

# COMMON Q/A

**Q:** Do I need to use the same mentor texts you suggest in the units?

**A:** No you don't need to go out and buy the mentor texts I use as examples. The coolest thing about the units is that you can use any mentor texts that you have available within the genre. So, if you are in the informational unit, you can gather nonfiction mentor texts from your school library or classroom to use! This is also really helpful when teachers use the lessons in more than one grade level. Since these are skills kids in grades 2-6 need, it works great to use the same units but switch up the mentor texts year after year. Of course, the kids in the older classes will add much more deep thinking in the mini lessons as well!

**Q:** What do you grade in reading and writing workshop?

**A:** I grade using the supplemental bundle. I grade students independent work based on the mini lessons for reading. In writing, I grade their prewriting work in their notebooks, and use the grading rubrics from the supplemental pack.

**Q:** How long do you spend in reading and writing workshop?

**A:** Ideally, you want to spend an hour for each workshop. But, many teachers don't have that kind of schedule. To fit it all in, I recommend no less than 45 minutes for each workshop. You can get creative and use A/B schedules if needed.

**Q:** Which workshop do you teach first each day?

**A:** I teach reading first because in the reading lesson there are often lower level skills like, identify, summarize, notice. In writing, they need to actually apply the strategies into work that they are creating on their own. This is a much higher level skill. I've found that by laying the foundation in reading, students are much more successful trying those skills out as writers!

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**Q:** What is the difference between the grade level units of study?

**A:** The only difference are the standards attached. So, if you teach multiple grades, you only need one level. Because the lessons are so interactive and based on the students in the room, you can use them over again in different grade levels!

**Q:** Can the units of study be used as a stand-alone curriculum?

**A:** Yes, they are designed to be used as the core reading and writing curriculum in your class. Even if you don't follow the CCSS, the lessons and units are still based on best practice in the classroom, regardless of the standards system you use. You can seamlessly supplement the units with the supplemental bundle. There are other literacy centers resources, guided reading, and interventions that are also wonderful supplements.

**Q:** When do you teach grammar and spelling?

**A:** I incorporate grammar and spelling into a smaller block. I teach whole group interactive edits and often place that work in a literacy center during the reading workshop. Grammar skills can be covered in a word work center during the writing or reading workshop as well.

**Q:** When do you recommend reading mentor texts to the class?

**A:** I like to read mentor texts as interactive read-alouds at the end of the day. I have all my students pack up and spend the last 15 minutes reading to the class. It's a great way to wind down and enjoy the end of the day. I always make sure that any books I plan to use in mini lessons are read ahead of time so that I don't spend too long in the mini lesson during reading or writing workshop.