



Moving Forward with *Wit & Wisdom*®

A Study Guide for Teachers,
Coaches, and Leaders

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Contents

About This Resource 1

Moving Forward with Implementation 3

 Action 1: Setting Implementation Goals 3

 Action 2: Studying the Implementation Guide 6

 Action 3: Understanding the Content Stages 13

 Action 4: Preparing to Teach 21

 Action 5: Teaching Module 0 23

 Action 6: Reflecting 25

Resources to Learn More 27

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

Our partners' experience shows that success requires that educators deeply understand the curriculum and strategically prepare to teach it. Moving Forward with Wit & Wisdom® offers ideas and structures for educators—teachers, leaders, and coaches—to continue their self-study of Wit & Wisdom and prepare for successful implementation.

This is a flexible resource. We designed it to help all educators move forward with implementation. Those who have not participated in Wit & Wisdom professional learning can use the resource to develop their understanding; those who have attended Wit & Wisdom professional learning can review and extend their learning.

This resource offers the following:

- Recommendations for studying the curriculum and resources
- Guidance on using protocols to prepare to teach Wit & Wisdom
- Ideas for ongoing professional learning community (PLC) work
- Resources for further learning

WHO IS THIS RESOURCE FOR?

Educators can study this resource independently or collaboratively. The actions can be taken by leadership teams, the faculty, professional learning communities, grade-level teams, or individuals.

This resource uses icons to denote the primary users for particular actions.



Leaders can use this resource to

- establish implementation goals,
- deepen knowledge for more purposeful implementation, and
- reflect on implementation.



Coaches, teacher teams, and professional learning community (PLC) groups can use the resource to work together to

- deepen understanding of the curriculum through a study of the Implementation Guide,
- collaboratively prepare for instruction, and
- reflect on successes.



Teachers can use the resource independently to

- explore the Implementation Guide,
- deepen understanding of *Wit & Wisdom* approaches, and
- internalize modules and prepare for instruction.

All stakeholders can engage with all the actions, but the icons help them prioritize among the actions. Leaders should be familiar with all of the actions so that they can support coaches, teacher teams, PLCs, and teachers as needed.

HOW CAN EDUCATORS USE THIS RESOURCE?

While we present actions in sequence, educators do not need to work through this resource sequentially. Leaders, coaches, professional learning community teams, and individual teachers may explore different sections depending on their context and needs.

Our partners have found this resource useful to answer these questions:

How do I set appropriate goals for implementation?

- Action 1: Setting Implementation Goals offers goal-setting guidance.

How can I deepen my understanding of *Wit & Wisdom*'s learning design?

- Action 2: Studying the Implementation Guide includes study questions and strategies for understanding key aspects of the curriculum.
- Action 3: Understanding the Content Stages offers actions educators can take to deepen understanding of *Wit & Wisdom*'s process for reading complex texts.
- Resources to Learn More lists resources (blogs, webinars, research articles) that expand on essential elements of the curriculum's approach.

How should I prepare to teach *Wit & Wisdom*?

- Action 2: Studying the Implementation Guide includes study questions and strategies focused on preparing instruction.
- Action 5: Teaching Module 0 provides guidance for how and why to teach Module 0, a six-lesson module that orients teachers and students to *Wit & Wisdom* and helps create a community of readers and writers.
- Action 4: Preparing to Teach describes *Wit & Wisdom*'s preparation protocols—repeatable processes educators can use to prepare to teach at the module, Focusing Question arc, and lesson level.

How will I productively reflect on implementation?

- Action 6: Reflecting offers a process for reflecting on and moving forward with *Wit & Wisdom*.

ACTION 1:

SETTING IMPLEMENTATION GOALS

HOW THIS SECTION SUPPORTS IMPLEMENTATION

This section explains the purpose of setting annual implementation goals and offers guidance on how to do so.



Defining and communicating implementation goals are essential actions for leaders to take with their teams.

INTRODUCTION

Setting goals for *Wit & Wisdom* and a strategy to meet those goals helps ensure the following:

- **Expectations for the implementation year are realistic and appropriate.** Many curricular initiatives fail and are abandoned because the district, school leaders, or classroom teachers have unrealistic expectations for implementation, particularly in the first year. Setting realistic goals ensures that stakeholders know what to expect and plan for each year.
- **Success can be appropriately assessed.** Measurable goals help schools and educators understand and evaluate their progress.
- **Professional learning and planning time are used effectively.** Improvements in teaching and student learning are greatest when educators plan professional development, PLC meetings, grade-level meetings, or individual teacher work time with goals in mind.
- **Purposeful reflection determines next steps.** Regular reflection is an important part of an implementation cycle. Tying reflection to implementation goals allows educators to purposefully determine next steps.

Setting goals is key to implementing a rigorous, high-quality curriculum such as *Wit & Wisdom*, which has a complex, integrated learning design and high expectations for teachers and students. Because of the curriculum's complexity, successful implementation takes approximately three years.

Before this three-year mark, implementation—especially in the first year—can be challenging as educators learn the following:

- *Wit & Wisdom*'s framework and approaches to reading, writing, speaking and listening, and knowledge building—approaches that may be markedly different from those they have used in the past
- How to use *Wit & Wisdom*'s backward-design approach to support student success on performance-based assessments
- How to prepare to teach modules, Focusing Question arcs, and lessons, which requires a great deal of teacher knowledge and decision-making for success
- How to pace lessons
- How to support students who are new to grade-level complex texts and rigorous academic work

However, when supported with careful implementation goals and strategies, the initial struggle educators experience is a productive one. Teachers and leaders learn much about strategic planning and decision-making, ways to support and challenge all learners, and the capabilities of their students. Many teachers have reported that their first year with *Wit & Wisdom*, although challenging, helped them reimagine themselves as educators, embrace the joy of rigor, and ultimately become more accomplished and effective.

