

A stylized landscape illustration on the left side of the page. It features rolling green hills with various textures, including stippling and solid colors. A prominent tree with a yellow trunk and a green, layered canopy stands on a hill. In the foreground, there are green plants and a yellow path leading through the landscape. The background is a light blue sky.

Arts
& letters™

The Journey to *knowledge*

Walk Through the Student
Learning Experience



Every child is curious.

Every child has an active imagination.

Every child wants to learn.

At Great Minds®, we empower children with one of the most equalizing forces of all: *knowledge*.

With knowledge, they can do anything they set their minds to.

Every child is capable of greatness.



Knowledge is *sticky*.

High-quality, knowledge-rich instructional materials are found to improve student learning where skills and strategies alone fail. Why? Because when students can build on a developing integrated body of knowledge, learning is simpler, less susceptible to errors, and less likely to be forgotten.

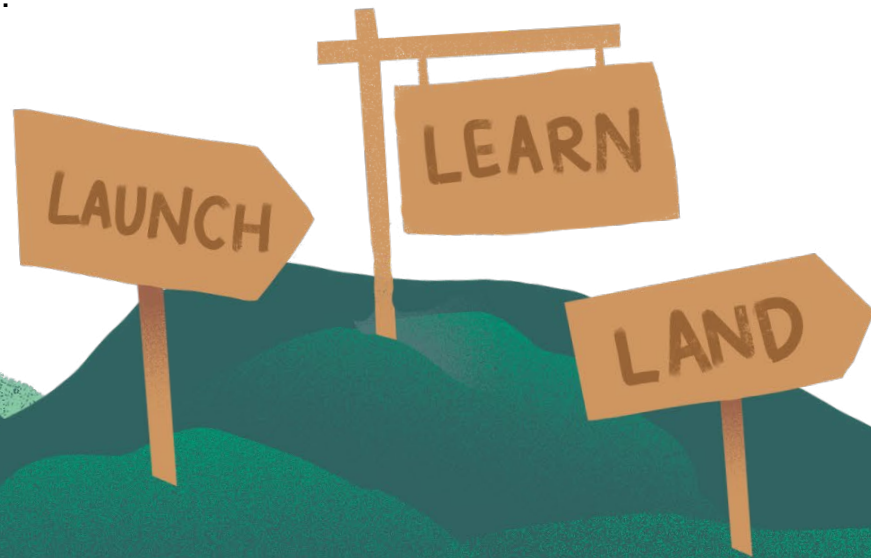
What does a knowledge-building curriculum look like?

It looks like students engaging with fine art and the history of math as they learn long division. English language arts (ELA) students learning about the circulatory system or the American west while they learn to write research-based informative essays. And young scientists reading about the journey of Amelia Earhart's flight to Howland Island as they learn about light, sight, and communication systems.



Curriculum design is important to building *knowledge*.

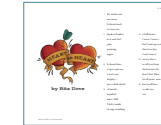
We developed our curricula with cognitive science research and learning sciences research guiding the instructional design. Each of our curricula intentionally follows a Launch, Learn, Land lesson structure to create the cognitive conditions that are optimal for student learning, retention of information, and building enduring knowledge.



LAUNCH 4 minutes

Read the Content Framing Question

1. Remind students that as the class works their way through each module, they will answer a big question called the Essential Question.
2. Display and Choral Read the Essential Question: What does having a great heart mean?
3. Display "Heart to Heart." Explain that students will study many texts this year, including poems, books, articles, and art.
4. Explain that the class will start each lesson with a question to focus learning for the day. Display and Choral Read the Content Framing Question: What do I notice and wonder about this text?
5. Explain that during a Wonder lesson the class begins to read the text for the first time to spark their curiosity. Students share what they notice and wonder about the text. Introduce "Heart to Heart" by reading aloud the title and author. Tell students that in this lesson they will share what they notice and wonder about the poem and then practice reading it aloud.



LAUNCH introduces the topic and activates prior knowledge.

LEARN 51 minutes

Read | Notice and Wonder About "Heart to Heart" | 13 minutes

1. Display the class Notice and Wonder Chart for "Heart to Heart." Explain that students will use a Notice and Wonder Chart throughout the year to write down what they notice about a text as well as their related questions.
2. Ask this question:
What things do readers notice as they read a text for the first time?
Key Ideas
 - structure and features of a text
 - information or details that are familiar and unfamiliar
 - unknown words
3. Direct students to "Heart to Heart," located in the *Learn* book. Instruct students to read the poem silently one time and annotate unknown words.
4. Read aloud the poem and annotate the word *regret*. Then think aloud to model how to notice and wonder about an unknown word. Tell students to share with a partner a word they annotated.
5. Instruct students to silently read the poem again, thinking about what they notice. Then tell students to discuss with a partner something they notice.

