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# CURRICULUM AUDIT

Dr. Gravity Goldberg &  
Laura Sarsten  
Board Meeting  
Pocantico Schools  
December 6, 2016



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# A BIT ABOUT US...

Gravity

- former teacher and professor
- author of many professional books and articles
- doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction
- literacy consultant

Laura

- former teacher
  - classroom was a labsite and research site
  - highlighted in several professional books
  - literacy consultant
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*“Learning something new means questioning those things we do well automatically. It means questioning our tacit expertise...it is the willingness to risk clumsy movements that allows us to become explicit and intentional about what we do. And that, as far as I can tell, is how we can best honor the mystery of learning in our teaching.” - Wagner*



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# RECOGNIZING STRENGTHS

- All grade levels make reading and writing a true priority in their classrooms
  - The current curriculum addresses many of the State Standards
  - There is an eagerness, openness and commitment to the work
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# HOW INSTRUCTIONAL CHANGES CAN BRING JOY AND



## REENERGIZE OUR PRACTICE

- Curriculum articulation and development allows for ongoing collaborative dialogue among teachers and colleagues
  - Helps create a culture that values continuous reflection and refinement
  - Developing skill based units allows us to teach skills/strategies that are portable and can be applied widely
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Meet individually with grade level teams to discuss what the current curriculum is. What areas do we want to preserve?

Analyze to uncover any gaps, redundancies, or overemphasis on particular standards to identify which areas we want to further develop or revise

Ongoing supportive professional learning to ensure successful implementation of the newly developed curriculum



Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

Step 4

Step 5

Align the current curriculum to the State Standards & look more closely at current research surrounding best practices

Work collaboratively to design a skill-based curriculum that we all can implement with joy and commitment

# TAKING A CLOSER LOOK AT THE AUDIT

Unit Name	Timeframe	Unit Focus & Description	Reading Standards	Addressed in Current Curriculum?
Reading Street: Review My World Genres Addressed: realistic fiction, introduce fable, and a folktale, photo essays	6 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Beginning Sounds</li> <li>- Letter Formations</li> <li>- Parts of Speech</li> <li>- Sentences: Declarative and Exclamatory</li> <li>- What does the sentence look like?</li> <li>- Overarching social studies theme with the reading</li> <li>- What's around you at home</li> <li>- What's around you in your community</li> <li>- What's around you in school</li> <li>- What's around you in your neighborhood</li> </ul>	<b>Reading Standards: Literature</b>  <b>Grade 1 students:</b>  1. Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	Yes
Unit 1: Animals Tame and Wild Genres Addressed: Realistic Fiction/Fairytale Literary Non-fiction 2 Animal Fantasy	6 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Foundations/Phonics review from Reading Street</li> <li>- Reviewing digraphs</li> <li>- Vocabulary: "Amazing Words" embedded in the texts</li> <li>- Adjectives: what are examples</li> <li>- Nouns</li> <li>- Verbs</li> <li>- Characters</li> <li>- Setting</li> <li>- Plot</li> <li>- Main Idea &amp; Details</li> <li>- Cause &amp; Effect</li> <li>- Realism vs. Fantasy</li> <li>- Strategies Taught:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monitor and Clarify</li> <li>- Summarize</li> <li>- Visualize</li> <li>- Story Structure</li> <li>- Text Structure</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2. Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.  3. Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.  4. Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses.  5. Explain major differences between books that tell stories and books that give information, drawing on a wide reading of a range of text types.  6. Identify who is telling the story at various points in a text.	Yes  Yes  Yes  Yes  Yes  Yes, but can be further developed

Audit

Aligned to the Standards

# SUGGESTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

## Standards:

- Looking at the specific grade level conventions expectations in order to map out where to teach which skills. Conventions are specific grammar/punctuation rules that are taught in context. Each unit can address specific skills that are then expected in students' written work.
- Build in more frequent shorter-time framed writing opportunities (writing about reading, reflections, quick responses, goal setting ) for students in addition to the more formal writing experiences.
- Plan for different publishing platforms to integrate technology/audio recordings & the arts.

## Research- Based Practices Suggestions:

- "Students read more, understand more, and are more likely to continue reading when they have the opportunity to choose what they read. In a 2004 meta-analysis, Guthrie and Humenick found that the two most powerful instructional design factors for improving reading motivation and comprehension were (1) student access to many books and (2) personal choice of what to read" ( as quoted in Allington, 2012)
- Research has demonstrated that access to self-selected texts improves students' reading performance (Krashen, 2011), whereas no evidence indicates that workbooks, photocopies, or computer tutorial programs have ever done so (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998; Dynarski, 2007).

## Independence & Student Ownership:

- One of the revisions of the standards indicates that students pick "self-selected" texts of their interest, thus resulting in moving away from basal readers or chosen whole class chapter books and more towards self-selected independent reading choices.
- Students have choice as to which topics/stories they want to write, in order to support and nurture independence and help develop the writer not the writing. |

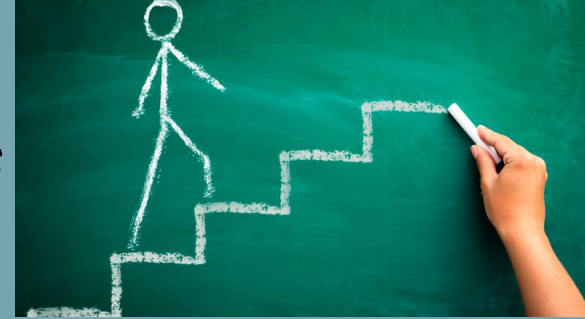


# WHY A SKILL-BASED CURRICULUM?

- It is naturally adaptable and flexible
- Provides consistency & builds grade level to grade level
- Skills are portable and transferable
- Provides freedom and choice to teachers
- More easily aligned to standards

## NEXT STEPS

- Begin to build a framework to include curriculum development in Reading
- Plan a Summer Institute to collaborate with teachers in the development of the Reading & Writing curriculum
- Continue to have ongoing supportive professional learning opportunities for teachers to create and collaborate



# Teachers' Perspectives and Experiences





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WWW.DRGRAVITYGOLDBERG.COM

DR. GRAVITY GOLDBERG

[GRAVITY@DRGRAVITYGOLDBERG.COM](mailto:GRAVITY@DRGRAVITYGOLDBERG.COM)

LAURA SARSTEN

[LAURA@DRGRAVITYGOLDBERG.COM](mailto:LAURA@DRGRAVITYGOLDBERG.COM)

[WWW.DRGRAVITYGOLDBERG.COM](http://WWW.DRGRAVITYGOLDBERG.COM)