

## Appendix 2

### **Curriculum including Scope and Sequence Documents, Units, Assessments and Content covered for ELA**

# **REED 601**

## **Reading Program Evaluation Assignment: McGraw-Hill Reading Wonders Grade One**

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## **I. Description of the Program: Curriculum Overview**

### *Identification of key goals and objectives stated by the program publisher and/or authors*

The Wonders Reading Program goals are to engage the learner, provide collaboration, and give the opportunity to manage and assign tasks to his or her students. The program engages students by providing ready made presentations for each lesson in the program, time appropriate lessons, and colorful on-level interesting books. The program allows teachers to be able to communicate with students, parents, and other teachers digitally. The students are able to take part in their learning and take responsibility for their learning. Parents are able to keep track of their child's learning by knowing exactly what their child is learning throughout the year. Lastly, a students' progress can be monitored online with the Wonders Program and each child can be given appropriate work based on his or her abilities.

### *Organization of curriculum*

The Wonders program is an entire systematic language arts curriculum. There are three main sections: whole group reading, small group differentiated instruction, and whole group language arts. The whole group reading section is further broken down into devoted time blocks for Building Background, Listening Comprehension, Word Work (Phonemic Awareness), Phonics, Spelling, High-frequency Word Work and Shared Reading. For any of these sections, teachers are able to go online and customize their own lesson plans through the McGraw-Hill website. For the small group teaching section, there are different books that can be chosen to teach to children who are either approaching, on level, beyond, or English language learners (ELL). The third section, language arts, has a writing and grammar lesson for each day of the

week. The writing lessons are either shared or independent. The Works Program has discrete blocks of time devoted to each instructional component and is not very flexible.

### *Teachers' role*

There is a guide for teachers to follow specifically. However, there is not a specific language the teachers have to follow. It will say, for example, review phoneme blending, give the teacher examples of what to use, but then will give choices on how to implement the instruction. Teachers can Go Digital and use word mats online. The teacher can implement his or her own way to teach a skill, but needs to stick with the examples given. It is important to do that because the phonics is laid out to match the reading instruction portion so you would not want to teach the children different sounds, otherwise they will have trouble with the reading for the week. The Wonders program provides teachers with every part of the language arts instruction model you would need to teach in a day. The teacher is not expected to come up with his or her own curriculum.

### *Students' role in the curriculum*

The phonics and whole group reading sections are laid out for children to have more of a follow along and respond type of instruction. With small group and writing instruction, there is room left for independent inquiry time. There is plenty of materials given for students to work with. The program lends to different learning styles by giving teachers the use of concrete and digital materials.

## B. Instructional Elements

### Identification of Major Instructional Components

Instructional Component	YES	Not Major Instructional Component but included in program
Phonemic Awareness	X	
Phonics	X	
Fluency	X	
Spelling		X
High Frequency		X
Comprehension	X	
Building Background		X
Strategies Instruction	X	
Vocabulary		X
Writing	X	
Discussion		X
Response	X	
Shared/Independent Reading	X	
Read Aloud	X	
Other: Online Component	X	

### Use of Centers, Grouping, Cooperative Learning

Instructional Component/Time Allotted for each Component	Use of Centers	Groupings	Cooperative Learning
Phonemic Awareness- 5 minutes (7%)	Yes	Whole Group	Yes
Phonics 10 minutes (14%)	Yes	Whole Group/Small Group	No
Spelling 5 minutes (7%)	No	Whole Group	No
Fluency 5 minutes (7%)	Yes	Small Group	Yes
Comprehension 10 minutes (14%)		Whole Group/Small Group	Yes
Building Background 5 minutes (7%)	No	Whole Group	Yes
Strategies Instruction	Yes	Whole Group/Small Group	No

Vocabulary 5 Minutes (7% )	Yes	Whole Group/Partner/Small Group	Yes
Writing 5 Minutes (7% )	Yes	Independent	Yes
Discussion	No	Whole Group/Small Group	Yes
Response	Yes	Whole Group/Small Group/Individual	Yes
Shared/Independent Reading 10 minutes (14% )	Yes	Whole Group/Small Group	Yes
Read Aloud 10 minutes (14% )	Yes	Whole Group/Partner/Individual Digital	Yes
Other: Digital	Yes	Individual	No

