Scholastic *CODE X*

Common Core Code X, **Grades 6-8,** is the first, authentic English Language Arts Curriculum that challenges students to read, think, analyze, question, cite evidence, debate, and write every day. *Code X* was built specifically to address the rigorous demands of the Common Core State Standards and to ensure students become deep readers and measured writers, who can translate these skills into success on the Next Generation Assessments.

Instructional Content

Code X is focused on and developed around the key instructional shifts necessary to fully implement the Common Core State Standards. Each grade level includes seven units of instruction that integrate authentic, complex texts with research-based classroom routines for developing academic discourse, centered around literacy practices designed for Common Core.

Reading

Each *Code X* Unit exposes students to on- and above-grade level texts that span a variety of genres, including literary nonfiction, informational, and fictional text types at an appropriate range of text complexity. Texts are selected and sequenced to build disciplinary knowledge of topics and subjects covered in the Grades 6-8 Science and Social Studies Frameworks. Scaffolded instruction gradually decreases over time as teachers monitor student learning and understanding of content-area text. Instruction in *Code X* focuses on Close Reading of text and gathering evidence at the word, phrase, and text level. Questions and short tasks are all in service of deep reading of the texts that are then used as sources for speaking and listening and writing assignments.

Writing

Writing is the vehicle through which each writer articulates understanding of text. Throughout *Code X*, students compose both on-demand and process writing, as well as short, focused research projects. Students become proficient with the key writing types identified by the Common Core—essay, argument essay, and narrative writing. Daily writing assignments during Close Reading create opportunities to record and elaborate thinking while reading. The questioning and discussion in which students engage during the *Identify Evidence, Key Ideas and Details,* and *Craft and Structure* parts of the text analysis extend the exercise of capturing ideas from text evidence as a foundation for developing, elaborating, and articulating ideas in the final written performance task. Student produce 4-5 single and multi-paragraph writing assignments leading to a culminating performance task for a novel study that integrates knowledge, ideas, and skills.

Speaking & Listening

In *Code X*, structured engagement routines provide consistent modeling and scaffolding as students participate in academic discussions in pairs, groups, and whole class. *Think-(Write)-Pair*-Share routines helps teachers structure efficient partnering and elicit accountable student responses in academic register. Idea *Wave* encourages students to contribute to sharing responses during whole-group instruction. *Socratic Seminars* help students gain a deeper understanding of text through inquiry and dialogue.

Language

Code X vocabulary instruction focuses on academic vocabulary, words with abstract or multiple meanings or uses, domain-specific terms, and words that are part of a word family or semantic network to build students' knowledge and understanding. Students are also taught to access a range of strategies to determine word meanings in context. Using the research of Isabel Beck, Margaret McKeown, and Linda Kucan, *Code X* helps students categorize words into three tiers of vocabulary—everyday words; high-frequency, academic words; and less common academic words. Teachers use the *Code X* Academic Vocabulary Routine to directly teach students academic words in Tiers Two and Three twice during each unit. Students determine the meanings of new words by analyzing word parts, word families, word roots, and context clues.

Instructional Design

Code X is designed for use in a typical 45-60 minute English Language Arts block. The instructional design provides daily opportunities for direct instruction, academic discussion, small-group, and independent work. Students begin the class in whole-group instruction in which the teacher engages students in the day's content, helps build background knowledge, and guides students through Close Reading for the 3-4 short nonfiction and literature texts. Daily small-group instruction, led by the teacher, provides opportunities for students to focus on text-based questions, as well as writing and research tasks. During whole-group wrap-up, students synthesize the information they learned during the class period.

Assessment & Progress Monitoring

Students are systematically and explicitly assessed throughout *Code X* to ensure they are mastering the key instructional shifts of the Common Core State Standards.

- Formative Assessments provide opportunities for students to demonstrate comprehension of text and measure mastery of key CCSS. Daily on-demand writing assignments focus on key ideas and details, as well as craft and structure throughout each Unit.

- Writing Unit Performance Tasks focus on reading, writing, speaking and listening, and research claims. These tasks measure students' depth of understanding, as well as interpretive, analytical, synthesis, and research skills.

- Next Generation Assessments assess standards in the Unite, provide multiple practice opportunities in advance of the Next Generation assessments, and provide teachers with additional data points for grading.

Scaffolded Instruction

Code X equips educators with support to ensure that all students can engage with text with specificity, as well as participate equally in academic discourse as a class, in smaller groups and in writing. *Code X* includes daily strategies and teacher modeling to support English language learners, struggling readers, students with learning disabilities, and advanced learners.

Daily Instructional Routines—Ten instructional routines are used throughout the course of a Unit in *Code X*. Routines focus on the key instructional shifts of the Common Core and support teachers in internalizing these shifts in their day-to-day practice. These instructional routines provide students with processes for expressing their ideas in order to study, review, and learn content material, rethink content, and process ideas. In addition, they serve as tools to assess students' understanding of key ideas in texts and equip students with highly portable literacy and communication skills. These routines all include specific strategies for differentiating for English language learners, struggling readers, students with learning disabilities, and advanced students.

Vocabulary—Of the many features of complex text, difficult or uncommon vocabulary presents the greatest challenge for student readers. Direct instruction of Target Words is delivered through a step-by-step Vocabulary Routine that includes teacher supports on how to adjust for various student needs. Students learn new vocabulary through explicit teaching and consistent instruction sequence.

Support for Structured Academic Interaction—*Code X* teachers follow explicit and systematic instruction of academic language to give students the tools they need to comprehend text and participate in formal speaking and writing tasks. Teacher instruction allows time for students to digest questions and tasks before preparing responses. In addition, all students are held accountable for responding to questions and tasks and are provided supports, such as sentence starters and sentence frames, in order to convey perspectives and communicate feedback.

<u>Structured Approaches to Teaching Writing</u>—*Code X* supports students in writing argumentative, informative, and narrative texts using the Writing Process so that students internalize key text structures, as well as the steps that effective writers follow. Before beginning the process, students analyze a model and determine key features of the structure. Depending on student needs and pace, the writing process may take three or more days of instruction. As students develop their topics, they pull from the many days of on-demand writing they have done throughout their text analysis.

Motivation & Engagement

Each Unit in *Code X* is built around an engaging concept, an essential question, and an enduring understanding worth reading, writing, and talking about—Close Reading must build knowledge. Topics range from civil rights to symbiosis, from economics to identity, from archeology to conservation, and more. Structured engagement routines such as *Think (Write)-Pair-Share* and the *Socratic Seminar* encourage social interaction and increase the quality of student responses.

Professional Development

Code X Implementation Training—Part I

A two-day training for teachers and instructional leaders will focus on implementation of *Code X* to create a shared understanding of the implications for instruction within a school or district and to prepare students for the rigorous demands of the Common Core and the Next Generation Assessments.

Code X Implementation Training—Part 2

This one-day follow-up training will take place 8-10 weeks after initial implementation to expand support for teachers and leaders by clarifying questions about implementation and going deeper with engaging all students with rigorous text-dependent questions and tasks. In addition, the training will focus on deepening teacher understanding in three areas—understanding the range and quality of textual content, developing deep pedagogy for achieving the instructional shifts demanded by the CCSS, and mastering the "how to" of implementation.

  For additional information about *Code X,* please visit www.scholastic.com/codex.