SETTING GOALS IN THE FIRST YEAR

In the first year, focus implementation goals on two key areas: understanding the curriculum components and learning to prepare instruction strategically. Consider the following when setting your goals:

- Understanding the curriculum components
 - Content Stages and Content Framing Questions
 - Craft Stages and Craft Questions
 - Knowledge building
 - Reading
 - Writing
 - Speaking and listening
 - Fluency
 - Vocabulary
 - Style and conventions
 - Visual art
 - Standards alignment
 - Core Practices
 - Assessment
- Preparing strategically
 - Analyzing a module's backward design using the Module Study Protocol
 - Orienting teachers and students to the instructional design and key routines by teaching Module 0, an abbreviated set of lessons to teach at the beginning of the school year
 - Analyzing the knowledge and skills taught throughout an arc of lessons by engaging with the Focusing Question Arc Study Protocol
 - Examining the role of each lesson element through lesson analysis
 - Leveraging resources such as the Module Overview, the module's appendices, and the Implementation Guide
 - Pacing
 - Analyzing student progress and performance
 - Collaborating with grade-level teams to prepare instruction
 - Collaborating with a broader *Wit & Wisdom* network, for example, through social media

In setting goals, it may also be helpful to reflect on the experiences of educators who have completed their first year of implementation. These educators consistently report the following results:

- **Stronger academic discourse**—Educators express amazement at the rich academic conversations in *Wit & Wisdom* classrooms. Many are impressed by vocabulary development as well as the transformative experience of Socratic Seminars, student-led discussions of thought-provoking questions.
- **Heightened use of evidence**—Students regularly support their written and spoken ideas with textual evidence, both spontaneously and when prompted.
- **Growth in student knowledge**—Students are building deep knowledge of and interest in module topics. Many feel inspired to continue learning in other academic settings and even after a module ends.
- **High levels of student engagement**—Learners at all levels are markedly more excited about English Language Arts and look forward to their work.
- **Growth by students with Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs)**—With *Wit & Wisdom*, all students—regardless of their learning challenges—read the same texts and learn the same rich content. Additionally, they have a variety of written and oral opportunities to express the knowledge they have built. Accordingly, it is not surprising that many schools report that students with IEPs have made especially great strides.
- **Improved ability to compare texts**—Studying a curated collection of literary and informational texts provides authentic opportunities to compare perspectives, the basis of CCSS R.9. *Wit & Wisdom* students often surprise their teachers with unprompted insights, meeting the true intent of the standard.
- **Wonder Stage transfer**—Across disciplines, students initiate their work with complex texts by noticing and wondering about their content and form. As they become increasingly familiar with this practice, students apply previous knowledge, independently identify text features, and develop important questions based on their observations.

ACTION 2:

STUDYING THE IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

HOW THIS SECTION SUPPORTS IMPLEMENTATION

This section helps educators conduct a targeted study of the Implementation Guide, a key resource in understanding the learning design of the curriculum.



All stakeholders will benefit from Implementation Guide learning. We recommend the activities in this section for collaborative work in small groups or teams.

INTRODUCTION

The *Wit & Wisdom* Implementation Guide is a comprehensive resource that explains what the curriculum is, why it works, and how to implement it. It provides information to help *Wit & Wisdom* users understand the curriculum's approach and learn key strategies for preparation and implementation.

Like many comprehensive resources, the Implementation Guide can be overwhelming if read all at once. The following action table offers ideas for how to align study of the Implementation Guide with specific implementation needs or goals.

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE STUDY QUESTIONS AND ACTIONS

Purpose

The purpose of this section is to analyze

- *Wit & Wisdom*'s learning design, rationale, and impact;
- specific instructional approaches; and
- classroom applications.

Materials

- Implementation Guide
- Other materials as indicated in the chart

Steps

- Choose a topic for study, based on your needs, interests, or goals.
 - Each topic helps educators understand or prepare for modules or lessons. You may study all the topics in the order listed, or you might choose to focus on a single topic. Each topic and its related questions and actions can stand on their own.
 - It helps to repeat many of the questions and actions. For example, you might want to complete the Meeting Student Needs study questions and actions several times over the course of the year.
- Read and analyze the applicable sections of the Implementation Guide, using annotation, notes, or a graphic organizer.
- Apply the suggested study questions or actions from the last column.
- Decide on a format for study. The Implementation Guide study questions are designed to be used in a variety of settings.
 - If you use the questions in a collaborative setting, such as a faculty or PLC meeting, consider using one or more of the following structures:
 - **Assign pre-reading.** Before the meeting, have teachers read relevant sections of the Implementation Guide.
 - **Celebrate successes and reflect on challenges.** Open the meeting by having teachers share their successes and challenges since the last Wit & Wisdom meeting. Note the challenges and, before concluding the meeting, brainstorm ways that studying the Implementation Guide might address those challenges. In future meetings, track progress in addressing them.
 - **Explore the Implementation Guide.** Using the guidance in the chart below, have teachers share their reflections on the sections of the guide they read before the meeting.
 - **Apply the Implementation Guide.** Using the guidance in the chart, have teachers apply their learning to some aspect of their practice with Wit & Wisdom.
 - **Reflect.** End with teachers reflecting on their learning or sharing their ideas from their application.

The following table enumerates topics critical to implementation success. It is not meant to be comprehensive.

Topic	Relevant Implementation Guide Sections and Other Materials Needed	Suggested Study Questions and Actions
Learning Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Getting Started with <i>Wit & Wisdom</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Learning Design (21–54) <p>Download and view, print, or save the <i>Wit & Wisdom</i> Components and Features resource in the Teacher Resource Pack on the Great Minds dashboard.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What new insights do you have about the learning design? ▪ What are the implications of those insights for your instruction?
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Going Deeper with <i>Wit & Wisdom</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Writing (80–83) ▪ Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Writing Models (134–140) ▫ Writing Rubrics (141–182) <p>Bring the following materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teacher Edition ▪ Low, medium, and high student responses to an informal writing task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Based on your reading of Writing (80–83), consider this question: What is <i>Wit & Wisdom</i>'s approach to writing? ▪ Consider how you have been using or could use the Analyze lesson sections and Appendix C to assess writing and plan instruction. ▪ Evaluate the sample student responses using information from the lesson's Analyze section and/or the appropriate writing rubric, focusing on both strengths and areas for growth. ▪ Plan instruction based on your evaluation of the student writing samples. Look at upcoming lessons to determine where you can add this instruction. ▪ For school-wide groups, look at the writing models and rubrics across the grades included in Resources (134–182). What do you notice about the progression? Why is this significant?

