

## Practical Approaches to Developing Stand-alone Curriculum

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This featured article shares practical approaches to developing stand-alone curriculum using the myriad of resources provided by the New York State Department of Education to ensure that stand-alone instruction provides opportunities for multilingual students to acquire the English language needed for success in core curriculum content areas and meet the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards. We outline the curriculum development process we have used with educators to develop thematic instructional units based on grade-level and content-rich big ideas that are aligned to standards with an explicit focus on academic language and literacy development. We provide examples of templates and a thematic instructional unit which culminate into a language production project to show how backward design principles can be used to align content and language standards, assessment, and instruction. Finally, we offer suggestions for engaging in collaborative review and reflection to empower English-as-a-new-language (ENL) teachers to develop a year-long curriculum for stand-alone classes.

*Keywords:* English language development, stand-alone ENL, curriculum development, Advanced Literacies, multilingual learners

**With** increasing numbers of multilingual learners (MLLs) in U.S. schools, education policy and practices have adapted to provide access and opportunity to a diverse student body. In many states, instructional models to teach MLLs include designated English language development (ELD) classes, along with academic content classes with an integrated language development component. In New York State (NYS), our context, regulations require schools to provide both “integrated” and “stand-alone” instruction in English as a New Language (ENL). Integrated classes, in which there is a dual focus on conceptual and linguistic development, typically occur in English language arts (ELA) classrooms, or during the ELA block in the elementary setting. These classes are required to be co-taught by an ELA or classroom teacher and an ENL teacher, or by one teacher who has certification in both areas. Stand-alone ENL is a required class for MLLs who are at the

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Entering and Emerging levels of proficiency, and is taught exclusively by a NYS certified ENL teacher. New York State Education Department (NYSED) Commissioner's Report Part 154-2 (2019b) defines each of these educational contexts as such:

Integrated ENL: Students receive core content area and English language development instruction which includes home language supports and appropriate ELL scaffolds. Integrated ENL instruction is a co-teaching approach carried out by a combination of NYS certified ESOL and content area teachers. Dually certified teachers may also teach Integrated ENL.

Stand-alone ENL: Students receive English language development instruction taught by a NYS certified ESOL teacher in order to acquire the English language needed for success in core content areas (p. 3).

In NYS, curricular resources are provided for integrated ENL (e.g., NYSED, n.d.), but similar resources are not provided for stand-alone ENL. All NYS districts are charged with following the state standards, but curricular decisions are local. In the case of stand-alone ENL, this can mean that each teacher creates their own curricula, leading to vast discrepancies from school to school and district to district. This article aims to take initial steps to provide clarity about curriculum, instruction, and assessment for stand-alone ENL so that we may begin to see a more standard model of instruction in NYS schools. Throughout this article, we use the term "stand-alone ENL" and "ELD" interchangeably as the former is the term used for English language acquisition instruction in New York State.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

If all curricula are to be developed locally, then the educators developing the curricula need a strong foundation in best practices in both curriculum and instruction. In reviewing the literature related to this topic, we ask, "What are best practices for stand-alone, or ELD, curriculum and instruction?" Consequently, we found few empirical studies related to stand-alone ELD specifically, and instead, several overarching syntheses from which guidance can be formulated. In this literature review, we summarize the findings of the research syntheses in relation to our work in creating practical curricular frameworks for stand-alone instruction.

In their 2013 research synthesis on ELD programming and instruction, Saunders et al. (2013) acknowledged the lack of research specific to stand-alone ELD instruction. They argued that ELD instruction in K-12 American schools has been under-researched, and therefore guidelines tend to be more theoretical than evidence-based (p. 13). Despite the limited research specific to ELD/stand-alone, they reviewed six research syntheses and meta-analyses to determine more general best practices and then applied them to the ELD/stand-alone context. These scholars made the distinction between the goals of integrated (sheltered) ENL and stand-alone ENL clear: "In ELD instruction, language is the primary objective and content is secondary. In sheltered [integrated] instruction, content is primary and language is secondary" (Saunders et al., 2013, p. 14). Note, however, that in both settings, the integration of language learning and content learning is essential. In their synthesis of the research, Saunders et al. (2013) provided programmatic as well as curricular and pedagogical guidelines. For the purpose of this article, we focus solely on the curricular and instructional guidelines. Specifically, Saunders et al. (2013) asserted that ELD instruction should (a) explicitly teach forms of English (e.g., vocabulary, syntax, morphology, functions, and conventions); (b) emphasize academic language as well as conversational language; (c) incorporate reading and writing, but should also emphasize

