

CSAC Question #3

English Language Arts:

Provide a rationale for diverging from the chosen highly aligned curriculum that occur in each grade.

1. **For example, texts and tasks were modified in the scope and sequence documents for grade three. While these documents describe the unit topic and complexity level of the modified texts, the culminating writing tasks are divorced from the content under study.**

Rationale:

In developing the Pacing Guides for 3rd grade and 2nd grade (and other grades), teachers identified certain sections of texts, some of which were from different units, that better coordinated and aligned with other unit-specific texts in order to meet specific social studies and/or science content standards and texts that are more relevant for English Language Learners.

For example, the 3rd grade pacing guide has three texts that were substituted for three non-fiction texts found in EPIC for 3rd grade. The 2nd grade pacing guide has four texts that were substituted for four non-fiction texts found in RAZ for 2nd grade. These non-fiction texts have comparable Lexile scores (text complexity). The teachers' rationale for the change in texts to non-fiction is to provide students additional opportunities to write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. Some reasons for increasing exposure to nonfiction texts, specifically for our EL's, include developing academic vocabulary and word knowledge, expanding background knowledge, and teaching text features and text structures. Developing the ability to understand non-fiction text is critical for academic success – especially as students get older.

The writing tasks for the 3rd grade pacing guide Unit 2 covering Main Idea and Key Details, and for the 2nd grade pacing guide Unit 2 covering Main Idea and Key Details, have culminating tasks that allow our students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills gained from instruction through the writing activities. These selected texts include a mix of evidence-based writing tasks using the writing process which incorporates the standards and opportunities for students to practice and apply these skills. Unit 2 also includes the Informational Text Performance Task that is aligned with CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.2. for 3rd grade and CCSS.ELA Literacy W.2.2. for 2nd grade.