Topic	Relevant Implementation Guide Sections and Other Materials Needed	Suggested Study Questions and Actions
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Going Deeper with <i>Wit & Wisdom</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Assessment (57–60) <p>Bring the following materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teacher Edition ▪ Low, medium, and high student responses to a formal assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What assessments have your students completed so far? What has gone well? What has been challenging? ▪ Read Going Deeper with <i>Wit & Wisdom</i>--> Assessment (57–60), highlighting or annotating information that explains successes or that could help with challenges. ▪ Consider how you have been using or could use the lessons' informal assessments--Checks for Understanding (CFUs)--to assess student progress and make instructional decisions. ▪ Evaluate one of your student responses to a formal assessment using resources included in your module, such as the Assessment Sheet, the assessment checklist, or the Appendix C sample response. If working with a group, compare evaluations to work toward a common understanding of expectations. ▪ Plan instruction based on your evaluation. Look at upcoming lessons to determine where you can add this instruction. ▪ As time permits, evaluate additional examples of student assessment responses and plan instruction accordingly. ▪ Reflect on how this work aligns with the assessment principles from the Implementation Guide (57).

Topic	Relevant Implementation Guide Sections and Other Materials Needed	Suggested Study Questions and Actions
Knowledge Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Building Knowledge through Complex Text (8–11) ▫ Research in Action (13–14) ▪ Planning for Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Student Journals (92–93) <p>Bring the following materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teacher Edition—current or upcoming module 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read Building Knowledge through Complex Text (8–11), highlighting or annotating information that helps you understand <i>Wit & Wisdom</i>’s approach to knowledge building in the modules. ▪ Think of your students’ needs when accessing complex texts. Then, read Research in Action (13–14), highlighting or annotating information that relates to the student needs you identified. ▪ Based on your reading, consider this question: How does building knowledge on a topic throughout a module support your students’ needs? ▪ Read the Suggested Student Understandings and Knowledge sections from the Module in Context in the Module Overview of a current or upcoming module. Consider these questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Why does the knowledge in this module matter? ▫ What will resonate with your students, and why? ▫ How might you highlight the knowledge in this module? ▪ Read the Student Journals (92–93) section of the Implementation Guide, focusing on the Knowledge Journal. Review a Know lesson from your module (located by using the Module Map in the Module Overview). Consider these questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ How do the activities in this Know lesson help students build knowledge? ▫ Why is the learning in this lesson important for the module, as well as beyond the module?

Topic	Relevant Implementation Guide Sections and Other Materials Needed	Suggested Study Questions and Actions
Visual Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Going Deeper with <i>Wit & Wisdom</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Visual Art (78–80) <p>Bring the following materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teacher Edition—current and upcoming modules <p>Download these resources to your dashboard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Art of <i>Wit & Wisdom</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reflect on the visual art lesson(s) you have taught so far. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ What might explain some of the successes you’ve had with visual art lessons? ▫ What might explain some of the challenges? ▪ If you haven’t yet taught any visual art lessons, what makes you excited about teaching them? What concerns do you have? ▪ Read Visual Art (78–80), highlighting or annotating information that explains the knowledge and skill building that occurs through the study of visual art. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ How will the study of visual art contribute to your students’ learning and growth in the ELA classroom? In the world? ▫ What information might extend your understanding of successes and challenges thus far? ▫ If you haven’t yet taught a visual art lesson, how does the information affect your reflection of doing so? ▫ Review a lesson from your module that uses a visual artwork that you have not yet taught. (Locate a lesson by using the Texts column in the Module Map of the Module Overview.) How does the lesson embody the guidance in the Visual Art section of the Implementation Guide? For example, consider these questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are the Content Stages used to guide students in viewing this visual artwork? • How does viewing this visual artwork enhance students’ knowledge in this module? • Why will studying this and other visual artworks benefit your students? • What art vocabulary will students develop during the lesson? • How can you encourage students to turn to the visual artwork as evidence when discussing or writing about the art?

Topic	Relevant Implementation Guide Sections and Other Materials Needed	Suggested Study Questions and Actions
Meeting Student Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Going Deeper with <i>Wit & Wisdom</i> (57–86) ▪ Getting Started with <i>Wit & Wisdom</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Meeting Student Needs (39–47) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Think of two common student needs you want to respond to with <i>Wit & Wisdom</i> this year. ▪ Examine Going Deeper (57–86) and identify one element of <i>Wit & Wisdom</i> that you believe will be especially instrumental in meeting these needs. Take notes on evidence that supports your selection. Consider what changes, if any, you need to make to your teaching practice to enhance this element. ▪ Read Meeting Student Needs (39–47) with those student needs in mind, highlighting or annotating curricular elements or strategies that might provide the needed support. ▪ Analyze your upcoming lessons for times when you could emphasize a certain aspect of a lesson, provide a scaffold, or differentiate.
Logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning for Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Setting up a <i>Wit & Wisdom</i> Classroom (92–93) <p>Digital Users: Watch the Getting Started Videos Classroom Setup video with your grade-level collection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Sharing <i>Wit & Wisdom</i> with Families (97) <p>Download and view, print, or save the <i>Wit & Wisdom</i> Family Tip Sheets (in English and other languages) available in the <i>Wit & Wisdom</i> Family Resources on the Great Minds dashboard.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read Setting up a <i>Wit & Wisdom</i> Classroom (92–93). Consider these questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ What does the journal system look like in your classroom? How is this system currently working for you and your students? ▫ Based on your reading and reflections, how might you adjust your journal system to solve any logistical or organizational challenges you might be facing? ▫ Consider streamlining journal work so that journals are a useful tool for recording thinking but do not require a significant amount of time for upkeep or recording information. For example, instead of having students copy vocabulary definitions, consider providing typed definitions for students to place into their journals. ▪ Read Sharing <i>Wit & Wisdom</i> with Families (97). How can you apply these ideas to involve families in their students' learning? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Consider how you will share the Tip Sheets with families and caregivers.
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Volume of Reading Guidance (107) ▫ Socratic Seminar Guidance (107–113) ▫ Instructional Routines (114–127) 	<p>For each area of focus—Volume of Reading, Socratic Seminar, and instructional routines—consider these questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What successes and challenges have you experienced in this area? ▪ How can information from the relevant Implementation Guide section support your instruction? <p>For example, if focusing on instructional routines, you might decide that you could use a Mix and Mingle instead of a Think–Pair–Share if students need to move and there is time in a lesson. Or, if focusing on Socratic Seminar, you might consider distributing recommended questions to scaffold participation.</p>