listening and speaking; and (d) integrate meaning and communication to support explicit teaching of language. Additionally, they shared guidelines for ELD instruction, such as stressing the importance of language objectives, the primary use of English during ELD instruction, the inclusion of carefully planned and executed interactive activities among students, corrective feedback on form, and attention to and the incorporation of communication and language learning strategies.

A more recent research synthesis by Weiss et al. (2022) provides several overlapping guidelines for stand-alone ELD, but succinctly groups them into four fundamental principles of stand-alone ELD instruction, around which stand-alone curricula should be crafted: (a) purposeful communication, (b) disciplinary practices, (c) language focus, and (d) thematic units. When taken together, these principles result in a curriculum focused on engaging and relevant academic questions, in which forms and functions of English are studied in the context of engaging texts, and with the English language used in authentic and productive ways. This is in stark contrast to a traditional style of language instruction in which students learn *about* the language instead of learning *to use* the language for communicative purposes (Saunders et al., 2013). Connecting back to our NYS context, as defined by CR-Part 154, stand-alone ENL is intended to develop “the English language *needed for success in core content areas* [emphasis added]” (NYSED, 2019b, p. 7). This means that the focus of stand-alone classes should be academic and closely connected to the language of the Humanities and STEM fields. Lastly, and importantly, the authors assert that in a stand-alone ELD course, attention to the learners must be at the forefront of curricular decision-making with considerations of students’ social emotional development, student choice, and engagement (Weiss et al., 2022). The best practices suggested by Saunders et al. (2013) and Weiss et al. (2022) are grounded in research findings from the past two decades. Among this body of research and notable to our NYS context, the Institute of Education Science (IES) What Works Clearinghouse released the 2014 report “Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School” (Baker et al., 2014) to provide recommendations based on relevant research findings with high efficacy. While these recommendations are not specific to stand-alone ELD curriculum and instruction, they provide strong guidance regarding best practices for teaching MLLs. The evidence-based recommendations are: (a) teach a set of academic vocabulary words intensively across several days using a variety of instructional activities; (b) integrate oral and written English language instruction into content-area teaching; (c) provide regular, structured opportunities to develop written language skills; and (d) provide small-group instructional intervention to students struggling in areas of literacy and English language development. Le Menestrel and Takanishi (2017) proposed guidelines that echo the IES recommendations with attention to explicit literacy instruction, academic vocabulary development, and the integration of academic content learning with language learning.

To implement these guidelines, we can look to the work of Lesaux and Galloway (2017) and Wolf-Greenburg et al. (2022). Specifically based on the body of research featured in the IES report (Baker et al., 2014), Lesaux and Galloway (2017) developed the Advanced Literacies Framework that has been adopted by the NYS Education Department to implement evidence-based practices in a curricular framework. Wolf-Greenburg et al. (2022) provide implementation guidance specific to stand-alone ENL. Reinforcing the findings from Saunders et al. (2013), they wrote, “The basis for building an ELD curriculum is precisely the same as any content curriculum. *The distinguishing feature of an ELD curriculum is the linguistic focus* [emphasis added] aligned to the academic content learning objectives” (p. 5). Their recommendations emphasize the importance of backward design, working from state standards in both content and language, and then connecting the standards with the summative assessment. The work that we present in this article draws

from the Advanced Literacies framework proposed by Lesaux and Galloway (2017), demonstrating how it can be applied to the stand-alone/ELD setting.

## CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

In a previous NYS TESOL Journal article (Gregory & Oliver, 2024), we advocated for the prioritization and support of the development of a stand-alone ENL curriculum that is aligned to the NYS Next Generation Learning Standards (NGLS) in English Language Arts (ELA). Specifically, we argued that NYS school districts need to ensure that the curricula for stand-alone instruction meets the expectations as defined in the Glossary of Terms: “An instructional model in which students received English language development instruction taught by a NYS-certified teacher of English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) to *acquire the English language needed for success in core content areas* [emphasis added]” (NYSED, 2019b, p. 7). We asserted, “Stand-alone English language development courses need to be as carefully designed as math, science, ELA, and social studies courses, with curriculum maps aligned to standards and assessments, and the resources to support academic English teaching and learning” (Gregory & Oliver, 2024, p. 17). Since the release of that publication, we have received positive feedback from the field on our initial alternative perspectives piece, including sentiments of agreement from ENL teachers, school leaders, and teacher educators alike. In this follow-up article, we offer some practical ways to approach curriculum development with tools, resources, and examples of curricular units created by teams of ENL teachers with whom we have worked collaboratively. In doing so, we aim to continue the conversation and empower teachers to elevate the status of stand-alone instruction so that they can indeed help multilingual learners “acquire the English language skills needed for success in core content courses” (NYSED, 2019b, p. 7).

As a starting point, we address the ways some of our findings from a survey<sup>2</sup> we administered (related to stand-alone instruction in NYS) has informed our work with ENL teachers and school leaders around curriculum development. Our initial intention was to conduct research to learn more about what stand-alone ENL looks like throughout NYS. We polled ENL teachers across the state to inquire about their experiences with stand-alone curriculum, instruction, assessment, and program models. Survey participants were recruited through our graduate student alumni network, as well as local and statewide organizations for ENL teachers. Unfortunately, we had a very low response rate ( $n=14$ ) and many who participated were our former students. These two factors limited the usefulness of the data gleaned from the survey, so we did not complete a full research study based on that data. However, we found it informative to our thinking about ENL stand-alone curriculum, or lack thereof. Most respondents indicated that there is no set curriculum for stand-alone ENL classes in their school and provided numerous examples of how they design instruction for their stand-alone ENL classes. This absence of a pattern among responses confirmed our hypothesis that ENL instruction runs the gamut from homework

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<sup>2</sup> The [Stand-Alone Instruction Survey](#) was the instrument we used to gather information about stand-alone instruction. It was sent out to ENL teachers who responded to a call for participants through the Hudson Valley and Capital Region R-BERNS and the Capital Region ENL Roundtable. Each participant gave informed consent prior to responding to the survey. This study was approved by [institution’s] IRB (approval # 24-25.1 E).

help to grammar-based lessons to New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) prep and skills-focused activities (e.g., writing support, literacy development). These results, while limited in number, established the impetus to take on the work of helping schools and departments to evaluate their stand-alone ENL programs' curricula, instruction, and assessment practices.

We acknowledge the fact that "each school district in New York State maintains complete local control over its curriculum and is free to determine the content, concepts, and skills necessary in helping students make maximum progress toward the grade-level goals defined by the standards" (NYSED 2019b, p. 5), and as such, we are not advocating a uniform curriculum be used across the state. Rather, we seek to help all educators come to a shared understanding of what stand-alone instruction and assessment should look like, and how to develop a curriculum—following guidelines established in the literature about ELD curriculum—that helps multilingual learners to integrate content learning with language and literacy development so that they have access and opportunities to participate in grade-level instruction in these core content areas.

### **OUR APPROACH TO STAND-ALONE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT: HELPING TEACHERS USE NYSED RESOURCES**

Recognizing the need for dedicated time for stand-alone curriculum development, we began this work as a workshop series through one of the Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) of New York State. Twelve ENL teachers from five different school districts participated in the five-day project where we took them through the process we outline below. These teachers worked together with others from their school districts, and at times, with teachers from other districts who taught similar grade levels. In this section, we provide details about our approach to curriculum development with this group of teachers and the resources we used with them.