LEARN engages students in accessing new knowledge, building on previous knowledge, and sharing what they have learned.

LAND 5 minutes

Reflect on Learning

1. Direct attention to both knowledge charts, and read aloud each chart title. Explain that knowledge of the world is knowledge students gain from texts in the module. Explain that knowledge of ELA is knowledge students gain as they learn reading, writing, and speaking skills. Writing statements about new learning helps people remember and track the knowledge they gain.
2. Facilitate a brief discussion of the following question to help students articulate the knowledge they built during the lesson:
What did you learn today?
Teacher Note
As needed, prompt students to reflect on what they learned by asking questions such as these:
 - What did you learn from the poem "Heart to Heart" and the work of art?
 - What did you learn about fluency?
 - What did you learn to do?

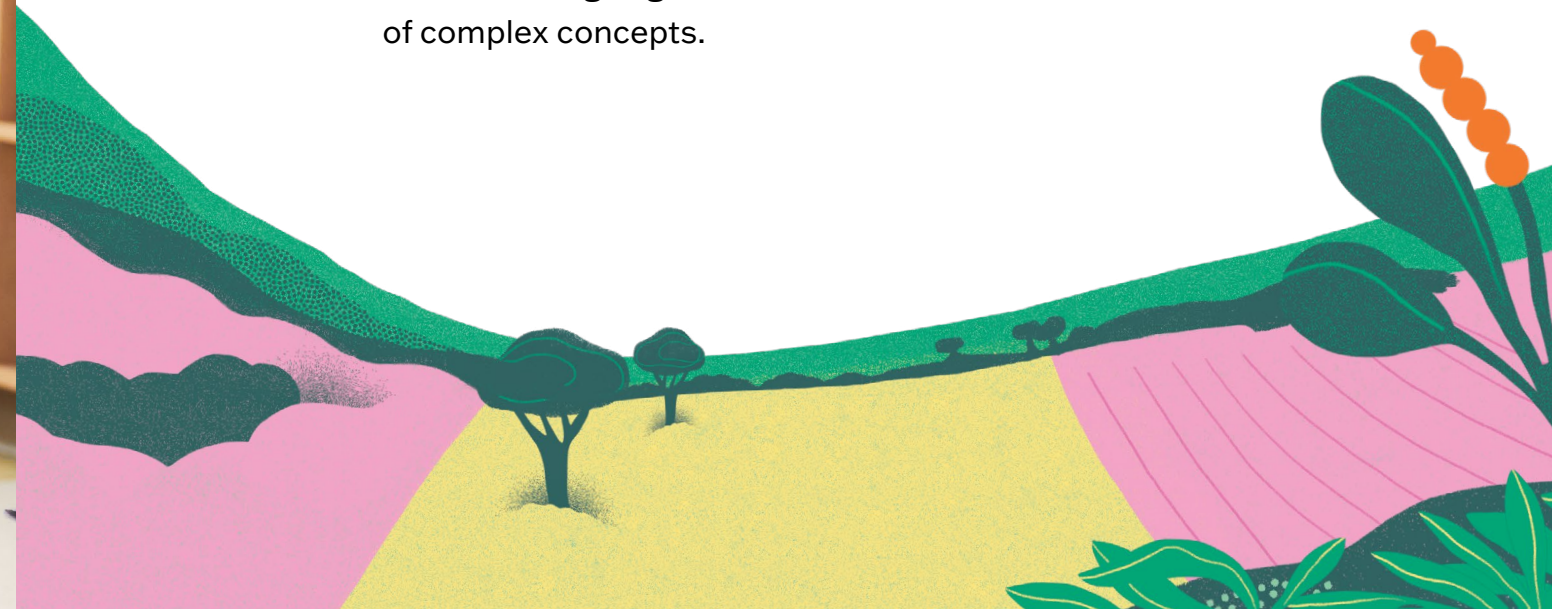
World Knowledge
ELA Knowledge

LAND has students reflect on their learning and how their new knowledge fits into the larger context of the topic or module and real-life application.



