

Required Reading FAQs

How were the texts on the list chosen?

With the help of teachers, specialists, and district leaders, the CUSD AZCCRS Reading List was adopted in June 2013. The process began with a thoughtful, careful, and well-trained group of committee members (composed of teachers, specialists, and administrators). Over the course of multiple meetings, the committee members suggested books using criteria from Appendix A of the ACCRS State Standards, as well as the PARCC Content Frameworks.

The texts were **read and evaluated by teachers** across the district. Parent evaluations were also solicited and collected. After reviewing this information, a list was recommended to the CUSD School Board. The list was posted for a 90-day review to further solicit feedback from teachers and the community. In June 2013, the list was approved by the CUSD Governing Board.

Which books are required, and which books are optional?

The left column (“Required”) of the CUSD AZCCRS Reading List indicates the texts that must be read by students at each grade level. Grades K-3 include stories for the teacher to read aloud to students. These texts are meant to progressively move students up a staircase of text complexity. All students in the district will be expected to read these titles (unless exempted by an I.E.P.). In Kindergarten, students may require prompting and support. As with all instruction, teacher decisions regarding scaffolding and accommodations/differentiation for specific students would apply.

If the book is “required,” do I need to teach the whole novel/text?

There are many purposes to the required reads. According to the AZCCRS, students are expected to have common background of literary knowledge which includes not only particular exemplar texts, but also appropriate levels of text complexity. At the secondary level, not every “required” text must be taught cover-to-cover, nor should it be. Teachers should exercise professional judgment, as many of the exemplar texts include provocative or mature content. Remember, the purpose of the required reads is to provide teachers with the content by which they deliver the AZCCRS standards.

Can other texts (beyond the list) be taught?

A teacher’s priority and requirement is to utilize the required texts as indicated by the grade level list in instruction. If these requirements are met, teachers may utilize complex, challenging texts beyond the list with parent and/or administrative approval. Teachers should be cautious to allow plenty of instructional time for deep, carefully planned units of instruction.

Are the books assigned to other grades flexible? Can I teach a text on another grade’s list?

The texts on the list have been strategically chosen to move students up a staircase of complexity as well as allow for differentiation (to challenge or scaffold as needed). The texts on each grade level’s list are protected and reserved for that grade level solely.

If I teach grade-level students, can we read an honors/advanced level book?

A teacher’s priority and requirement is to teach and utilize the required texts as indicated by the grade level list. When choosing the texts from the center column (“Reserved Extended Text”) of the CUSD AZCCRS Reading List, teachers can teach the honors or most challenging texts to suit the needs of their class or students.

What about CATS classes?

Currently, the reading selections for CATS will remain the same as they have in past years. The reading selections for these classes can be found on a link in the curriculum website. The texts listed at other grade-levels (either on the CATS List or the CUSD AZCCRS Reading List) are protected and reserved.

Are there resources available?

Resources have been made available to each site. Texts have been ordered and shipped to each school. In addition, the curriculum website offers “suggested resource guides” for some of the texts. These guides offer teachers the building blocks of a unit, and a means to begin planning instruction. Ideally, the bank will continue to build as educators from across the district collaborate.

If there’s an excerpt in our anthology/basal of a title taught at a later grade, can we read it?

The anthologies and basals help teach skills and strategies. If students are only reading a small excerpt (**not** the entire text), and the text is being read to facilitate specific skills and strategies, then it is understandable that some excerpts may be read.

What about timing? How long should we take to read these texts?

Some texts will demand a longer instructional time, others less time. Designate planning time with those at your site to ensure successful, standards-based instruction that best serves the students in your class.

Can we use audio versions of the book?

The purpose of the chosen books is for students to read the text. However, a teacher may strategically and thoughtfully provide occasional audio/video snippets to *enhance* instruction. There should be specific reasons for that type of instruction, including alignment to the standards. For students who need accommodations, please work with your site specialists (Reading Specialist, SPED, ELL, Case Managers, etc.).

How can we obtain copies of shorter texts?

Obtaining and using the shorter, open-source texts available online is a decision best made by the teachers and administration at the site. Copies can be made and recycled year-to-year. Another option is to allow students to find, read, and use the texts online (in a lab, a classroom, a library, or at home). This may be an ideal opportunity to prepare students for PARCC and their technological future.

Can these texts be taught by other teachers (in other disciplines)?

The required texts listed must be taught by the ELA teacher; however, some texts on the list allow the opportunity to build cross-disciplinary instruction.

Will our students be tested on these books?

As a professional classroom teacher, utilizing summative and formative assessment is one of the best means to determine student growth. At this time, there are no district assessments for these texts.

How should these texts be taught?

Students in CUSD receive standards-based instruction, and these texts are a means to support that outcome. The goal of this list is to have students reading complex, challenging texts independently and proficiently (please see RL or RI.10). We rely on the professional knowledge of CUSD teachers to scaffold and differentiate, as necessary, in order to provide students with rigorous instruction. Some options include literature circles, small group instruction, etc.

Can a read aloud be used as a literature study in the following grade level?

One goal of this reading list is that students are building a body of knowledge, and that teachers can rely on the fact that students come with experience with texts taught at previous grades. Teachers should be thoughtful about investing valuable instructional time on a text that has been studied in an earlier grade. Teachers should consider using another text that can be compared and utilized to stretch student thinking.