

ELA guide for communication and collaboration

Amplify has created the Amplify ELD curriculum to support core Amplify ELA lessons so that ELs across all levels of proficiency can access and fully engage in rigorous grade-level content. These lessons consistently interact with and influence each other. It is imperative that an ELD teacher and an ELA teacher collaborate to provide a rich learning experience for English Learners, allowing them to learn content while simultaneously developing language skills. ELA and ELD teachers each bring unique talents, viewpoints, and expertise to the education venue. *Collaboration is the key to success.* There are several ways in which this collaboration can be achieved.

One approach to collaboration is to use the Same Lesson Pacing. In this type of pacing, the ELA and ELD teacher teach the same lesson on the same day, with the ELA teacher teaching the core lesson and the ELD teacher teaching the ELD version of the lesson. For example, if students read the ELA *Red Scarf Girl*, Lesson 1: “The World of *Red Scarf Girl*” on Monday in the ELA class, they should then be working on the same text in the ELD *Red Scarf Girl*, Lesson 1: “The Happiest Girl in the World” in the ELD classroom. Teaching the same lesson serves as a reteaching opportunity of critical language skills needed to better engage with the content. Students would, in essence, be “double-dipping” by practicing the same content twice in one day, and in turn build confidence in academic language. In some ELA units, there may not be a corresponding ELD lesson that fits the same text. On these days, the ELD teacher has the flexibility to focus on extension activities from previous ELA lessons to amplify students’ oral discourse and writing skills.

An alternate approach to keeping the same pacing of lessons between the ELA and ELD classrooms is to implement Staggered Pacing. In this pacing, lessons are staggered by 1-2 days, where the ELD teacher is continually 1-2 days ahead of the ELA classroom pacing of lessons. The ELD teacher could pre-teach a selected text, focusing on difficult vocabulary, practicing oral sentence starters, building background, and making text-to-self connections with the students. This “jump-start” to language demands featured in upcoming lessons would allow all students to equally access the core content. For example, in collaborative planning, if an ELD teacher knows that the ELA teacher is currently teaching Lesson 6: “Revisiting to Go Deeper” of the *Red Scarf Girl*, he or she can teach Lesson 8: “The Teachers Were Nowhere to Be Seen” of the *Red Scarf Girl*. The students would then be practicing the skills of finding text evidence to reveal a character’s feelings and sharing orally with peers two days prior to engaging with these language demands in the ELA classroom. The advanced exposure to unknown vocabulary, fluency practice, oral discourse about the content, and modeled think-alouds in their ELD classroom days before will benefit all ELs and set students up for success in their ELA classroom lesson. This approach would equally build students’ confidence in academic language.

Ideally, an ELA and an ELD teacher would meet one time per week for a 20-30 minute formal conversation regarding students’ individual progress and overall lesson pacing. It is suggested that this meeting take place mid-week, on a Wednesday or Thursday, so that the two teachers could discuss what has been taught in Lessons 1 and 2 of the 6-Lesson Cycle pacing of the ELD curriculum. Timing is crucial; the ELD teacher will want to follow closely which text has been taught by the ELA teacher, whether the two teachers are following the Same Lesson Pacing or a Staggered Pacing. For example, in a Same Lesson Pacing scenario, the ELD teacher may need to use the adapted ELA text for students working at the Emerging level, or focus on different vocabulary (highlighted within Amplify’s ELD lessons) for further discussion within the Expanding or Bridging levels.

While looking back at what has been taught in Lessons 1 and 2, the ELA teacher can relay individual student needs or strengths that have appeared, so that the ELD teacher can better support each individual learner in the following days' ELD lessons. For example, In the ELA Red Scarf Girl, Lesson 1: "The Happiest Girl in the World", students read a passage of text about a character, Ji-li. If the ELA teacher noticed that Student Z was having difficulty comprehending the text and making a personal connection orally, the ELD teacher could then set a priority to go through the text at a slower pace or use the adapted version of the text (in Amplify's Emerging level activity) with Student Z, as well as use sentence frames to support language production. The ELA and ELD teacher should also collaborate during this time to look ahead at lesson pacing. Are the lessons accurately on track, taking into account any holidays, assemblies, or the need to review/reteach content? Will the upcoming text mirror the 6-Lesson Cycle? Together, the teachers can co-plan the following week of pacing. A general agenda and timeline for a collaboration meeting may look like this:

- **Review:** Review the previous three days of lessons, specifically the text featured and major learning activities and objectives (5-7 minutes).
- **Reflect and Analyze:** Discuss individual students' strengths and needs that have developed in relation to accessing and engaging with the content (10 minutes).
- **Plan:** Project a pacing guideline of the next week's lessons, including the text featured and possible language demands (10 minutes).

In addition to weekly meetings, Amplify strongly encourages frequent informal communication via email to collaborate and monitor student progress between the ELA and ELD classroom. Email communication may include samples of student writing that has been "handed in" electronically by the student, or observational notes of a student's interaction within the classroom. This communication should be a two-way street; the ELA teacher should share work samples and data, and the ELD teacher should similarly share progress in meeting language goals previously established in a weekly collaboration meeting. The emails may be brief since both teachers are preoccupied with their teaching duties, however they are rich in importance. Depending on a school's policies, the school could choose to let both the ELD and ELA teacher access the Amplify ELA Gradebook scores of each other's classroom assignments to track student growth and analyze areas of need. By working together, this communication will paint a clear picture of where a student needs more or less scaffolding to better access the content and meet the CA CCSS. It will ensure that ELs are developing their language skills and making steady progress toward closing the academic language gap.