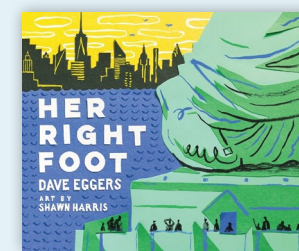
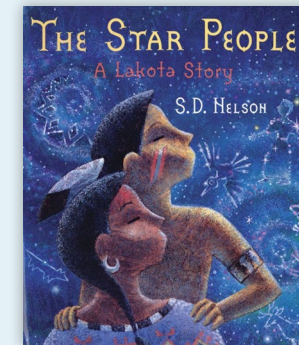
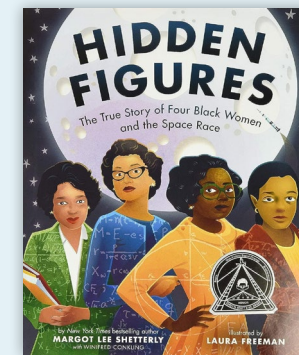
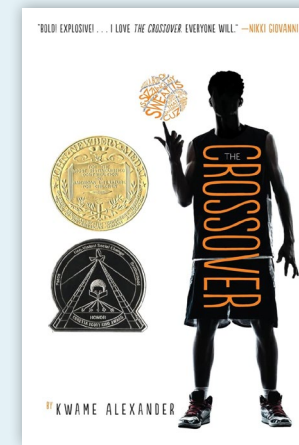
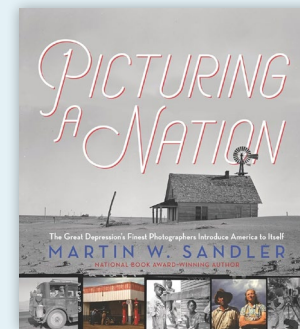
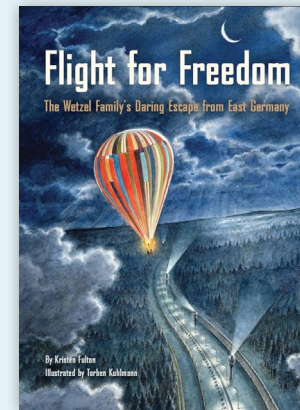
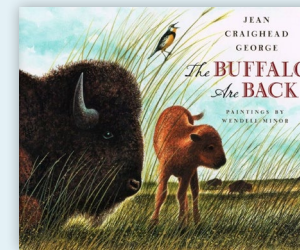
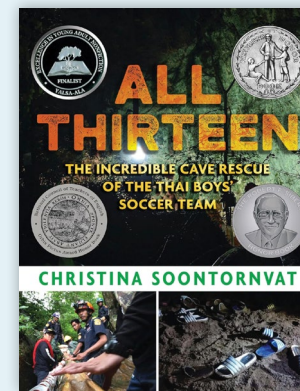
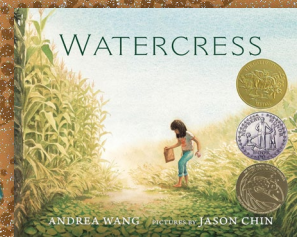
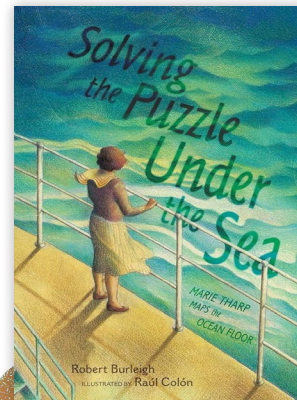
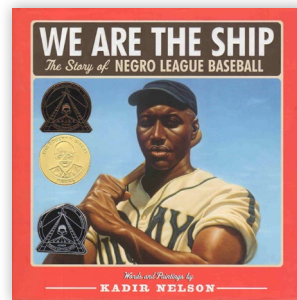
Student *engagement* solidifies knowledge and understanding.

Students lead conversations about the content through Socratic seminars, peer-to-peer discussion activities, discussion-based assessments, and other lesson activities. Consistent Instructional Routines drive a structured approach to thinking about a topic while reducing cognitive load to better make sense of complex concepts.



Complex topics and knowledge-rich texts are *at the center*.

Informed by the Science of Reading research and feedback from educators with years of experience using highly-rated English language arts content from Great Minds, *Arts & Letters™* is a comprehensive, standards-based K–8 curriculum that helps students build reading, writing, speaking, listening, vocabulary, and language skills while they deepen their knowledge of science, history, art, and more. Students have cohesive, content-rich texts at their fingertips, so students move beyond just finding the main idea and engage in collaborative discussions with peers.



Each *Arts & Letters* module centers on an intentional combination of literary, informational, fine art, and multimedia texts to build knowledge of the module topic.

Authentic fiction and nonfiction complex texts include award winners, showcase diverse viewpoints, and represent varied genres including essays, speeches, articles, interviews, memoirs, and poetry.

Carefully sequenced texts—not basals—all relate to the topic and create intentional layers of knowledge building for students.

Volume of Reading lists provide supplementary titles related to the topics and genres presented in each module to encourage students' independent reading and extend their learning.

A closer look: unfolding the student learning *experience*.

Each year, *Arts & Letters* students explore four topics that may cover the arts, science, history, geography and more. These topics are not themes that loosely tie together a few lessons, they are topics that are worthy of a deep dive, building enduring knowledge of the topic while they build essential English language arts skills.

To understand the knowledge building experience from a student's perspective, let's unfold Level 4 Module 1: *A Great Heart*.