ACTION 3:

UNDERSTANDING THE CONTENT STAGES

HOW THIS SECTION SUPPORTS IMPLEMENTATION

This section helps educators develop a deep understanding of a fundamental aspect of *Wit & Wisdom*'s learning design—its unique process for reading complex texts. It provides two activities to help educators understand the process, its alignment to standards, and its execution in actual lessons.



Teachers will benefit from collaborating in small groups or teams to deepen their understanding of the Content Stages.

INTRODUCTION

Wit & Wisdom's process for reading complex texts uses a sequence of five Content Stages, which provide students with a flexible yet predictable process for accessing, understanding, and analyzing complex texts. Each of the five **Content Stages**—Wonder, Organize, Reveal, Distill, and Know—sets a distinct purpose for students' reading.

Each Content Stage has an accompanying **Content Framing Question** that shapes each lesson and focuses students' exploration of a text. Through repeated application of the stages and questions, students develop habits of mind they can use to access and deeply understand texts in multiple academic contexts.

In the lessons, students access, understand, and analyze complex texts at each Content Stage through a variety of **instructional routines**, classroom procedures that provide students with a structured approach to thinking about a topic, question, or idea. (For more on instructional routines, see pages 114–127 of the Implementation Guide.)

The following actions are designed to foster a deeper understanding of the Content Stages and Content Framing Questions:

- Analyzing the Content Stages
- Examining the Content Stage Progression

ANALYZING THE CONTENT STAGES

Purpose

- To deepen understanding of the Content Stages
- To discern how the Content Stages connect to the standards

Materials

- Text of relevant English language arts (ELA) standards for appropriate grade level(s)

Steps

- Read the chart below. It identifies each Content Stage, a typical version of its associated Content Framing Question, the type of thinking and action each stage requires of readers, and examples of instructional routines and Core Practices that a lesson might use at each stage.
- After reading the information in the first four columns, highlight or underline key words and phrases that capture the essence of each stage.
- Using your grade-level standards, think through how each Content Stage focuses on the thinking and learning required by specific standards. Record observations in the last column.

Content Stage	Content Framing Question	Description of Thinking and Actions	Instructional Routines and Core Practices	Standards Alignment and Specific Skills Instruction
Wonder	What do I notice and wonder about this text?	Read the text with curiosity and attention, and ask key questions about what is read.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete a Notice and Wonder T-Chart. ▪ Annotate the text with observations and questions. ▪ Write a series of statements using the following sentence frame: I noticed _____, and that makes me wonder _____. 	
Organize	What is happening in this text?	Organize thinking on what the text is about to demonstrate literal comprehension of a text.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Literary Text <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Create a story map by charting the characters, setting, problem, attempts to solve the problem, and solution. ▫ Complete Literary Dominoes by recording (in words or visuals) important events in a specific order. ▫ Sketch images that convey ideas. ▪ Informational Text <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Write a brief summary of the text. ▫ Complete a Boxes and Bullets graphic organizer by stating key details in bullet-point form under a main idea written in a box. ▫ Make a timeline of major events. 	

Content Stage	Content Framing Question	Description of Thinking and Actions	Instructional Routines and Core Practices	Standards Alignment and Specific Skills Instruction
Reveal	What does a deeper exploration of [textual element] reveal in this text?	Go deeper into the text to explore an element of the author's craft, analyze the text's structure and its implicit meaning, or attend to another unique feature of the text.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the element by annotating and interpreting the significance of the element. Write a paragraph analyzing the significance of the element, including evidence to support that analysis. Make a table or graphic organizer to document the effects the element has on the text's meaning, including evidence to support each effect listed in the table. 	
Distill	What is the essential meaning of this text?	Synthesize an understanding of a text's elements to discern the full impact of the elements studied, be it in an essential meaning, a central idea, a central message, or a theme. Seek to understand the text as a sum of its parts, with the goal of achieving a profound understanding of the whole work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a Quick Write that explains the essential meaning(s) of the text and provides details that support the choice. Jot a list of significant details (e.g., problem and solution, changes in character, language patterns) and posit the essential meaning(s) that unifies most of these details. 	
Know	How does this text(s) build my knowledge of [topic]?	Consider the text or texts in the context of previous knowledge and new learning. Examine the impact of the text on knowledge, and articulate the transferable knowledge and skills acquired while studying a text.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a Quick Write that explains what the text teaches you about the world, how your understanding of specific ideas (e.g., justice, persistence) has grown, and/or what skills you used to understand the text. Compare and contrast what you learned from the text with another text on a related topic. 	