*Identification of instructional balance and relationships*

- Core Materials- Reading/Writing Workshop books, 15 Literature Big Books, Literature Anthology, Leveled Readers, Workstation Activity Cards, Visual Vocabulary Cards, Resources for Word Work, Teacher’s Edition, Practice Book, Trade Books, Interactive Read-Aloud Cards, Retelling Cards, 42 Teaching Posters, and Assessments- weekly, unit, benchmark, and fluency.
- Supplemental Materials- It is unclear which of the above materials are supplemental because the website did not use this term to describe the materials.
- Independent reading materials- trade books and leveled readers.
- Web-based reading- digital texts and eBooks, that are iPad compatible that tracks print with audio support, Student Workspace online, and School to Home connection.
- Culturally responsive materials-There are culturally responsive materials. There is a Parallel Spanish Reading Program called Maravillas, ELL books for differentiation, and a section called School to Home Page that provides a letter to parents in multiple languages. These letters can be printed.

*Identification of reading materials used*

The Wonders Reading Program includes various materials that enable teachers to differentiate instruction for different reading abilities. The teacher’s guide includes whole group lessons and small group lessons. The small group lessons are targeted lessons for four different

reading levels. The levels are: approaching, ELL, on level, and beyond. There are leveled readers which include four leveled books for each topic. There are leveled Workstation Cards that provide independent practice of weekly skills. This program also incorporates activities for varying learning styles. There are songs for every sound/spelling card and videos for students to watch that teach movements to go with sound/spelling cards. Students can also access the Wonders Program online where they can collaborate with others digitally, play games, and read eBooks with audio and print tracking. Teachers have access to other materials termed “digital content.” They can use videos, photographs, interactive mini-lesson presentations, and interactive graphic organizers.

*Identification of how the curriculum and instruction is culturally relevant and/or responsive*

According to their website, this program includes “trade books that students want to read.” Many of the books feature animals which is relevant for the age group. There is a book about friends, stories about Ruby Bridges, George Washington, and Martin Luther King, Jr. The books seem appropriate for first grade although books about/from other cultures such as Spain, Mexico, etc. did not seem to be included in the first grade program.

*Supports second language learners*

There are materials to support second language learners. There are leveled readers designed specifically for ELL students. The program also includes visual vocabulary cards and story retelling cards. Although the latter two items are designed for the whole class, they will be beneficial for second language learners.

**C. Assessment**

*Identification of assessment instruments that are used*

- Diagnostic purposes- There are placement and diagnostic assessments that can be created and customized for individuals. There are also e-assessments that can be created and questions can be edited.
- Curricular or criterion outcomes- The diagnostic, placement, and benchmark tests assess performance. Learning is evaluated through weekly and unit assessments. There are multiple choice questions and written responses.
- Norming or school policy purposes- The entire program aligns with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) which are all assessed on standardized tests

**Is the curriculum flexible so that diagnostic information regarding students can be integrated into instructional procedures?**

Diagnostic information regarding students can be integrated into instructional procedures. The assessments are used to place students into small groups and to assign leveled readers. The formal assessments are also used to monitor progress, inform instruction, and include remediation plans. During whole-group instruction, the Teacher’s Edition has different stopping points where teachers can informally assess student understanding of the lesson. One stopping point is called Monitor and Differentiate which gives teachers “if...then” statements. For example, in the Teacher’s Edition on page 89, “Can children apply the strategy *make and confirm predictions*? If No, Approaching readers need Reteach activity and ELL readers need Develop activity. If Yes, On Level readers need Review activity and Beyond readers need Extend activity.” For each leveled activity, specific pages are assigned.

Another stopping point is called Leveled Up with Leveled Readers which also gives teachers “if...then” statements. For example, on page 131, if children in the Approaching reading group can read *What a Nest!* with fluency and can correctly answer the Respond to Reading questions, students will be given the On Level version of the week’s book.