4 A Great Heart

LEARN ▶ Module 1



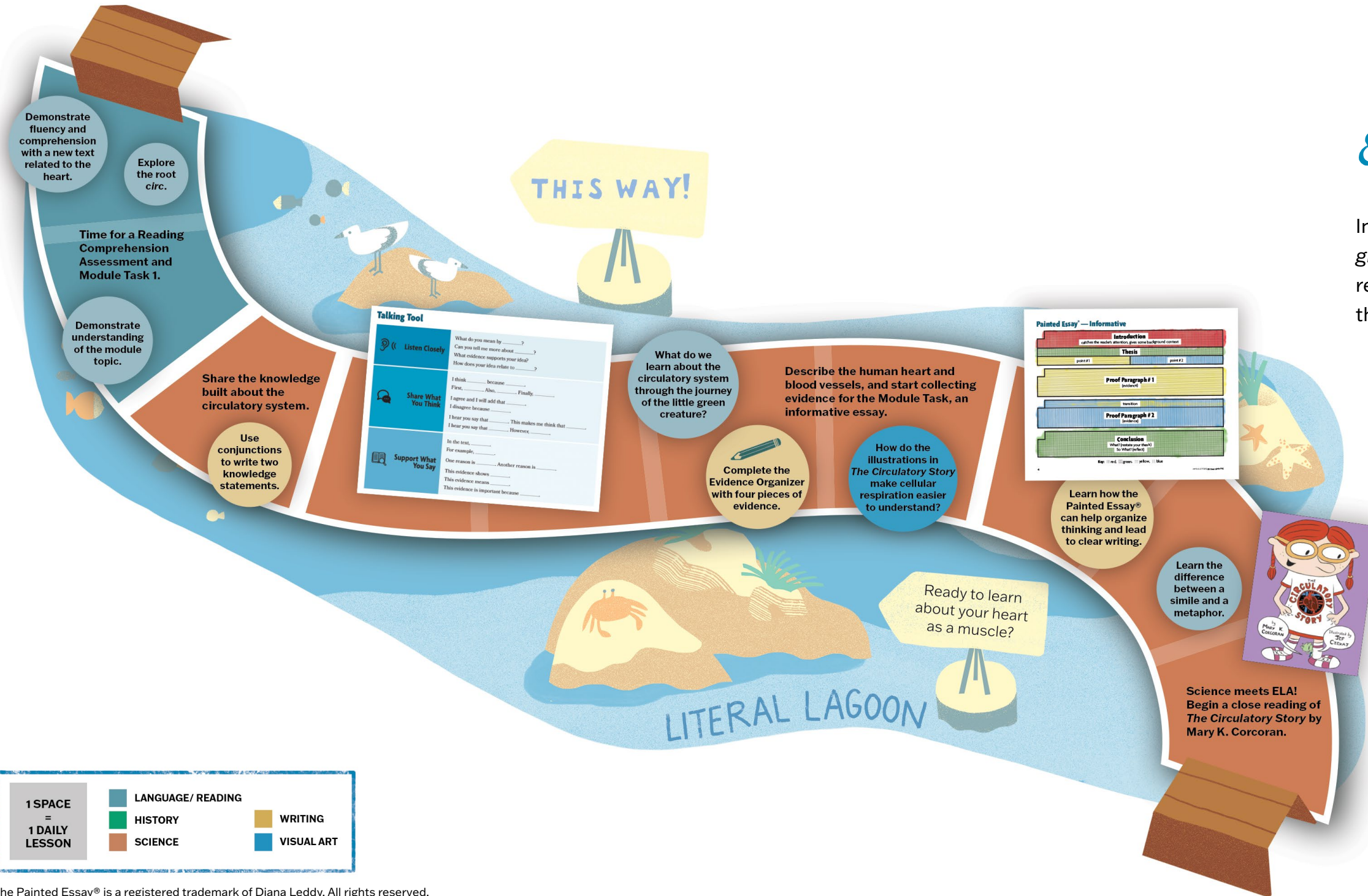
Arts
& letters.

Join us on a journey of knowledge as we peek into the daily lessons of an Arts & Letters™ module. In this module, students will explore what having a *great heart* means literally and figuratively.



1 SPACE = 1 DAILY LESSON	LANGUAGE/ READING	WRITING
	HISTORY	VISUAL ART
	SCIENCE	

In the Literal Lagoon, students explore a *great heart* from a literal perspective by reading and writing about the function of their circulatory system.



During the next two weeks, students concentrate on building knowledge by analyzing the figurative meaning of the word heart and what it means when we hear that someone has a *great heart*.

THIS WAY!

What else could having a great heart mean?

Notice and wonder about Thomas Eakins's painting *The Gross Clinic*.

Observe how composition and the chiaroscuro technique convey emotion and focus.

Write an introductory paragraph and concluding paragraph for Module Task 2.

Team up to learn about heart valves and share observations with your partner.

Learn how to write a hook to elicit emotion for an essay.

Discuss what the central idea is in *The Gross Clinic*.

