This summer, as always, district leaders can send key individuals to attend a national or international TCRWP institute and/or you can request a “Homegrown” institute tailored specifically to the needs and aspirations of your teachers and students. Homegrown institutes happen around the world, both in-person and virtually. They bring together educators—as few as 12 or as many as 800—in a community of study around the teaching of reading, writing, or phonics.

These institutes are flexible by design. Although we have already begun planning for the small roster of these described below, you are welcome to propose an entirely different topic. Homegrown institutes can be either on-site or they can be virtual. Most Homegrowns are four days, Monday-Thursday, with an optional fifth day focused on a special topic or on support for literacy leaders.

More districts request Homegrown institutes than we can staff, so for this reason, please select a few possible weeks (1st, 2nd, 3rd choice) and do so as soon as possible. To schedule a Homegrown institute, please fill out this form or write to Kathy Neville at kathy@readingandwritingproject.org.

Below you will see the topics that we have already begun to plan for 2023:

- The Essentials of Teaching Writing: Structures, Methods, and Curriculum to Turn All Students into Writers: Grades K-8
- The Essentials of Teaching Reading: Structures, Methods, and Curriculum to Turn All Students into Readers: Grades K-8
- Responsive, Assessment-Based Small Group Work: Toolkits and Methods to Accelerate Growth in Phonics, Fluency, and Comprehension: Grades K-8
- Small Groups and Conferences that Make a Dramatic Difference to Young Writers: Grades K-8
- Rebalancing Balanced Literacy: Integrate Science of Reading into Your K-2 Reading Workshop: Grades K-2
- Using TCRWP’s Newly Published Jump Rope Readers to Support Early Readers: Grades K-2
- Foundational Reading in the Upper-Grade Workshop: Supporting Data-Based Phonics, Comprehension, and Fluency: Grades 3-6
- Argument Writing and Research Skills across the Disciplines: ELA, Social Studies, and Science: Grades 9-12
Writing as a force of expression is more important than ever. Our students need to be heard, they want to develop powerful voices, they long to be confident writers. Many teachers report that they still see gaps in stamina and skill arising from the pandemic years and they are eager for help turning students into powerful and passionate writers. All of this means that it is critical to pour all of our research, our shared knowledge, and our love into making writing instruction vibrant, accessible, and transformative.

TCRWP is especially primed to help you teach writing in potent and practical ways because we’ve devoted our last few years to the research, teaching, and writing work involved in creating new Writing Units of Study. At this institute, you can expect to harvest the Project’s newest and deepest insights about the teaching of writing and to learn with intensity from the community of practice at TC. You’ll learn about our new tools, curriculum, mentor texts, and methods.

You’ll also re-energize yourself as a mentor writer and writing instructor. You’ll study progressions and toolkits, conferring and small group work. You’ll learn about formative assessment, and how to use tools to not only find out more about your writers, but also to learn how to teach inside a spiral of skill development, so that your teaching builds on and supports instruction that happens before and after you. You’ll study the small, implicit moves that make a writing workshop magical—the relationship building, the intimacy, the ways you can respond to writers so they feel affirmed and seen. You’ll dive deeply into methods and curriculum, so that you emerge with contagious confidence.

There has never been a more important time for teachers all over the world to have a way to recharge themselves. Come, ready to be reminded of why you chose this profession in the first place of what beautiful teaching and learning can look and feel like, and of what it means to learn side by side with others who share your passion for writing, for sharing stories, for speaking truths, and for social justice.
We have seen, over the last few years, the power of reading as a pathway to knowledge and a portal to imagined worlds full of humor, adventure, and possibility. We have seen young readers discover the magic of being able to slide across a word, translating squiggles on the page into meaning. And we have seen that these powers have not been equally distributed. It, therefore, falls on us, as educators, to move heaven and earth to be sure that all young people feel welcome in the world of literacy. This is urgent and beautiful work.

At the reading institute, you’ll hear about predictable structures that allow kids to read with deep engagement and allow you to teach in potent, assessment-based ways. You’ll learn how you can curate texts and plan curriculum so that all the readers in your care are able to engage in all-important practice with the essential skills of reading.