EXAMINING THE CONTENT STAGE PROGRESSION

Purpose

- To deepen understanding of how the Content Stages support authentic reading and understanding
- To analyze how the Content Stages organize reading and learning within each module

Materials

- Content Stage Progression tables
- Current grade-level module(s)

Steps

- Review the Content Stage Progression tables. Each table shows a sequence of five lessons from a specific module, the text(s) that are the focus of that lesson, the Content Stage, and the Content Framing Question. The tables are ordered from Kindergarten through Grade 8. As the tables show, even though the Content Stages are frequently experienced in a certain order—Wonder, Organize, Reveal, Distill, Know—by intentional design, lessons do not always take students through the stages in this exact order for each text.
- For each grade, pay attention to the text or the section read, the Content Stage and Content Framing Question for that lesson, and the progression across the five lessons.
- Determine what might account for the progression. Consider the following:
 - The types of support readers at a specific grade level might need. For example, why might lessons in the early grades often take students through all five stages with each text while those in the upper grades may use a different pattern?
 - The nature of the text, including its length, genre, and complexity, and how that might affect the application and sequencing of Content Stages. For example, what might it signal about a text if there are two consecutive Organize lessons?
 - Whether the text is core or supplementary and why various texts are used in the broader context of the module. For example, does the text seem to be used to explore the Essential Question or to build background knowledge for understanding other texts?
- Choose a module from your grade level.
 - Using the Module Map, select a five-lesson sequence in the module.
 - Analyze the Content Stage progression across these five lessons, considering the nature of the text(s) involved and the needs of readers at that grade level. Note the rationale for the progression.
- Select another five-lesson sequence from the same module, and analyze another Content Stage progression. Record the rationale for the progression. Repeat this action as needed throughout the remaining lessons in the module to develop a deeper understanding of the Content Stages.
- Reflect on your learning: What new insights do you have about the Content Stages? How might this learning be applied to your preparation or teaching of lessons?

Kindergarten Module 3 Lessons 22–26		
Lesson	Text(s)	Content Stage
22	<i>Now & Ben</i>	Wonder: What do I notice and wonder about <i>Now & Ben</i> ?
23	<i>Now & Ben</i>	Organize: What is happening in <i>Now & Ben</i> ?
24	<i>Now & Ben</i>	Reveal: What does a deeper exploration of the words and illustrations reveal in <i>Now & Ben</i> ?
25	<i>Now & Ben</i>	Distill: What is the essential meaning of <i>Now & Ben</i> ?
26	<i>Now & Ben</i>	Know: How does <i>Now & Ben</i> build my knowledge?

Grade 1 Module 4 Lessons 1–5		
Lesson	Text(s)	Content Stage
1	<i>Glass Slipper, Gold Sandal: A Worldwide Cinderella</i>	Wonder: What do I notice and wonder about <i>Glass Slipper, Gold Sandal</i> ?
2	<i>Cinderella</i>	Wonder: What do I notice and wonder about <i>Cinderella</i> ?
3	<i>Cinderella</i>	Organize: What is happening in <i>Cinderella</i> ?
4	<i>Cinderella</i>	Organize: What is happening in <i>Cinderella</i> ?
5	<i>Cinderella</i>	Reveal: What does a deeper exploration of the characters reveal in <i>Cinderella</i> ?

Grade 2 Module 2 Lessons 26–30		
Lesson	Text(s)	Content Stage
26	<i>John Henry: An American Legend</i>	Wonder: What do I notice and wonder about <i>John Henry: An American Legend</i> by Keats?
27	<i>John Henry: An American Legend</i>	Organize: What's happening in <i>John Henry: An American Legend</i> by Keats?
28	<i>John Henry</i>	Wonder: What do I notice and wonder about <i>John Henry</i> by Lester?
29	<i>John Henry</i>	Organize: What's happening in <i>John Henry</i> by Lester?
30	<i>John Henry</i> <i>John Henry: An American Legend</i>	Reveal: What does a deeper exploration of a comparison between the two versions reveal in the John Henry texts?

Grade 3 Module 3 Lessons 1–5		
Lesson	Text(s)	Content Stage
1	<i>Grandfather's Journey</i>	Wonder: What do I notice and wonder about <i>Grandfather's Journey</i> ?
2	<i>Grandfather's Journey</i>	Organize: What's happening in <i>Grandfather's Journey</i> ?
3	<i>Grandfather's Journey</i>	Reveal: What does a deeper exploration of Grandfather's character reveal in <i>Grandfather's Journey</i> ?
4	<i>Grandfather's Journey</i>	Reveal: What does a deeper exploration of point of view reveal in <i>Grandfather's Journey</i> ?
5	<i>Grandfather's Journey</i>	Reveal: What does a deeper exploration of word choices reveal about Grandfather's character in <i>Grandfather's Journey</i> ?

Grade 4 Module 3 Lessons 1–5		
Lesson	Text(s)	Content Stage
1	<i>George vs. George: The American Revolution as Seen from Both Sides</i>	Wonder: What do I notice and wonder about the book <i>George vs. George: The American Revolution as Seen from Both Sides</i> ?
2	<i>George vs. George: The American Revolution as Seen from Both Sides</i>	Organize: What is happening on pages 7–18 in <i>George vs. George</i> ?
3	<i>George vs. George: The American Revolution as Seen from Both Sides</i>	Organize: What is happening on pages 18–22 in <i>George vs. George</i> ?
4	“Massacre in King Street” (a supplemental text about the Boston Massacre) <i>George vs. George: The American Revolution as Seen from Both Sides</i>	Reveal: What does a deeper exploration of different accounts of the Boston Massacre reveal about perspective?
5	<i>The Boston Massacre</i>	Organize: What is happening in the artwork, <i>The Boston Massacre</i> , by Paul Revere?

Grade 5 Module 3 Lessons 17–21		
Lesson	Text(s)	Content Stage
17	<i>The River Between Us</i> , chapters 1–2	Organize: What’s happening in chapters 1 and 2 of <i>The River Between Us</i> ?
18	<i>The River Between Us</i> , chapter 3	Reveal: What does a deeper exploration of point of view reveal in chapter 3 of <i>The River Between Us</i> ?
19	<i>The River Between Us</i> , chapter 4	Reveal: What does a deeper exploration of Delphine and Calinda reveal in chapter 4 of <i>The River Between Us</i> ?
20	<i>The River Between Us</i> , chapter 5	Reveal: What does a deeper exploration of Tilly’s point of view reveal in chapter 5 of <i>The River Between Us</i> ?
21	<i>The River Between Us</i> , chapter 6	Reveal: What does a deeper exploration of metaphors in chapter 6 of <i>The River Between Us</i> reveal about characters and events?

