

## **Excellence in Language Arts: The Model for Language Arts Instruction in PISD**

### **Instructional Expectations**

**Rationale:** With increased standards, by both federal (NCLB) and state (TEKS/TAKS), consistency in instruction throughout the district can lead to the achievement and maintenance of the high standards currently set. Implementing an instructional model district-wide does not happen immediately. Therefore, a support system of on-going professional development will aid in the implementation of the model.

#### **Model:**

Differentiation is now a critical component of delivering effective and appropriate instruction to all students. The workshop approach to the Language Arts Model instruction provides an excellent structure for differentiation to occur as well as opportunities for intervention. In addition, reading and writing are intimately conjoined. Through this model students individually engage with the reading and writing processes in meaningful ways. Within the workshop model both large and small group instruction can occur; however, within large group instruction, minilessons will be shared as the direct teach component.

**Read aloud, guided reading and writing, shared reading and writing, and individual reading and writing, and teacher/peer conferences** will occur, sometimes simultaneously given the construct of the classroom. Multi-genre reading and writing will be incorporated into every grading period. Within this model there are certain norms for the classroom:

- 1) Processes of reading and writing modeled daily;
- 2) Projects that allow voice and choice in both reading and writing modes;
- 3) Authentic purposes for reading and writing; time to read independently in student choice materials with response (classrooms should build classroom libraries with multiple genres to ensure every student always has something to read)
- 4) Tools which afford students time to write and read (variety of physical material: paper, multi media– film clips, texts...);
- 5) Models which show students a variety of authors' craft; and
- 6) Interactive response opportunities which encourage students to question or clarify when meaning breaks down (with partners, in small groups, or in teacher conferences).

#### **Class Structure (Suggestion):**

##### **A. What It Looks Like** (Primary 2.5+ hours; 2 hours elementary; 1 hour secondary)

- Teachers will have mini-lessons (approx. 15-20 minutes) for each concept that they're teaching followed up by such things as centers, guided reading, guided writing, etc.
- Teacher demonstrates and students watch (teachers as writers; teachers as readers).
- Students practice.
- Teacher summarizes. (Today what I have taught you..., so remember as you're writing/reading....)
- Students then get writer's or reader's notebook and resume previous day's work.
- Teachers move among students doing conferences or small group instruction.
- Share in large group and/or peer share in order to debrief the day.

**B. Instructional Content (for further specificity see [PISD K-12 Components of Literacy](#))**

**Primary**

**Writing**

**Teachers of writing must be writers themselves and share with students their composing process as they take students through all stages of the writing process.**

- Provide explicit handwriting instruction
- Use reading/writing connections or any activity which prompts connections with students.
- Teach sense of story
- write and model writing for their students building upon personal experiences (student and teacher)
- guide students through the writing process regularly (pre-write/plan, develop, revise, edit and publish)
- score holistically and provide meaningful feedback to students
- directly teach strategies found in good writing (focus/coherence/organization/development of ideas, voice, word choice, and conventions)

**Reading**

**Teachers of reading must be readers themselves and share with students their reading process as they take students through all stages of the reading process.**

Primary students are working through the early stages of reading development. Early readers will be “glued to the print” and moving towards fluent reading with an increased level of comprehension.

- Provide a foundational understanding of the alphabetic principle
- Provide explicit instruction in Phonological and Phonemic Awareness
- Instruct with a systematic approach to both phonics and spelling
- Provide differentiated reading instruction in a balanced literacy program
- Instruct students in comprehension strategies and utilizing graphic organizers

**Elementary**

**Writing**

**Teachers of writing must be writers themselves and share with students their composing process as they take students through all stages of the writing process.**

- Teach sense of story
- Use reading/writing connections or any activity which prompts connections with students.
- Students maintain a portfolio of works (see K-12 end of year continuum)
- At least one paper per grading period should be taken through the process– major assignment; students write several minor pieces that stay in draft form (conferences throughout).
- As students master the writing process, move to non-narrative writing

**Reading**

**Teachers of reading must be readers themselves and share with students their reading process as they take students through all stages of the reading process.**

- Incorporate multi-genre reading into every grading period.
- Incorporate a variety of texts and other types of print and non-print media into all activities.
- Student-led discussions will increase as whole class novel units decrease.
- Student reading logs are maintained with a variety of reader responses, including self-reflection

**Secondary**

**Writing**

**Teachers of writing must be writers themselves and share with students their composing process as they take students through all stages of the writing process.**

- Begin with personal narrative (could vary from level to level: memoir, vignette, autobiography...)
- Teach sense of story

- Use reading/writing connections or any activity that prompts connections with students.
- Students maintain a portfolio of works (see K-12 end of year continuum).
- At least one paper per grading period should be taken through the process– major assignment; students write several minor pieces that stay in draft form (conferences throughout).
- As students master the writing process, move to non-narrative writing

## **Reading**

**Teachers of reading must be readers themselves and share with students their reading process as they take students through all stages of the reading process.**

- Incorporate multi-genre reading into every grading period; student choice (classroom libraries, library books...)
- Incorporate a variety of texts and other types of print and non-print media into all activities
- Student-led discussions will increase as whole class novel units decrease.
- Student reading logs are maintained with a variety of reader responses.

## **PISD Additional Instructional Expectations**

In addition to the content of the Curriculum Bundles for each content area, the following instructional expectations serve to emphasize instructional elements that will prepare students to be more successful on state assessments. Both the Curriculum Bundles and the following instructional expectations are to be implemented by PISD campuses.

### **General**

- Scrutinize the master schedule to provide the most allotted time possible for each content area.
- Integrate subjects as much as possible to produce quality instruction and effective time management.
- Provide instructional opportunities **both** with **and** without the availability of resources for references.
- Balance questions of one right answer with open-ended items that require reference support.
- Provide regular opportunities for technology integration in each content area.
- Begin TEKS tutorials in the fall, based on curriculum mastery.
- Begin TAKS tutorials in January, after the periodic assessment.

### **Language Arts**

- Provide **daily** modeling and practice with inferential (deductive reasoning) and reflective thinking (connecting to prior knowledge/experience).
- read alouds that prompt connections – text to self, text to text, text to world (small and large group discussions, book clubs)
- visual aids (variety) and activities/strategies that help organize thinking/information and promote critical thinking
- Include multi genres in reading/writing in each grading period (fiction, nonfiction, functional) and activities/strategies to link across texts (class libraries, library books, books from home....).
- Incorporate open book tasks during each grading period (i.e. science and social studies textbooks for textual support).
- Include open-ended items on assessments each grading period specifically targeting support from the text with a portion of the grade reflecting the “process” (finding support, etc.) rather than 100% for the correct answer.
- Provide for student reflection of best/favorite works and goal setting during each grading period (reading and writing – including multimedia in grades 4-12)