Watch a *More* video about Dr. Gross, and then describe him in your journal.

Create and display drawings to help explain complex ideas to support Module Task 2.

Create knowledge statements using coordinating conjunctions and an illustrator statement.

How can someone demonstrate they have a great heart?

How did he demonstrate empathy, generosity, and courage?

Analyze the concept of legacy and collect evidence showing Walter Dean Myers had a great heart.

Practice writing sentences using pronouns and adverbs.

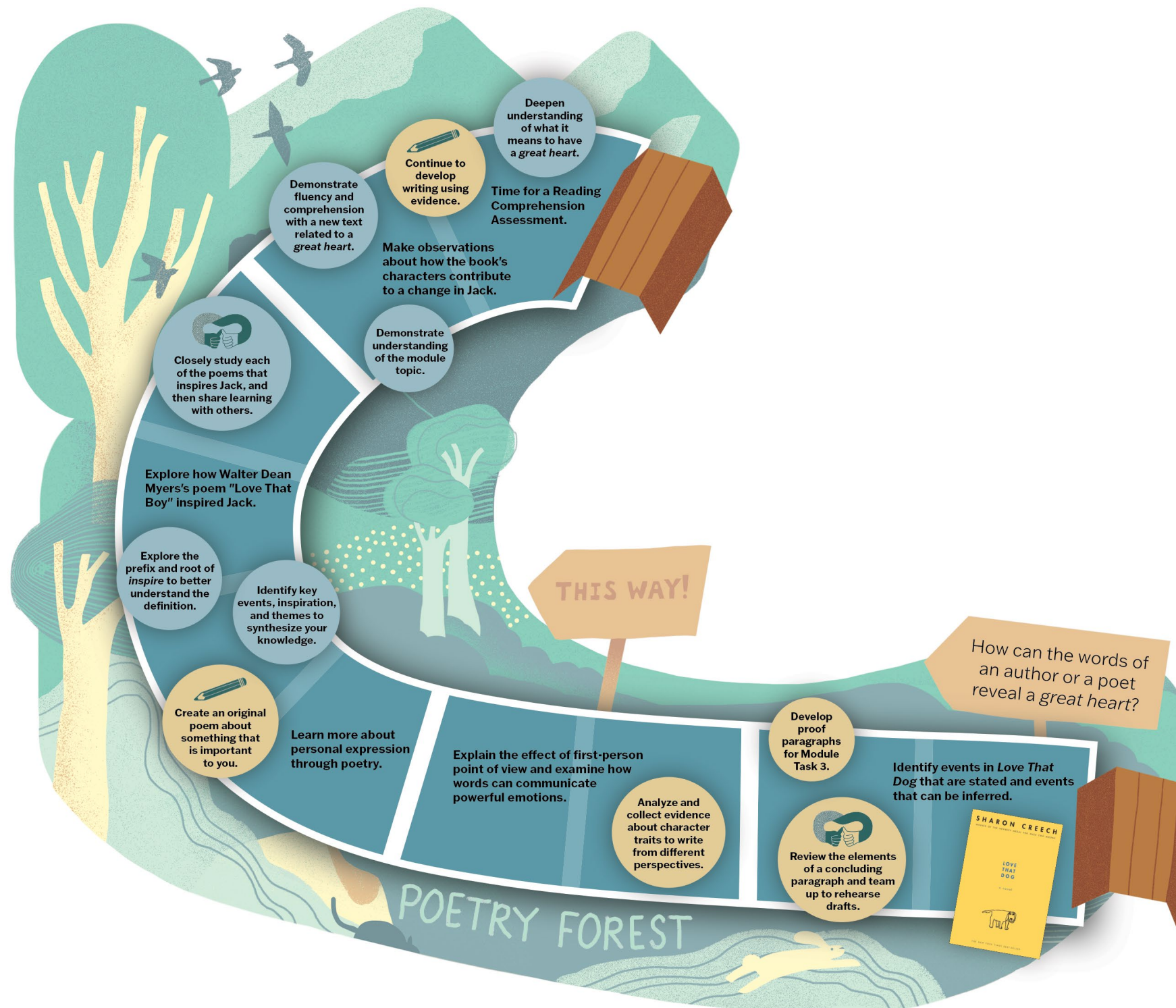
Learn about Walter Dean Myers and how he demonstrated a great heart during his lifetime.

Discuss observations and wonders about "The Legacy of Walter Dean Myers."