Grade 6 Module 3 Lessons 1–5		
Lesson	Text(s)	Content Stage
1	<i>Blood on the River</i> , chapter 1	Wonder: What do I notice and wonder about <i>Blood on the River</i> ?
2	<i>Blood on the River</i> , chapters 1–3	Organize: What’s happening in chapters 1–3 of <i>Blood on the River</i> ?
3	<i>Blood on the River</i> , chapters 4–6	Organize: What’s happening in chapters 4–6 of <i>Blood on the River</i> ?
4	<i>Blood on the River</i> , chapters 7–8	Reveal: What does a deeper exploration of characterization reveal in <i>Blood on the River</i> ?
5	<i>Blood on the River</i> , chapters 9–10	Distill: What are the emerging big ideas in chapters 9–10 of <i>Blood on the River</i> ?

Grade 7 Module 4 Lessons 1–5		
Lesson	Text(s)	Content Stage
1	<i>Fever 1793</i> , chapters 1–2	Wonder: What do I notice and wonder about <i>Fever 1793</i> ?
2	<i>Fever 1793</i> , chapters 3–4	Organize: What is happening in <i>Fever 1793</i> ?
3	<i>An American Plague</i> , chapter 1 <i>Fever 1793</i> , chapters 1–4	Organize: What is happening in <i>An American Plague</i> and <i>Fever 1793</i> ?
4	<i>An American Plague</i> , chapter 2 <i>Fever 1793</i> , chapter 5	Organize: What is happening in <i>An American Plague</i> and <i>Fever 1793</i> ?
5	<i>An American Plague</i> , chapters 1–2 <i>Fever 1793</i> , chapters 1–6	Reveal: What does a deeper exploration of character reveal about society and social class in <i>Fever 1793</i> ?

Grade 8 Module 2 Lessons 1–5		
Lesson	Text(s)	Content Stage
1	“The War to End All Wars” “The Peace President Goes to War”	Wonder: What do I notice and wonder about “The War to End All Wars” and “The Peace President Goes to War”?
2	“The War to End All Wars” “The Peace President Goes to War”	Organize: What is happening in the two articles about World War I?
3	“The Teenage Soldiers of World War One”	Reveal: What does a deeper exploration of the experiences of British teenage soldiers reveal?
4	“Your Country Needs You: Why Did So Many Volunteer in 1914?”	Distill: What are the central ideas of “Your Country Needs You: Why Did So Many Volunteer in 1914?”
5	“The War to End All Wars” “The Peace President Goes to War” “The Teenage Soldiers of World War One” “Your Country Needs You: Why Did So Many Volunteer in 1914?”	Know: How do informational texts about the war build my knowledge of reasons for joining World War I?

For more on the Content Stages and Content Framing Questions, consider reading the following five-part series from the Wit & Wisdom blog. Emily Gula, a Wit & Wisdom teacher-writer, connects with educators across the country, examining the Content Stages to explain how teachers and students have experienced them and to elaborate on how each stage benefits students.



Instructional leaders or coaches might consider using this series for collaborative work. For example, they could design study questions for each blog post.

Wonder	“What a Wonderful World”
Organize	“Get Organized”
Reveal	“Read, Repeat, Reveal”
Distill	“Distilling the Essence”
Know	“The Knowledge Story”

ACTION 4:

PREPARING TO TEACH

HOW THIS SECTION SUPPORTS IMPLEMENTATION

To make the most of *Wit & Wisdom*, teachers must internalize the curriculum before implementation. *Wit & Wisdom*'s preparation protocols support this internalization, building a deep understanding of the curriculum's what and why. This understanding helps teachers effectively use lesson materials and plan logistics, as well as pace and scaffold instruction.



Leaders will want to review the protocols to plan sufficient time and structures in the school schedule for their completion. Teachers will want to complete the protocols, individually or collaboratively.

INTRODUCTION

Wit & Wisdom's preparation protocols follow the curriculum's backward design so educators understand how the pieces of each module fit together and can therefore prepare for successful implementation.

Each grade of *Wit & Wisdom* has four **modules**, or units, each designed around an Essential Question. A series of Focusing Questions channels student learning across arcs of lessons so students build the knowledge and skills to answer the Essential Question. The *Wit & Wisdom* protocols follow this module structure:

- The **Module Study Protocol** guides educators to examine a module's topic, texts, and skill focus and analyze the knowledge and skills students are expected to develop.
- The **Focusing Question Arc Study Protocol** guides educators to understand what knowledge and skills an arc of lessons, addressing a particular Focusing Question, will develop and how that arc fits in with the module as a whole.
- The **Lesson Study Protocol** supports educators in preparing to teach a lesson by understanding what happens in the lesson and why. This deep analysis helps educators pace instruction and make sound decisions, such as how long to discuss a question before moving on, as well as anticipate where students may struggle and plan how to support them with follow-up questions.

COMPLETING THE PREPARATION PROTOCOLS

Teachers new to the curriculum or a grade level prepare to teach the curriculum by following these steps:

1. Complete the Module Study Protocol to understand the big picture—the module’s topics, texts, knowledge goals, and skills focus.
2. Complete the Focusing Question Arc Study Protocol for the first arc, or series of lessons in the module, to understand the knowledge and skills the lessons in that arc develop and how that arc fits into the module.
3. Complete the Lesson Study Protocol for each lesson in the first Focusing Question arc.

As teachers near the end of a Focusing Question arc, they complete the Focusing Question Arc Study Protocol for the next arc and the Lesson Study Protocol for lessons within that arc, continuing until they complete the module.

After Year 1, teachers refer to the completed protocols, updating and supplementing them as needed. Teachers complete the protocols individually or collaboratively.

The Preparation Protocols are available as a downloadable resource at greatminds.org and witeng.link/prep-protocols.