**Do the curriculum or criterion outcome assessments measure what is actually covered in the curriculum?**



The assessments do measure what is covered in the curriculum. During Unit 2, Week 2, students read a fantasy story called *Cubs in a Hut*. This week's high frequency words were could, live, one, then, and three. Next, students learn about and practice short u during phonics. The comprehension piece focuses on characters, setting, and events. During writing, students learn about organization, and the grammar skill is on singular and plural nouns. Week 2's assessment tests students on a fresh read (or never before read) story called *Hut or House?* This story is also fantasy. Short u, characters, setting, and events, and some of the high frequency words are assessed. The weekly fresh reads are leveled based on the four reading levels.

**Are the different assessment instruments aligned to provide complementary, useful information for instruction?**

*Identification of appropriateness of assessments*

The Weekly, Unit, and Benchmark assessments are aligned to provide complementary, useful information for instruction. Each formal assessment is used to monitor progress and inform instruction. There are six units and each unit consists of six stories (one per week). At the end of a unit, the Unit Assessment is given. This assessment tests students on various skills that they learned and practiced during the entire unit. It is not very clear when Benchmark assessments are given but from browsing the various materials, these tests appear to assess students on the skills they have been taught after a certain number of units.

The Fluency and Running Record assessments do not align with each other or any other assessments. The passages from each are given based on reading ability and the passages increase in difficulty.

**II. Underlying or Stated Theoretical Premises of Program**

**Identification of how different theoretical dimensions influence the literacy program.**

*Linguistic*

The Wonders Reading Program has parts that resemble the Bottom-Up approach to teaching reading and other parts resemble the Top-Down approach. The Systems of Language table from page 43 of Stephen Kucer's (2009) the "Dimensions of Literacy," will be used to describe the Wonders Reading Program. An example lesson from Unit 2, Week 2 will be used to compare the systems of language to the reading program. The first day's lesson of the week starts with a whole group lesson. The lesson models the Top-Down approach where pragmatic, text type, genre, and text structure are covered. First, the teacher reads a read aloud story to build background knowledge about the topic of buildings. Next, the teacher and students work on oral vocabulary development (the vocabulary words are shelter and materials). Listening comprehension skills are then practiced. The teacher reads from the Big Book about *The 3 Little Daisies* while modeling how to make and confirm predictions. Students have the opportunity to practice.

The second half of the whole group lesson models the Bottom-Up approach. There is a focus on the graphemic up to the semantic systems of language. The teacher engages students in Word Work which incorporates fluency (sound spellings), phonological awareness (rhyme) phonics/spelling (introduction of short u), and high frequency words (could, live, one, then, three). Next, the teacher conducts a shared reading of *Cubs in a Hut*. Many of the words contain the short u sound. After the read aloud, students reread the story again with a partner. While reading, they focus on making predictions, practicing high frequency words, and identifying words with short u.

Differentiated instruction for small groups focuses on many elements of the Bottom-Up approach. During this time, students use their leveled reader to practice phonemic awareness, phonics, and high frequency words (approaching level students); practice phonics (on level

students); practice oral vocabulary (beyond level students); or reread shared reading story, practice phonemic awareness, phonics, and vocabulary (ELL level students).

During shared writing, students learn more about the organization of written texts. *Cubs in a Hut* is the text used for closer analysis. Next, students plan their writing of a fantasy story about building a house out of fruit. The grammar lesson is on singular and plural nouns, which does not reference the story for examples.

It is important to note that the Wonders Reading Program aligns with Kucer's Primary Literacy Demands found on page 32, in table 2.7.

### *Cognitive*

In regard to the types of texts used in the Wonders Reading Program, there are examples of stories that use controlled vocabulary and examples of stories that are authentic and predictable. One of the texts students read is called *Good Job Ben!* The story uses controlled vocabulary, high frequency words, and many words that contain the week's phonics focus (short e). This story is not well written, does not flow easily, and is hard to follow. Without pictures to match the text, readers would be highly confused as to what is happening in the story. According to Kucer (2009), this story would be deemed "unpredictable" (p. 125). Another story, though, that uses controlled vocabulary, high frequency words, and many words that contain the short u sound, is well written. The story has a natural flow and is easy to follow. Although the story is not very predictable based on text alone, the illustrations match the story. Students can make predictions based on what is going on in the pictures; the pictures tell the story. The text is coherent and a clear message is conveyed.

