

Introduction

Purpose

The purposes of *English Language Arts Curriculum Framework: A Living Document* are to

- support, nurture, and inspire the learning growth of all learners
- provide direction for learning design and assessment
- set out the philosophical and pedagogical foundations for English language arts learning
- present the four English language arts *practices* and their characterizing *elements*
- describe multiple ways that students engage in practices at various points in learning
- encourage educators and learners “to engage in vital, rigorous, and venturous forms of pedagogy” (Jardine and Friesen 4)

Background

In January 2011, the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Education, Kindergarten to Grade 12 (WNCP) prepared *Guiding Principles for WNCP Curriculum Framework Projects* in response to the significant changes in the ways people live and work in today’s world.

In July 2011, the report *Implications of the OECD’s Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) for Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Learning in Manitoba (and Canada)* (Manitoba Education) was developed for Manitoba to provide an analysis of English language arts (ELA) curriculum, approaches to professional learning, and assessment practices across Canada.

In January 2012, Manitoba engaged focus groups of Manitoba educators in order to hear observations, insights, and feedback related to ELA curriculum, supports, resources, and assessment.

A report for WNCP partners was published in March 2012: *English Language Arts in Canada and around the World: Renewal of the WNCP Framework and Associated Curricula Based upon Guiding Principles for WNCP Curriculum Framework Projects* (Western and Northern Canadian Protocol for Collaboration).

In January 2013, Jardine and Friesen developed a follow-up document, *Implementation Guide: Guiding Principles for WNCP Curriculum Framework Projects*.

The English language arts curriculum framework responds to multiple reports and reflects the WNCPE guiding principles that aim to meet the current and future needs of learners as well as the needs of societies. This framework also responds to current research and literature in curriculum, English language arts, and pedagogies.

Shifts in curriculum design and growing knowledge related to changing educator practice require shifts in implementation models. Current processes must represent networked, connected, and emergent processes that engage educators deeply and in sustained ways in conversation, reflection, and action.

Implementation no longer means simply imposing already fully understood principles to specific examples. This is the old industrial model of application and is no longer warrantable in the 21st century. Rather, it means allowing specific examples, locales, communities of work and cultural realities to question, shape, and supplement (Gadamer 1989, p. 39) those principles and to make them “fitting” for the circumstances of their application. (Jardine and Friesen 5)

Further Reading, Viewing, and Research

Curriculum Design

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