As we noted in our previous article (Gregory & Oliver, 2024), there are a myriad of resources to assist teachers in developing standards-aligned curricula that have been commissioned by the New York State Department of Education (NYSED). In our work with in-service and pre-service teachers, we take a principled approach to curriculum development, starting with "the why," and introduce one such resource to them—the Advanced Literacies framework. Lesaux & Galloway (2017) define "Advanced Literacies" as "the skills and competencies that enable communication in increasingly diverse ways and promote the understanding and use of text for a variety of purposes" (p. 1). This evidence-based approach to literacy development is grounded in four Hallmarks:

Hallmark 1: Work with engaging texts that feature big ideas and rich content;

Hallmark 2: Talk/discuss to build both conversational and academic language and knowledge;

Hallmark 3: Write to build language and knowledge; and

Hallmark 4: Study a small set of high utility vocabulary words and academic language structures to build breadth and depth of knowledge.

Using this framework, we begin with a shared understanding of what MLLs need in terms of instruction to develop the requisite language and literacy skills to meet the NYS

NGLS and be successful in core content courses. In this way, we offer ENL teachers a lens through which they can approach curriculum development in a principled manner.

In addition to the Advanced Literacies Topic Briefs, NYSED released the Academic and Linguistic Demands: Creating Access to the Next Generation Learning Standards in ELA for Linguistically Diverse Learners (ALDs), a “set of tools helps teachers identify the words, phrases, and language structures embedded in the English Language Arts standards so that they are able to provide standards-aligned, grade-level instruction to English Language Learners” (NYSED, 2023, p. 7). We modified the Example of HLA-ELA-ENL Aligned 5th Grade Curriculum Map found in the ALDs (NYSED, 2023, p. 12) that is shown in Figure 1 in an effort to help ENL teachers see what a curriculum map for a unit of instruction that aligns social studies content and ELA skills and practices with a clear and explicit focus on English language development, as emphasized by Wolf-Greenburg et al. (2022), Weiss et al. (2022) and Saunders et al. (2013). In the Integrated ELA class, students are reading longer novels: *Esperanza Rising*, *I am Malala*, and/or *Refugee*. In the stand-alone class, the text set includes shorter texts and videos (*Universal Declaration of Human Rights*), a graphic novel (*When Stars Are Scattered*), and a 42-page non-fiction book, *Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Sarajevo*. These texts, selected by the developers of the ALDs and designers of the HLA-ELA-ENL Aligned 5th Grade Curriculum Map, will allow ENL teachers to address the Big

**Figure 1: Example of HLA-ELA-ENL Aligned 5th Grade Curriculum Map**

Example of HLA-ELA-ENL Aligned 5th Grade Curriculum Map

5th Grade Curriculum Alignment Map: Human Rights		
<b>Essential Questions:</b> What are human rights? How do people respond when human rights are challenged? How can we tell powerful stories about people's experiences?		
Standards	Linguistic Demands	Academic Demands
<b>5R2:</b> Determine a theme or central idea and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize a text.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use words and phrases to summarize the central ideas of the text (e.g., “The main points are...”; “The key points the author makes are...”).</li> <li>Use words and phrases to explain a theme or central idea along with how those ideas are supported by key details (e.g., “The author relates ...”; “This idea is supported by ...”).</li> </ul>	Summarize text and determine a theme or central idea along with supporting details.
<b>5W4:</b> Create a poem, story, play, artwork, or other response to a text, author, theme, or personal experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use sentence structures to introduce a poem, story, play, artwork, or other response to a text, author, theme, or personal experience (e.g., “I wrote about in response to ...”; “I/We will present ..... about....”; “I created a... in response to...”).</li> <li>Express ideas through the common conventions and/or style of a chosen genre.</li> </ul>	Respond to a text, author, theme, or personal experience through varied writing genres.
<b>5SL5:</b> Include digital media and/or visual displays in presentations to emphasize and enhance central ideas or themes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explanation of why certain digital media/visual displays were chosen for the particular presentation. (e.g., “This picture of the arctic landscape reveals...”).</li> <li>Explanation of how specific digital media/visual displays emphasize the main ideas/themes of the text (e.g., “The importance of including in the video is to show.....”).</li> </ul>	Include multimedia and visual displays to strengthen and highlight central ideas or themes.
Unit Texts		
HLA	ELA & Integrated ENL/ELA	Standalone ENL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Devolver al Remitente by Julia Alvarez</li> <li><a href="#">Declaración Universal de Derechos Humanos</a></li> <li>¡Si Se Puede!/Yes We Can!: Janitor Strike in LA by Diana Cohn &amp; Luis Rodríguez</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Esperanza Rising by Pam Muñoz</li> <li>I Am Malala: How One Girl Stood Up for Education and Changed the World by Malala Yousefazi</li> <li>Refugee by Alan Gratz</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Universal Declaration of Human Rights Text and Videos</a></li> <li>Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Sarajevo by Zlata Filipovic</li> <li>When Stars are Scattered, Victoria Jameison and Omar Mohamed</li> </ul>