An example of a highly predictable text is "The Pigs, the Wolf, and the Mud." This story does have some high frequency words but there is not a focus on a certain sound or spelling pattern. Instead, the author selected words based on the intentions of the meaning to be

conveyed, used repetitive structure, produced a coherent story, the pictures were parallel with the print, and the genre was familiar (Kucer, 2009, p. 125). Since this text is highly predictable, it is easier for students to apply reading strategies and processes before, during, and after reading.

### *Sociocultural*

When students have developed prior knowledge through experiences over periods of time they are able to absorb the information being presented more easily. They are also able to relate to and make connections to the experiences in the literature being read. It is these experiences, according to Kucer, that shape the motivation for learning to read and write.

### *Developmental*

Students are taught based on the skill level they are at developmentally. Differentiation of instruction is provided based on the given assessments within the program. According to Kucer, learning is a process that will improve over time and requires the child to attempt to use language more often. Children need to know they can accomplish a goal to gain confidence in their reading and writing. By presenting information that is developmentally appropriate and providing time for students to use language in many ways, a child will be able to improve on and build upon his or her knowledge base.

## **Identification how theoretical models may influence the program**

### *Constructivist Models*

Constructivist models influence the Wonders Program. The constructivist model revolves around a person making meaning from what is read and connecting it with his/her prior knowledge. In the Literature Anthology for Unit 3, there is a fictional story called *On My Way to School*. It asks an essential question before reading, “How do we measure time?” Next, it explains that the story is about a boy who is late for school. Then after reading the story, the

students have to make connections to it. Some ideas students should think about: “How is time important in the story? Have they ever been late to school? What types of things make them late?” The next story in the anthology is a nonfiction story called *It’s About Time!* The students are asked to compare the previous fictional text with this nonfiction one. There is also a variety of text genres incorporated in the program, including fantasy, nonfiction, drama, folktale, and poetry to name a few.

### *Literacy Development Models*

The literacy development model focuses on cognitive development. Within this model is the Maturation Theory, which includes waiting until children are ready to begin learning a skill; in this case, reading. The Wonders Program begins teaching reading development and skills in Kindergarten. The literacy development model discusses using Big Books, and the Wonders Program does. Also, there is an importance on environmental print and a literacy-rich classroom. The Wonders Program has materials that support a literacy-rich environment, including visual vocabulary cards and teaching posters. The Wonders Program encourages parents to participate in their child’s academic career to help them succeed. There are letters to parents about the units in the program which can be translated into different languages if needed. There is a home-school connection that parents can view in print or online.

### *Social Learning Models*

Social learning models influence the Wonders Reading Program. The model is present in the way in which the program practices skills and strategies through literacy centers, shared reading, partner reading, small-group guided reading, and writing. There is a great deal of teacher think alouds and practice through I Do, We Do, and You Do within the different

instructional components, such as Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Structural Analysis, High Frequency Words, and Comprehension. Social learning perspectives are also integrated through online learning in a portion of the program called Go Digital. This program takes students through online learning centers with leveled activities, interactive whiteboard activities, and activities that cover all of the major instructional components.

The socio-cultural theory is present in this program. There are many opportunities for teachers to help build background knowledge with students. The program has a nice way of scaffolding the background knowledge for students that are English Language Learners, Intermediate Learners, Advanced Learners, and Advanced High Learners. For ELL the program incorporates pictures to help with building background knowledge. For more advanced learners, the program incorporates asking questions that require more critical thinking skills.

The Social Constructivism Model is present in this program through the varied levels of instruction. It allows for differentiated instruction through scaffolding. There are five levels of differentiated instruction in this program which allows for and supplies teachers with the tools to effectively vary instruction for each lesson grouping. The five levels are English Language Learners, Approaching Level Learners, On Level Learners, Above Level Learners, and Advanced Level Learners. For example, when teaching vocabulary for Approaching Level Learners, the program suggests having the students draw pictures for words. On Level Learners would act out vocabulary and then create a sentence that incorporates the vocabulary based on their actions. Advanced and Advanced High Level Learners would work in partners to draw or cut out pictures from a magazine to illustrate a word. These students would then use their pictures to make a collage. The program allows for all of the students in the class to learn the same concepts but on different levels.