ACTION 5:

TEACHING MODULE 0

HOW THIS SECTION SUPPORTS IMPLEMENTATION

This section provides guidance for how and why to teach Module 0, a six-lesson module that orients teachers and students to *Wit & Wisdom* and helps create a community of readers and writers.



Leaders will want to review Module 0 to plan sufficient time and structures in the academic calendar for their completion. Teachers will want to engage in the actions to prepare to teach Module 0.

INTRODUCTION

Module 0 consists of six 50-minute lessons to be taught at the start of the school year. It introduces students and teachers to *Wit & Wisdom*'s key components and features:

- Content Framing Questions, the hallmark of the *Wit & Wisdom* learning design
- Craft Questions that structure *Wit & Wisdom*'s approach to writing and speaking
- Core Practices—questioning, annotating, summarizing, and collecting evidence—that students use throughout the modules
- Instructional routines that are used frequently in modules
- The organization and features of a *Wit & Wisdom* lesson
- The experience of studying a visual text

The *Wit & Wisdom* design fosters a classroom culture that instills a love of reading, builds the stamina for close and careful analysis of texts, and nurtures academic discourse that values inquiry and reasoning. The work in Module 0 begins to establish this culture.

To prepare for teaching Module 0, read its Module Overview and the following guidance. As you prepare to teach the lessons, consider using the preparation protocols outlined in Section 6 of this resource.

DESIGN OF MODULE 0

Module 0 is available for three grade bands: K–2, 3–5, and 6–8. Each version of Module 0 includes developmentally appropriate actions for a specific grade band. In addition, all grade bands are vertically aligned to ensure a consistent introduction to *Wit & Wisdom* and to provide instructional leaders with a basic framework for implementation support.

Module 0 is vertically aligned in the following ways:

- Essential Questions are aligned and increase in complexity in each grade band.
- Lessons share commonalities across grade bands. Each grade band follows the same sequence of Content Framing Questions and Craft Questions. Each also introduces students to certain key materials and instructional elements in a specific order, as the following chart shows:

Lesson	Content Stage	Craft Stage	Instructional Element
1	Wonder		
2	Organize	Examine	Vocabulary Journal
3	Reveal	Experiment	Response Journal
4	Distill	Execute	
5	Know	Excel	Knowledge Journal Socratic Seminar
6	Know (related to visual art)		

- Each grade band introduces students to instructional routines that are developmentally appropriate for that grade band. See the At a Glance page for each lesson for a list of the specific instructional routines used. This work within lessons follows the predictable structure of introducing, practicing, and reflecting on the routine.

TEXT SELECTION FOR MODULE 0

Each grade band's set of Module 0 lessons uses a text aligned to the module's Essential Question:

- GK-2: *Wild About Books* by Judy Sierra
- G3-5: *Thank You, Mr. Falker* by Patricia Polacco
- G6-8: "A Poem for My Librarian, Mrs. Long (You never know what troubled little girl needs a book)" by Nikki Giovanni

The lessons are written so that only one classroom copy of a text is needed. Module 0 for Grades 6–8 links to a PDF of the poem, available online. Many schools will have the Grades K–2 and Grades 3–5 texts in their libraries; but if not, educators will need to obtain the text in some other way.

TEACHING MODULE 0 AFTER YEAR 1

Teaching Module 0 at the beginning of each school year introduces new students to Wit & Wisdom's learning design, serves as a refresher for returning students, and helps to establish a new community of readers and writers.

If educators have students who were taught the Module 0 text in a prior year, such as Grade 1 or Grade 2 in the K–2 grade band, they can adapt Module 0 to be taught with a different text. Appendix A in each Module 0 provides suggestions for these alternate texts. Teachers are not limited to this list. However, if they opt for a text not on the list, they should choose one with a theme that is relevant to building a community of inquisitive readers and writers.

Note that alternate texts are not provided for Kindergarten, Grade 3, and Grade 6, as these are the beginning grades for a grade band. Students in these grades are reading the Module 0 text for that grade band for the first time.

ACTION 6:

REFLECTING

HOW THIS SECTION SUPPORTS IMPLEMENTATION

This section offers practical strategies for reflection, helping individuals and teams move forward with *Wit & Wisdom* by engaging in a process of continuous improvement.



All stakeholders will want to reflect on their implementation strengths and areas for learning.

INTRODUCTION

Purposeful reflection drives implementation success. Intentionally incorporating formal reflection helps educators celebrate and build on successful practices and progress, while also considering what has not worked, what needs improvement, and what still needs to be accomplished. This reflection can spark new goals along with immediate next steps and longer-range plans for improvement.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Reflection need not be complex or burdensome. Often a few key questions can uncover successes, challenges, and productive next steps. Consider using the following questions to guide reflection:

- What was your implementation goal?
- What worked?
- What did not work?
- What will you do differently next time? What are your next steps?

REFLECTION EVIDENCE AND NEXT STEPS

Base reflections on evidence. Often, student work or observations of daily performance serve as effective evidence. In addition, evidence might include changes a teacher made in preparation over the course of a module. It might be a combination of a teacher's anecdotal notes and a coach's feedback on progress toward an implementation goal.

In planning what to do differently, consider whether any of the following resources would support individual or collective development of the knowledge and skills needed to execute next steps:

- Information or actions from this resource
- Specific sections of the Implementation Guide
- Module and lesson components, such as the Module Overview, Teacher Notes or Alternate Activities within lessons, or appendices
- On-site *Wit & Wisdom* professional development
- *Wit & Wisdom*'s online communities

REFLECTION FORMATS

This reflection can occur in a variety of formats:

- Teachers can independently work through the questions.
- Grade-level teams can reflect both on individual performance and on team collaboration during preparation and teaching.
- Instructional coaches might lead reflections for professional learning communities.

Reflection benefits implementation at any time, but it can be particularly effective between modules.