Ideas and Essential Questions while they hone in on language forms and functions, and scaffold for literacy development. They also have a lower linguistic demand and offer a way to support what MLLs are learning in Integrated ELA without simply “pre-teaching” or “re-teaching” the content in the stand-alone classroom.

In our Curriculum Map Template (see Appendix A), we not only included a space for essential questions, standards, linguistic demands, academic demands, and unit texts, we also added spaces for language focus, the touchstone text (Lesaux & Harris, 2015) for each instructional cycle, key vocabulary, a text set, a language production project, and the learning plan (10-15 days of instruction). We also offered an example of a completed template for a 5th Grade Unit on Human Rights (see Appendix B). All these added elements reflect the Hallmarks of Advanced Literacies and the Knowledge Building framework (Lesaux & Harris, 2015). Finally, we encouraged ENL teachers to repeat this process so they could see the “big picture” for an entire year. We suggested four units of approximately 8–10 weeks each per year, with each unit broken down into three instructional cycles of 10–15 days. In this way, we offered ENL teachers a way to plan a scope and sequence for their instruction and assessment, just as their K-6 classroom and 7-12 content area colleagues would have, rather than haphazardly planning from day to day without a set end goal in mind.

We have used a third resource from NYSED, *A Guide for Aligning Local Curricula to the Next Generation English Language Arts Learning Standards* (NYSED, 2019a), in our curriculum development work with ENL teachers. This tool has provided us with the opportunity to add elements of peer review and reflection into this work. Given its focus on curriculum that develops life-long practices of readers and writers, standards-based instruction, and aligning assessments to standards, coupled with the Hallmarks of Advanced Literacies, we found this resource to be a useful tool for teachers to evaluate the curricular units they developed prior to implementing them into their teaching practice. For example, as ENL teachers selected resources for the units of instruction, we suggested that they refer to “Figure 1: How to Estimate a Text’s Complexity for a Reader” of the Guide to ensure that they are incorporating grade and age-appropriate texts, both in terms of a “touchstone text” and a text set, in their instructional cycles. Similarly, before designing units of instruction, we asked them to articulate a rationale for a thematic unit by responding to the question, “Think about why you are teaching this unit. How does the unit prepare our students to become lifelong readers, writers, learners, and thinkers?” found on page 14 of the Guide. Furthermore, to ensure that instructional units are standards-based and there is an alignment between standards and assessments, we asked them to select one standard for reading, writing, speaking/listening, and language, keeping in mind, “while all standards will be addressed throughout the year, not all standards will be present in one unit” (NYSED, 2019a, p. 14). This type of intentional and purposeful planning served as the guideposts for them in their curriculum development projects.