## *Cognitive Processing Models*

The Cognitive Processing Model has an influence on the Wonders Reading Program. The cognitive processing model influences the program through the way in which the material is presented to the students. The Interactive Model is present throughout the program, for example, when teaching in a five day span, the program uses both the bottom-up and top-down approach. The program presents sight words, decoding of words through sounds and sound spellings and word families, which is using the bottom-up approach to read. The program also teaches students how to use context clues, which is teaching the students to use the top-down approach when reading.

Gough's Model is identified in this program by the way in which students are asked to attach sounds to letters, word meanings, and are asked to find meaning in what they are reading. The program provides many opportunities for students to read to associate sounds to letters and word meanings, and provides many opportunities for students to respond during class discussion and at the same time, the teacher can check for understanding. Through discussions, teachers are also able to check for language comprehension.

The Dual-Route Cascaded Model is present in the Wonders Program through the use of computer technology. The program has a Go Digital component that accompanies it. Through this component, students can read books, have books read to them so they can hear how words are pronounced, participate in vocabulary lessons, and answer comprehension questions to gather meaning from what they read. The program also has many assessment tools that help to determine how quickly, fluently, and accurately a student is reading.

### **III. Related Research**

#### *Program-Based Research*

The McGraw Hill publishers state that the program is influenced by the following research reports:

- The Common Core State Standard in English Language Arts
- Developing Early Literacy: Report of the National Early Literacy Panel (NELP). This document synthesizes research on the development of early literacy skills for children from birth to age five.
- Report of the National Reading Panel. Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction: Reports of the subgroups (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development [NICHD], 2000). This source presents an extensive, detailed research review related to five broad categories. In cases where the data were of sufficient quality and uniformity, research results were summarized in a meta-analysis, a method for statistically combining research results across an entire body of research studies.
- Preventing reading difficulties in young children, a review of research on early childhood reading commissioned by the National Research Council (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). This source represents a broad-ranging research summary and review, but without inclusion of specific details of the research.
- Writing to Read: Evidence for How Writing Can Improve Reading. A Report from the Carnegie Corporation of New York (Graham & Herbert, 2010). This document provides a meta-analysis of research on the effects of specific types of writing interventions found to enhance students' reading skills.
- Writing Next: Effective Strategies to Improve Writing of Adolescents in Middle and High Schools. A Report from the Carnegie Corporation of New York (Graham & Perin, 2007). This report provides a review of research-based techniques designed to enhance the writing skills of 4th to 12th grade students.
- Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade: A Practice Guide. (Shanahan, Callison, Carriere, Duke, Pearson, Schatschneider, & Torgesen, 2010). This article contains recommended research-based practices in reading, according to level of evidence assigned by a panel of experts.

*Braunger and Lewis: Identification of key research findings from B&L that support and challenge the practices in the program.*

### *Vocabulary*

When introducing a Unit in the Wonders Program, background knowledge is built by providing vocabulary that pertains to the unit. The vocabulary is introduced and a discussion is



held on the words to build on and give background knowledge to the students. Braunger and Lewis (B&L) (2005) believe “Overall prior knowledge represents the sum of knowledge individuals have acquired as a result of their cumulative experiences both in and out of school. Specific prior knowledge represents the particular information an individual needs in order to understand text that deals with a certain topic” (p. 60). The program would be supported by B&L in how they provide vocabulary instruction.

### *Phonemic Awareness/Phonics*

The quick five minute Phonemic Awareness section is a great introduction to the sound that the children will be working on for the day. The sound that is introduced in this section will be reinforced in every other section that is taught that day. Then, it goes into the ten minute Phonics instruction time where the same letter is reinforced through word building. While B&L find that Phonemic Awareness and Phonics are predictors of early reading success, the research on how to implement the instruction is still undergoing. It was found that by the middle of first grade, a child will acquire the awareness through typical experiences at home and school. While it is good to have these two sections in the reading curriculum, B&L do not find it necessary. However, because the program carries the skills across all the dimensions, this is an important piece to the success of the program.

### *Fluency*

Fluency is reinforced during the small group shared reading time. Students are reading with children who are at the same independent reading level and are using books that are designed for their level. The books use words that children are able to decode. By providing children time to read books that are developmentally appropriate, children are able to build fluency. B&L believe fluency can be increased through repeated readings, listening and oral

reading with two texts, and timed reading of short text. The program uses all of these; however, just the repeated reading is used during instructional time. The other two are given when children are being assessed.

