each lesson prepares students for success on the Section Diagnostic assessment, each Section Diagnostic prepares students for success on the Culminating Task. Teachers review students' work using Section Diagnostic Checklists to determine students' progress and diagnose learning needs.

Lessons

In the TEKS-aligned lessons, students engage with one or more unit texts to build the knowledge and skills they will need for the unit assessments.

Each lesson has lesson goals, which are questions that focus on the knowledge, skills, and habits important for achieving the lesson objective. Teachers use the lesson goals to monitor student development: What do students know and not know about the texts they are reading? Are students generally on track to read, understand, and express their understanding and knowledge?

Optional lessons provide support and extension in reading and writing. Teachers can choose to enhance core instruction with these lessons to meet the specific needs of their students.

Activities

Each TEKS-aligned lesson consists of a series of instructional activities. Activities are identified as core or optional. Core activities contain essential content that prepares students for the Section Diagnostics. Optional activities allow teachers to provide additional support and extension for learning with content and activities that are integrated into the flow of instruction. Teachers choose a combination of the core and optional activities, and the total length of a lesson depends on how many activities are chosen.

Every activity begins with an activity overview, which includes information about the activity, the materials, and the class configuration necessary to implement the activity. Each activity is written in student-friendly language and provides directions necessary for completing the activity.

Teaching Notes

All units contain robust teaching notes that support teachers by providing important content and pedagogical information. The teaching notes are organized into three categories: About the Author, Concept, Text, Topic; Teaching Strategies and Decisions; and Student Support and Differentiation.

Student Materials

The program contains a suite of materials in a Literacy Toolbox that supports reading, writing, and speaking and listening activities pertinent to the unit's text or topic and instructional sequences. The Literacy Toolbox comprises graphic organizers (tools), reference guides, rubrics, and checklists, carefully designed to support student success throughout the learning progressions of the units. Each material is designed for flexible use. They are available as PDFs and, when editable, as Google Docs.

Texts

All instruction in reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language is integrated with the analysis of complex, grade-level texts. The program includes a range of text formats and genres, including novels, essays, government reports, foundational US documents, court cases, poetry, plays, images, podcasts, interactive graphics, tables, websites, and films. Texts reflect appropriate grade-level complexity, as determined by attention to qualitative, quantitative, and reader and task measures. Texts are deemed texts worthy of students' time and attention because of their significance, diversity, authenticity, and complexity. Texts are accessed in trade books, Unit Readers and through the internet.