EXAMPLE OF REFLECTION PROCESS IN ACTION

Setting	Grade-level team led by coach who has observed members teaching and worked with team on preparation	
Timing	End of Module 1	
Reflection	1. What was your implementation goal?	Increasing understanding of the Content Stages and how to use that knowledge to improve lesson-level teaching
	2. What worked?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ After we did the Content Stages Analysis and Examining Content Stage Progression, we started paying closer attention during lesson preparation to a lesson's Content Stage and Content Framing Question and how those indicated the lesson's major learning. ▪ Wonder and Organize lessons: These seemed to be especially purposeful and successful. Wonder lessons prompted all students to engage, and we guided them to deeper observations and related questions. We were intentional about ensuring students' literal comprehension in these lessons, which set students up for success with Reveal. ▪ Reveal lessons: We were surprised and impressed by students' willingness to reread texts, their ability to find evidence, and their insights.
	3. What did not work?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reveal Stage: These lessons often took two, sometimes three, days to complete. ▪ Distill Stage: We struggled with how to help students distill instead of us doing it for them. ▪ Know Stage: Students struggled to articulate everything they learned and how they learned it. ▪ Launch: This lesson section often seemed less purposeful than the rest. How can we use it to be more transparent with students about the lesson's purpose? ▪ Land: We often ran out of time and skipped this section. As a result, students often did not synthesize the learning for the lesson's Content Framing Question or internalize the learning for that stage.
	4. What will you do differently next time? What are your next steps?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete Distill lessons as written, waiting to implement scaffolds until we see if students need them. Students have surprised us with their abilities during Reveal lessons. Maybe they are better able to determine essential meaning than we think. ▪ Annotate and discuss the Building Knowledge through Complex Texts section of the Implementation Guide and the Know section of the Content Stages Analysis chart; then discuss implications for Know Stage lessons. Refer to the Instructional Routines section of the Implementation Guide to find a routine to help students express the scope of their learning. Have students use a Graffiti Wall to express the module's Knowledge Puzzle: the body of knowledge, complex texts, and Learning Goals. ▪ Complete a few lesson analyses with a focus on understanding the "why" of Launch and Land. ▪ Plan Launch as a team, making sure that both teachers and students understand its purpose for each lesson. ▪ Use timers (not with students, but for ourselves) to pace lessons, closely mirroring the Teacher Edition agenda. Strive, at first, to include Land at least every four out of five lessons.

RESOURCES TO LEARN MORE

RESOURCES REFERENCED IN MOVING FORWARD WITH WIT & WISDOM

<i>Wit & Wisdom</i> Resource	Location
Implementation Guide	http://witeng.link/IG
<i>Wit & Wisdom</i> Preparation Protocols	Downloadable PDFs: http://witeng.link/prep-protocols Included in the <i>Wit & Wisdom</i> Teacher Resource Pack, available with a Great Minds account from the Great Minds website
Module O	Downloadable PDFs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grades K-2 ▪ Grades 3-5 ▪ Grades 6-8 Included in the <i>Wit & Wisdom</i> Teacher Resource Pack, available with a Great Minds account from the Great Minds website

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Webinars

A series of recorded [webinars](#) available on the Great Minds website explores innovative aspects of *Wit & Wisdom*'s curriculum.

Videos

The *Wit & Wisdom* [Video Library](#) supports partners with brief videos on aspects of the curriculum and professional learning.

Articles and Other Publications

Wit & Wisdom writers have published [numerous articles](#) about the curriculum's content-rich, text-based instruction on outside websites, such as that for the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), an educational leadership organization. If using these resources collaboratively, instructional leaders or coaches might want to create discussion questions or other mechanisms for reading and deepening understanding of them.

Wit & Wisdom Blog Posts

Written from a variety of perspectives—including those of *Wit & Wisdom* teacher-writers, *Wit & Wisdom* school leaders and educators, and authors of *Wit & Wisdom* texts—the [blog entries](#) address a range of topics, from the curriculum's learning design to implementation strategies.

Wit & Wisdom Online Communities

Wit & Wisdom users can connect with other Wit & Wisdom educators to request, share, and explore ideas to support implementation via several social media platforms.

Facebook

Wit & Wisdom's [Facebook page](#) offers general information and updates about Wit & Wisdom resources, upcoming events, and posts from Wit & Wisdom classrooms. Grade-band Facebook pages allow educators to connect with other Wit & Wisdom educators at their grade levels:

[Grades K–2](#)

[Grades 3–5](#)

[Grades 6–8](#)

Twitter

The Wit & Wisdom Twitter feed, at [@WitWisdomELA](#), includes instructional strategies, best practices, resources, and updates from other Wit & Wisdom classrooms across the nation.

In addition, Wit & Wisdom hosts a monthly Twitter chat on specific areas of the curriculum or implementation needs. Follow the chat using the hashtag #WitWisdom. (Note: While educators can follow the chat without signing up for a Twitter account, an account is required to participate directly.)

Pinterest

The Wit & Wisdom [Pinterest page](#) is home to an extensive library of Wit & Wisdom resources, such as photos of how Wit & Wisdom teachers have set up their classrooms, links to author interviews, texts, and more. Boards are arranged by grade level and topic, with new content added frequently.

Wit & Wisdom Professional Learning

Great Minds offers a variety of professional learning opportunities to support educators' effective implementation of the curriculum. *Wit & Wisdom* professional learning offerings deepen educators' knowledge, skills, and understanding of the curriculum and leaders' and coaches' ability to support implementation.

The teacher-writers who developed *Wit & Wisdom* designed the professional learning sequence; experienced *Wit & Wisdom* teachers and coaches lead each session. *Wit & Wisdom* educators draw on their experience and expertise to facilitate deep learning about the curriculum, how best to implement it, and how best to lead and support implementation.

Wit & Wisdom professional learning offerings are designed for new and experienced classroom teachers, literacy coaches, and school leaders. Ideally grade-level teams and professional learning communities attend together so that they can continue learning together after each session. Art and history/social studies content-area teachers, teachers of multilingual learners, and special education teachers may also want to attend to support and align efforts.

To learn more about professional learning options, go to <https://www.greatminds.org/english/pd> or contact pd@greatminds.org.