FIGURATIVE FIELDS

1 SPACE = 1 DAILY LESSON	LANGUAGE/ READING	WRITING
	HISTORY	VISUAL ART
	SCIENCE	

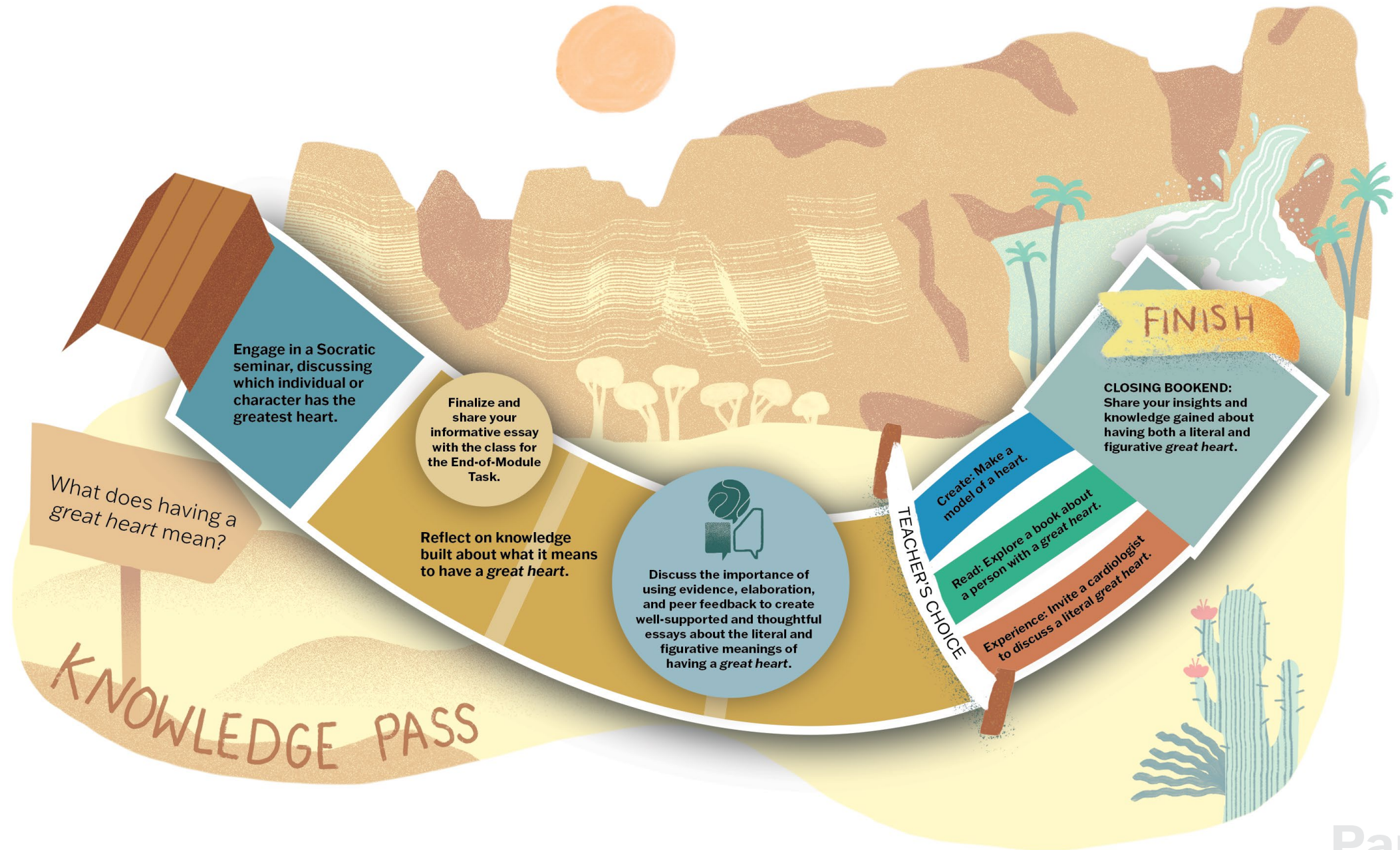
During the following two weeks, students explore a story that seamlessly weaves poetry into their learning, and they begin to craft their own poems.



Part 4

1 SPACE = 1 DAILY LESSON	LANGUAGE/ READING	WRITING
	HISTORY	VISUAL ART
	SCIENCE	

During the final week, students celebrate and reflect on the knowledge they've gained through complex texts, videos, and poetry. They showcase their new knowledge and skills in a Socratic seminar and an end-of-module informative essay.



1 SPACE = 1 DAILY LESSON	LANGUAGE/ READING	WRITING
	HISTORY	VISUAL ART
	SCIENCE	



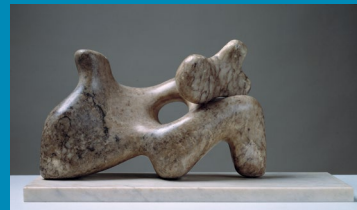
Knowledge is your superpower.

- Read great books from around the world.
- Explore documents that take you back in time.
- Write like an author.
- Discuss and debate topics you care about.
- Study art to make paintings come to life.

Ready to tap into knowledge?