After having developed stand-alone ENL instructional units, we grouped teams of ENL teachers and asked them to work collaboratively to review these instructional units and reflect using the “Indicators Alignment Tools” (NYSED, 2019a, pp. 16–21). In doing so, they were able to assess the degree to which the instructional units include core elements, support all students, feature engaging and content-rich texts, offer opportunities to build written language, develop academic language, and promote classroom discussion. We facilitated this type of peer review and reflection in individual districts in an effort to promote a vertical alignment within an entire ENL program. We also worked with ENL teachers from varying districts through a regional BOCES, grouping them by level (elementary, middle, and high school) so that they could learn from and with one another in

the curriculum development process. However, this collaborative approach to curriculum development and review is often not the norm; one of our survey respondents shared that they independently developed their stand-alone curriculum, the curriculum is unique to that class, and the other ENL teachers in the district use their own curriculum as well. They added:

Our district also doesn't have a lot of vertical or horizontal alignment across grade levels which is difficult to work with. Additionally, working in silos due to the lack of co-planning time with teams or departments means there's a lack of synergy and forward momentum. Collaboration is required to move the needle for ELLs and despite personal satisfaction with the curriculum I and others create, it ends there. It doesn't get shared, tweaked, or developed.

This comment speaks to the lack of attention given to stand-alone curriculum development and the under-sourcing of resources for this important component of ELD.

### **EXAMPLES OF STAND-ALONE INSTRUCTIONAL UNITS OF STUDY**

Since we began our initial work with that first group of 12 teachers, we have had the opportunity to bring this work into our graduate-level TESOL courses and work with individual school districts who recognize the need for stand-alone curriculum to support entering and emerging MLLs in acquiring the English language needed for success in core content areas. In our work with these pre-service and in-service teachers, we have seen some very creative and innovative examples of instructional units of study that are content based, (i.e., science, social studies, interdisciplinary), engaging, and centered around big ideas. Table 1 provides an overview of some of the examples of thematic instructional units across grade levels that we were permitted to share.

### **CONCLUSION**

We argue that this type of work (i.e., stand-alone curriculum development and review) is needed throughout NYS schools. The Indicators Alignment Tool a way to ensure that stand-alone curriculum develops life-long practices of readers and writers, provides standards-based instruction, aligns assessments to standards, features the Hallmarks of Advanced Literacies. In addition, it can also be a powerful way to educate others (e.g., fellow teachers, school administrators, counselors, etc.) about stand-alone instruction. A prevailing theme we saw in our survey highlighted the many misconceptions about the role and work of ENL teachers and what stand-alone is. The following comments were shared in the response to the open-ended question, "Please add any other comments you would like to offer about the NYS model of stand-alone ENL":

Classroom/content teachers need to learn the purpose and structure of stand-alone [class] to realize it is not homework help, catch up time, nor [*sic*] academic intervention.

Our school has never had a stand-alone class. Before this year, ENL was always seen as a resource room and ENL teachers did the modifications. With advocacy and some teacher training at the beginning of this year, we have been able to establish that the stand-alone classes are for students who need separate English instruction. It is also a struggle to have teachers understand they do the modifications in their content class, not ENL teachers.



Stand alone in my district is mostly seen as a Study Hall. All content area teachers expect that I use that time for homework help.

When questions arise about stand-alone time and the role ENL teachers play in MLL students' education, information from a completed alignment and reflection tool can be shared with fellow educators to help them understand that this class has a curriculum that has been designed to support MLLs in acquiring the English language needed for success in core content areas. The alignment and reflection tool can provide evidence of elements of high-quality curriculum and instruction and areas where more work and attention are needed. Furthermore, ENL teachers can use this tool to advocate for the time and resources to develop curriculum, not "on the fly," but rather in a structured and organized manner. We argue that ENL teachers, therefore, should be given release time during the regular school year or paid opportunities for curriculum development and review over the summer. In the words of one of our survey respondents, "It is incredibly time consuming to create everything and simply not sustainable."

To conclude, our work with ENL teachers and school leaders has led to a revamping of stand-alone curriculum in several school districts across New York State. We have had the opportunity and privilege to go into several of these classrooms, and we have seen how multilingual learners are grappling with big ideas, engaging with complex texts, and developing their English language and literacy skills. We have seen shifts in teachers' practices as they feel empowered to explore high-interest and relevant topics, meeting their students at their current entry points and advancing their content knowledge, literacy skills, and language development. We have witnessed a shift from grammar-led instruction to content-based instruction with grammar taught in contextualized ways.

