

Language Arts Newsletter:

February 2019



Welcome!

Agency Update

I hope you have all had a smooth start to this new year. Snow days are simultaneously our best friends and arch nemesis! That attitude also applies to testing; while we appreciate the data we receive from testing, it is often outside of our routine and requires time away from the engaging work we often do with kids. As we move into testing season, be mindful of how you balance testing and practice with the work that truly engages and benefits our students. We know that our kids need strong reading strategies and exposure to complex texts; but they also need deep pools of background knowledge and tier 2 and 3 vocabulary. While each of these need to be explicitly taught, they must then be woven together into authentic learning activities for students. Take-Away: Don't forget to have fun!

We know that many of our students come to us reading below grade level. My colleague, Cindy Hadicke, has traveled around Kansas presenting "The Science of Reading" to over 1,000 teachers Pre-K through 3rd grade! In an effort to better support secondary teachers who work with very low

readers, I am continuing Cindy's reading presentation but gearing it toward the secondary teacher. Right now, I only have two presentations scheduled, but I would like to arrange for more across the state. See more in the "Professional Learning" Section.

As we move into testing season, there is usually a trend to have students read more. While our assessment is mostly a reading exam, I can not stress enough the importance of consistent, thoughtful, and analytical writing in your classrooms. Do not sacrifice writing to prepare for a reading-based test. We know that one of the best ways to improve comprehension is by having students write about what they read. Please continue to have your students engage in meaningful writing this spring.

As always, if there is anything I can do to better serve you, please let me know!

-Sarah Perryman

Professional Learning Opportunities

Online Learning: **February: Growing your Writing Program**

(url for course: <https://learning.ksde.org/course/view.php?id=145>) (key: FEB2018)

Online Webinar: February 20 3:30-4:30 pm

Now-March 2019: Apply for the Flint Hills Writing Project

Learn more at <http://fhwp.org/> Apply [here](#)

February 18, 2019: Reading Instruction for the Secondary Teacher

Presentation given at Greenbush North; Learn more and register by going [here](#) (see LiNK → KSDE: 6-12)

March 1, 2019: Reading Instruction for the Secondary Teacher

Presentation given at Greenbush South; Learn more and register by going [here](#) (see LiNK → KSDE: 6-12)

March 4-5, 2019: Kansans Can and Do! Symposium in Manhattan, KS

Learn more and register by going [here](#)

April 4, 2019: KSDE Civic Engagement Conference

Learn more and register by going [here](#)

****Have you ever wondered how your schools' resources measure up to the rest? Visit <http://www.edreports.org> to review their evaluations of the many instructional resources schools have available to them today.**

****Have you ever wondered what curricular resources were being used across the state? Greenbush recently surveyed curriculum leaders to find out the answer to that popular question. You can access [elementary](#) and [secondary](#) results.**

Standards and Assessment News

In order to better support teachers, I would like to use this section to highlight not only new resources on the KSDE ELA page, but also, to highlight a teaching structure every month that could be beneficial to ELA practitioners across the state working with all grade levels.

Structure of the Month: Underlining and Highlighting (.50 Effect Size)

One way to help increase student engagement, interaction, and retention when reading is to have students mark their texts by underlining and highlighting. These skills can benefit students of all ability levels and can easily be done with paper/pencil and digitally. Check out this [resource](#) from Illinois Wesleyan University on how to mark your text.

ELA News:

As an agency, we are tasked with reviewing our standards every seven years. Our handwriting standards are due for review, and so I would like to start this process of review by sharing a Google Form. While we are obligated to review the standards, we are not required to make changes. Thus, our first goal is simply to collect comments from you all and any other stakeholder. Please take some time to review our standards and comment as you see necessary. Once comments have been collected, I will assemble a team to review the comments and determine the extent of work needed to address the comments. You can access the form [here](#). The form will **close at the end of February** and comment review will take place by the summer. If you have any suggestions regarding future ELA resources/projects, please let me know so I can work to meet your needs.

Agency News:

We are beginning to plan for our two summer institutes for professional learning. The first institute will be held in Emporia in June while the second will be held in Pratt in July. Stay tuned to further details regarding exact location and time. The theme for this year's institute is "Kansan's Can Ignite". Sessions will be centered around the four redesign principles: student success skills, personalized learning, community and family partnerships, and real world application. If there is an ELA topic you would like to see presented, please let me know. Additionally, if you have a topic you would like to share with your peers, please let me know so I can assist you with applying to be a paid presenter!

Assessment News:

As we move into third quarter, make sure you set aside time to complete the third interim assessment. The third assessment can be given **between February 4th and February 15th**. Remember, once students have taken all three interims, their final predictive score should accurately forecast their KAP performance. Also, take time to work through the technology practice with your students to help them utilize the built-in features of KITE. You can access the technology practice by clicking [here](#).

Good Things

The Kansas Masonic Foundation – They offer scholarships to many Kansas Students wishing to attend two year or four year universities. Learn more about this opportunity for your Juniors and Seniors by going [here](#). They also sponsor a book club that offers incentives and recognition for students to improve their reading. You can learn more, and get involved, by clicking [here](#).

Kansas Poetry Out Loud is hosting its state competition March 2, 2019 at Salina South High School at 1 pm.

For more information, contact:



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