### *Writing*

After the Shared Reading section is taught for the day, there is a Shared Writing lesson to go along with the book that was read during Shared Reading. B&L believe teaching a student to be a good reader is just as important as teaching a student to be a good writer. When a student can write well it enhances his ability to read. The Wonders Program enforces the importance of the writing process in every writing lesson to ensure that students have a firm grasp on the process and why the process is important.

### *Comprehension*

Teaching Strategies for Effective Reading Instruction are shared reading, read aloud, oral reading, explicit strategy instruction, explicit word study, guided reading, independent reading, and writing (B&L). The Wonders Program incorporates all of those components in one day. B&L said, "Giving children the opportunity to talk about the text many times allows for better comprehension." By connecting the content throughout the different teaching strategies, it allows students enough opportunities and time to talk about the skill being taught for the day.

B&L believe word knowledge strongly influences a student's comprehension of a text. The Wonders Program incorporates word knowledge right at the beginning of each lesson so that children have the foundational words defined. This allows students to be able to understand the text that is going to be read to them that day.

### *Independent Research on the Program*

No significant independent research on the Wonders Reading Program has been published at this time. Using Towson University's Cook Library's Research Database, numerous

searches were conducted that yielded no results. Search terms included: “McGraw Hill Wonders Reading Program,” “McGraw Hill Reading,” “McGraw Hill,” “Basal Reading,” “Reading Wonders Program,” “Reading Wonders,” “Reading Programs,” and “Wonders.” The date of publication was narrowed down to 2007-2013. After a [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) search, one authentic article was found; other results produced opinions and individual state’s Program Reviews. For example, Indiana’s Department of Education created a rubric to evaluate the Wonders Reading Program.

#### **IV. Critical Evaluation of Program**

##### **Strengths of the program**

- There is a guide throughout the teachers’ manual for different leveled learners which assist the teacher in knowing what to do next if a child is struggling or succeeding with a particular concept. It helps the teacher reteach the concept or advance the concept.
- The program has a good mixture of texts which helps to make reading fun for students.
- The Program has a nice digital component that accompanies the program, which enhances the learning that students are able to take part in and increases parental involvement.
- Workstation activity cards make it easy for the teacher to set up literacy centers within the classroom.
- All of the language arts components are aligned with each other to advance students learning.
- The teacher does not have to make up their own lessons, everything is provided for him or her.
- The program is research based and aligned with the Common Core.
- It addresses the five components of reading.
- There is differentiated instruction with small group instruction provided daily.

- Students can access the reading books online and from any location (phone, iPad, PlayStation, etc.).

### **Weaknesses of the program**

- Wonders does not leave room for much teacher creativity.
- It is a brand new program that does not have research on whether it is effective in the classroom yet.
- The goals and objectives are stated, but they are not stated clearly.
- There needs to be better guidelines on how to format small groups based on assessments.
- It could provide more opportunities for students to work collaboratively.
- Since it is aligned with the Common Core and is new, it might become a thing of the past in a couple of years because education is constantly changing and so are educational best practices.
- It does not provide much time for student selected reading materials and student selected writing topics. Reading and writing activities are assigned by the teacher. Giving students less choice leads to decreased motivation to learn and decreased engagement in the lessons and activities.

### **Identification of cautions, concerns and/or complaints regarding the program**

- It would be beneficial if the program included Pre-Kindergarten.
- There is a lot of teacher preparation required in the forefront before teaching a lesson.
- Teachers could become too comfortable with the material and not supplement their own creative ideas and materials.

### **Recommendations for adoption of the program (with any key caveats)**

We would recommend this program to elementary school teachers. We feel that even though the program is brand new, it aligns itself very well to the children's learning styles of today and it is motivating for them. Children are very technology savvy and that aspect of the program is motivating to them. It provides many opportunities for students to be engaged digitally through whole group instruction and independent practice. Our country has shifted toward Common Core Standards. The Wonders Program is aligned directly to those standards to enhance student learning. It would be great for new teachers as well. Teaching to the Common Core is still very

new and teachers are left to make up a great portion of their lessons. With having this program in schools, it would make the transition for them smooth.

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