When given the time, tools, and resources to develop, share, and review curriculum, ENL teachers can maximize the potential of their stand-alone time. In this vein, we offer some final thoughts from one of our survey respondents:

I think a curriculum for ENL Stand-alone is very needed to guide this class. I really like that an ENL teacher has a lot of autonomy and creative freedom to come up with their own lesson plans depending on their students' linguistic needs; however, at times a curriculum could really help. There have been many times this year in which I wish I had had a guide that I could refer to in order to plan for my classes.

We hope this follow-up piece provides NYS TESOL Journal readers with new ideas about curriculum development and review using research-based tools and resources we have referenced. Our multilingual learners are worth the investment of time and resources.

**Table 1*****Examples of Stand-alone Instructional Units of Study***

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Unit Theme &amp; Big Idea</b>	<b>Content Area</b>	<b>Language Focus</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Literacy Lab We share and talk about toys with friends.	Interdisciplinary	Demonstrative and possessive adjectives
4 <sup>th</sup>	Westward Expansion Different groups of people have different perspectives about westward expansion.	Social Studies	Citing evidence from historical documents Tier 2 academic vocabulary
5 <sup>th</sup>	Animal Adaptations Animals have different traits to help them survive.	Science	Infinitives of purpose
6 <sup>th</sup>	Crossing Between Cultures Our personal histories influence who we are but do not define who we want to be.	Social Studies	Comparative adjectives
7 <sup>th</sup>	The Power of Choice Making good choices can be hard.	Interdisciplinary	1st person/3rd person Descriptive adjectives Adverbs
8 <sup>th</sup>	Ecosystems Interactions between organisms and their environment are all interconnected and interdependent.	Science	Sequencing words, nominalizations, modals demonstratives, comparatives and superlatives
9 <sup>th</sup>	Journalistic Writing Authors write for different purposes.	Interdisciplinary	Analyze sources, cite evidence, determine central idea
10 <sup>th</sup>	Clean Water for the World Water is very important for humans to live.	Social Studies	Cite textual evidence, pronouns and antecedents
11 <sup>th</sup>	Identity My personal history and journey made me who I am.	Interdisciplinary	Past tense, sequencing, narration

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## APPENDIX A: CURRICULUM MAP TEMPLATE

Note: This is a template we developed for stand-alone curriculum development. We used the Knowledge Building approach with three 2–3-week instructional cycles per unit. It also includes various other elements from the Knowledge Building approach, but brings in the language focus since language is the driver in stand-alone. This template can help teachers create units of study around big ideas and content-rich texts, while having a focus on language development. It can also ensure that stand-alone instruction is based on grade-level standards, and there is an alignment among standards, curriculum, and assessment.

Grade Level:	Unit #		
	Unit Theme:		
	Instructional Cycle 1 (2-3 weeks)	Instructional Cycle 2 (2-3 weeks)	Instructional Cycle 3 (2-3 weeks)
Dates			
Standards	R:  W:  S/L:		
	↓		
Linguistic Demands	READING:  WRITING:  SPEAKING/LISTENING:		
Big Idea Is this idea multifaceted? Is this idea content-based?			

<p>Is this idea engaging?</p> <p>Essential Questions</p> <p>Are they open-ended and thought-provoking?</p> <p>Will they promote deep thinking and understanding?</p> <p>Do they connect to real-world learning?</p>			
<p>Grammar Focus</p> <p>(Language forms, functions, structures)</p>			
<p>Touchstone Text</p> <p>Nonfiction</p> <p>Brief</p> <p>Interesting, relevant, engaging</p> <p>High Quality</p> <p>On grade- level</p>			
<p>Key Vocabulary from the Touchstone Text</p>			



Complex High utility Morphologically challenging			
Text Set			
Language Production Project  Resource:			
Learning Plan (an outline of 10- 15 days of instruction)			