GRADE 4 MODULES

- Module 1** | A Great Heart
- Module 2** | Myths and Enduring Stories
- Module 3** | The American Revolution
- Module 4** | Let's Play Ball



ON THE COVER

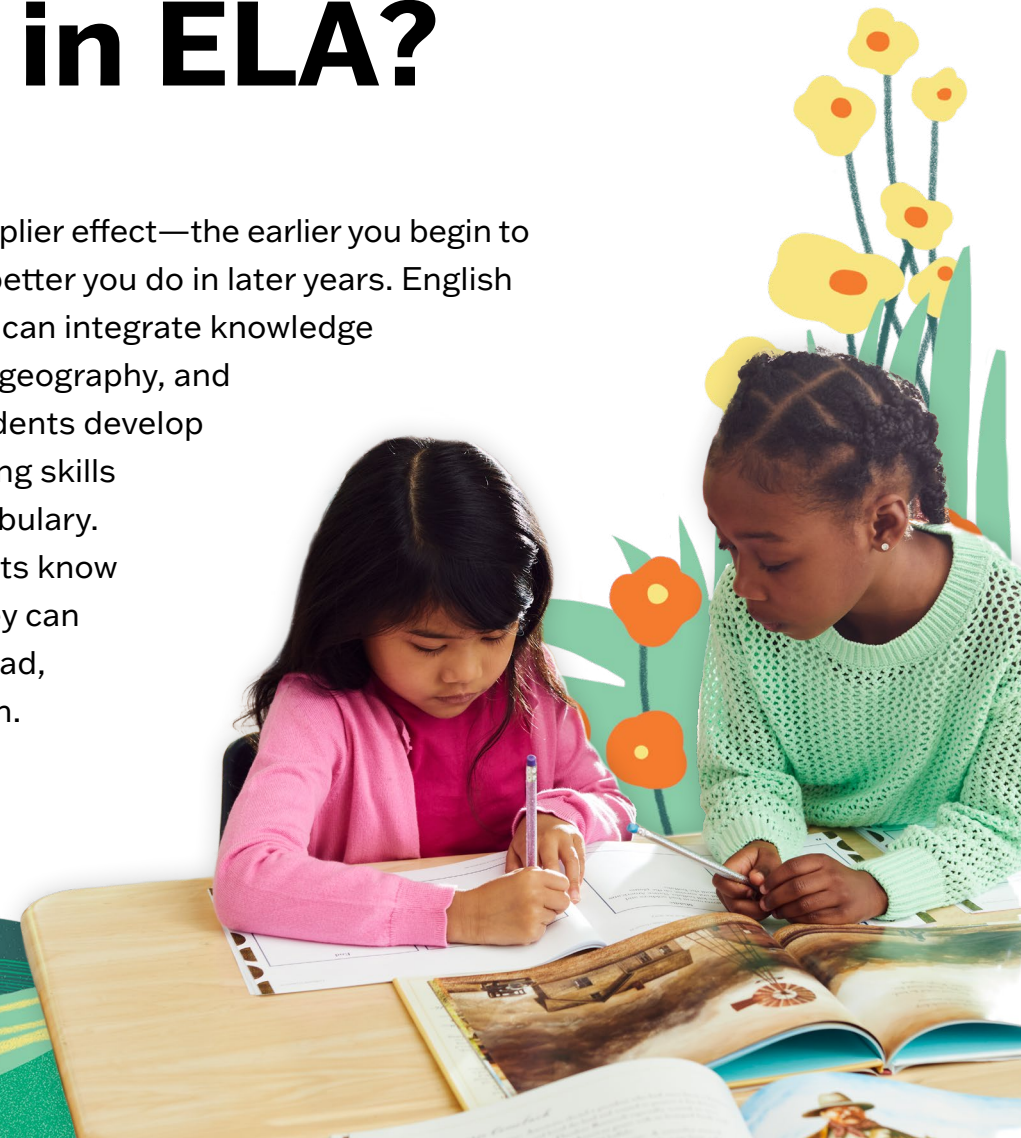
Mother and Child, 1934
 Dame Barbara Hepworth
 Cumberland alabaster on marble base,
 230 × 455 × 189 mm

Purchased with assistance from the Friends of the Tate Gallery
 1993. © Dame Barbara Hepworth. Photo: Tate Gallery



What does *knowledge building* mean in ELA?

Knowledge has a multiplier effect—the earlier you begin to build knowledge, the better you do in later years. English language arts lessons can integrate knowledge from science, history, geography, and other topics while students develop their reading and writing skills and expand their vocabulary. Because when students know a lot about a topic, they can more easily learn to read, write, speak, and listen.





Art opens up knowledge building for *all students*.

Arts & Letters students engage with significant works of art—including paintings, illustrations, prints, sculpture, architecture, and photographs—that provide diverse access points to a topic so learners at all levels can build strong literacy skills.