## APPENDIX B: EXAMPLE OF 5TH GRADE UNIT PLAN ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Note: The contents of this template is an instructional unit adapted from the [5th Grade Example](#) provided in the [Academic and Linguistic Demands: Creating Access to the Next Generation Learning Standards in English Language Arts for Linguistically Diverse Learners \(ALDs\)](#); p. 12). We added elements of the Knowledge Building approach, as well as the language focus for the unit since language is the driver in stand alone. In addition, we added a performance-based assessment (Language Production Project) as we wanted to ensure an alignment between the standards, curriculum, and assessment. This completed template can help teachers see how we developed an instructional unit around a big idea, using content rich texts, with an explicit focus on language development. This stand-alone unit is grounded in grade-level standards and their flexibility for each teacher to develop a learning plan based on their individual methodologies and students' needs.

Grade Level: 5	Unit 1 Unit Theme: Human Rights		
	Instructional Cycle 1 (2-3 weeks)	Instructional Cycle 2 (2-3 weeks)	Instructional Cycle 3 (2-3 weeks)
Dates	TBD	TBD	TBD
Standards	READING: 5R2: Determine a theme or central idea and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize a text.		
Linguistic Demands	WRITING: 5W4: Create a poem, story, play, artwork, or other response to a text, author, theme, or personal experience.		
	SPEAKING/LISTENING: 5SL4: Report on a topic or text, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support central ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace and volume appropriate for audience.		
	↓		
Linguistic Demands	READING: SUMMARIZE-- Use words and phrases to explain a theme or central idea along with how those ideas are supported by key details		
	WRITING: EXPLAIN-- Express ideas through the common conventions and/or style of a chosen genre		
	SPEAKING/ LISTENING: SUMMARIZE & EXPLAIN - Speak and Listen for words and phrases that signal a logical sequence.		
Big Idea Is this idea multifaceted?	Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status.		

<p>Is this idea content-based? Is this idea engaging?</p> <p>Essential Questions Are they open-ended and thought-provoking? Will they promote deep thinking and understanding? Do they connect to real-world learning?</p>	<p>How do people respond when human rights are challenged? How can we tell powerful stories about people's experiences?</p>		
Grammar Focus (Language forms, functions, structures)	<p>Sequencing words and structures Nominalizations Parts of speech</p>		
<p>Touchstone Text Non fiction Brief Interesting, relevant, engaging High Quality On grade- level</p>	<p><a href="#">Universal Declaration of Human Rights Text</a> (Amnesty International edition)  Rights 1-10</p>	<p><a href="#">Universal Declaration of Human Rights Text</a> (Amnesty International edition)  Rights 11-20</p>	<p><a href="#">Universal Declaration of Human Rights Text</a> (Amnesty International edition)  Rights 21-30</p>
<p>Key Vocabulary Complex High utility Morphologically challenging</p>	<p>Rights Free; freedom Slave Torture Just; unjust(ly) Law Legal</p>	<p>Innocent Guilty Crime Marry Separation Forbid Peace; peaceful</p>	<p>Political; politician Advantage Salary Profession Community Order Society destroy</p>
Text Set	<p>Universal Declaration of Human Rights Text [UDHR] Videos (Understanding human rights) Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Sarajevo by Zlata Filipovic When Stars are Scattered, Victoria Jameison and Omar Mohamed Leveled readers for independent reading on topics of Human Rights</p>		
Language Production Project	<p>You are someone whose human rights were challenged, and you have been asked to tell your story to a group of people who investigate human rights violations.</p> <p>As you tell your story, you will explain how your rights were challenged, what you did to overcome the challenges, and what you</p>		

	<p>would recommend to the group so that this type of violation does not happen again.</p> <p>You will give a speech to the group of investigators. A successful speech will include a clear explanation of what happened to you and how you responded to the situation. It will also include recommendations to the group with at least 3 citations from the UDHR.</p>		
Learning Plan (an outline of 10-15 days of instruction)	Each teacher would create their own learning plan	Each teacher would create their own learning plan	Each teacher would create their own learning plan

Resource: [EL Education](#)