Analyzing fine art helps students hone their observation, writing, speaking, and listening skills—all without the hurdle of decoding written text. Through repeated exposure and rigorous questioning, students deepen their knowledge while making connections to written text and other works of art. With the use of art, students with dyslexia and multilingual learners can better engage in class discussions without barriers.





Support for *multilingual* learners.

Arts & Letters weaves oral language development into lesson design, recognizing the vast body of research that demonstrates the importance of oral practice for multilingual learners. Lessons also include Language Support and Differentiation Support notes so that teachers can scaffold multilingual learners in the moment to engage in grade-level content.

Arts & Letters also includes *Prologue*, a supplemental set of lessons developed specifically for additional support of multilingual learners. These research-backed lessons focus on language development while giving students the background they need to participate in whole-class instruction. They include scaffolds for students with beginning and intermediate English proficiency levels, as well as connections to the Spanish language.



A rigorous English program *empowers* students.

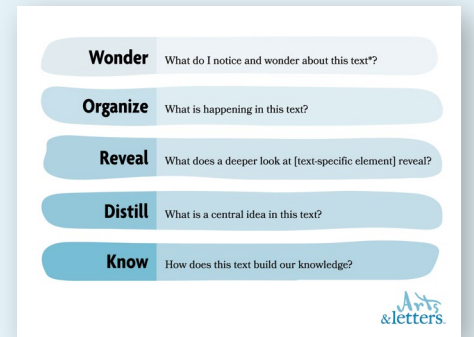
By providing a framework for inquiry, strategically revisiting essential topics throughout the curriculum, and providing opportunities for all students to access the learning through art, *Arts & Letters* helps students build rich layers of knowledge. Through productive struggle, all learners are empowered to tackle the rigor of grade-level content with confidence and joy.

Curriculum Components

Each grade level includes 4 modules that center on a single topic. Each module is 37–40 lessons and each lesson is 60 minutes. Modules build student knowledge on the topic by immersing students deeply in carefully sequenced texts. *Arts & Letters* modules span content areas including science, history, visual art, literature, poetry, and music.

The program includes the following:

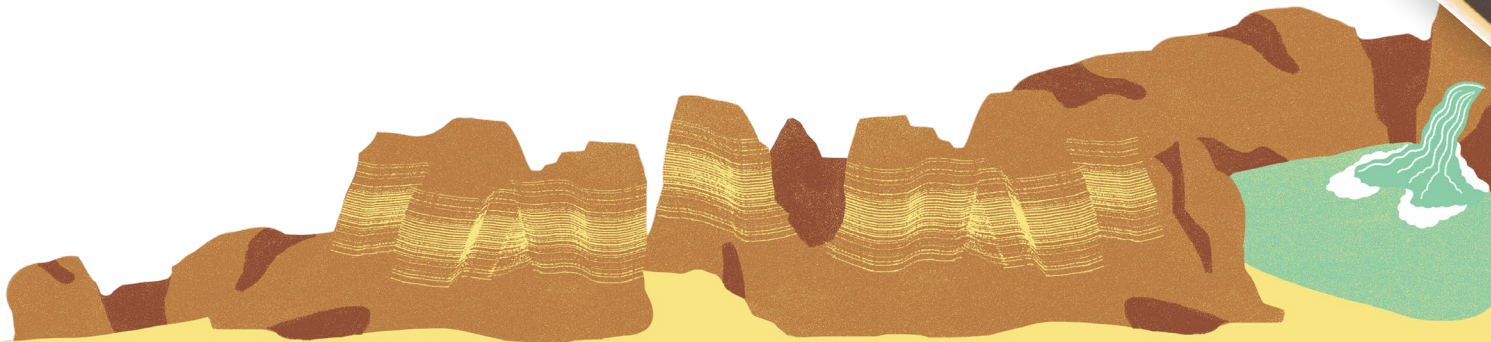
- *Teach* book (the teacher edition)
- *Learn* book (the student workbook)
- *Prologue* (for multilingual learner support)
- Knowledge Deck Cards
- Classroom posters
- Trade books
- *Arts & Letters* digital license to access:
 - Colleague to Colleague videos
 - More videos
 - Daily lesson slides
 - Digital assessments and reporting
 - and much more



The Great Minds *promise.*

For schools and districts adopting *Arts & Letters*, we offer professional learning opportunities crafted by our team of teacher-writers. We've developed two tracks of learning, one for teachers and one for leaders. Our team of experts also provide implementation guidance on different platforms, from blogs and social media to digital and in-person training.

Through ongoing support, we will help you effectively implement the curriculum and grow in confidence as you learn to lead your *Arts & Letters* classroom.





At Great Minds, we strongly believe that every child is capable of greatness, especially when they're given access to engaging, knowledge-building instructional materials.

Contact your Great Minds representative for a deeper dive into the learning design behind *Arts & Letters*.