You’ll learn how to make your minilessons compelling and lively so they rally youngsters into shared community reading. You’ll develop strategies to deliberately adjust your read alouds so that kids experience the power of the skills you are teaching. This might mean helping kids to roar like the troll under the three Billy Goats Gruff’s bridge, or it may mean helping kids synthesize what they’ve learned about hurricanes across a few related texts. Of course, it is equally important that you help readers draw on a knowledge of phonics in order to decode and to develop their bank of words they recognize without needing to decode.

You’ll study the most significant reading strategies for your students’ age level. And because now, more than ever, you need to teach the full span of learners, it will be critical for you to grasp how those skills fit into progressions that develop across time. By studying learning progressions and bands of text complexity, you’ll become more adept at helping kids move up levels of text complexity in both fiction and nonfiction. The truth is, for reading instruction to be effective, you need a deep toolkit of ready-to-go small groups so you are ready to celebrate and support English learners, children with learning differences, and reluctant readers, as well as avid and fluent readers. We’ll build that toolkit this week, and make sure that you know where resources are when you need them.

It will be important to also remember the big purposes of reading—how reading builds empathy and social bonds, how readers learn more about themselves and about the world, how reading offers mirrors and windows. We’ll help you broaden the range of texts your students encounter and engage families in ways that make reading personal. You’ll have the satisfaction of working on your reading in the company of others so that you can bring this contagious, affirmative belief in reading to your classroom.
In this institute, you will learn high-leverage small groups that you can use and adapt so as to provide responsive small group instruction that accelerates your readers’ progress. You’ll gain powerful insights into the most essential standards-based skills, and be reminded that for each of those skills, kids need to move along a pathway of progress. How important it is that you have lean and accessible ways to grasp what your youngsters can do and can’t yet do, and ways to scaffold their forward progress.

Towards this goal, you’ll learn to use universal screeners, standardized test scores, and formative assessments to set goals with and for kids, and you’ll learn to use your knowledge of research and of reading development as well as of levels of phonics and text complexity to identify the decoding, fluency, comprehension, and reading habits kids most need.

To help you be poised to respond to those needs efficiently, we’ll help you develop a toolkit that will set you up to support your full range of readers. You’ll learn how to draw on decodable texts, mini-charts, learning progressions, practice texts, student work, videos and other tools to make your teaching more concrete, specific, and responsive to each students’ needs. During the institute, plan to gather your favorite markers and Post-its, your tape and glue sticks, an art notebook or a binder, so you can create a toolkit to support your teaching.

Of course, there are methods for leading small groups that are transformational, and you’ll watch videos of small groups, see role plays of them, and receive coaching as you lead small groups. You’ll come to have a small repertoire of tried and true methods that you return to repeatedly, including some that involve shared reading, guided reading, word sorts, syntax surgery, and the like. You’ll also learn ways to make the work of planning and implementing small group instruction much more sustainable.

Expect to emerge more planned for the upcoming year, eager to share and collaborate with colleagues, and with renewed energy!
This institute will help your school become a place where kids like to write, and teachers like to teach writing. That magic requires eye-to-eye, personalized teaching. You’ll learn how to lead small groups and conferences that work that magic—but this personal sort of teaching is hard to do when kids are reluctant to write, when teaching writing feels a bit like pulling teeth so we’ll first help you to ramp up the energy for writing with a whole-class emphasis on celebration, compliments, breathtaking mentor texts, and identity building. Then we’ll show you how you can work within that ramped up enthusiasm for writing to lead small groups that actually have real-world, obvious, accountable traction.

We’ll especially help you study student work in argument and information writing with the lens of writing development in mind, learning to see the most important next steps writers need to take. And we’ll help you tap the power of the tool-chest of mini-charts, micro-progressions, mentor texts and examples in the new Writing Units of Study so that you don’t feel empty-handed as you teach. How important it is that you have grab-and-go tools that allow you to respond in the moment to whatever your kids show you!

There is widespread agreement that our students need dramatic infusions of energy and direction so they make notable progress as narrative, argument, and information writers, and also so they begin to tap into that wonderful sense of “I have something to say that the world wants to hear.” This institute will help you teach in ways that support that progress.

SMALL GROUPS AND CONFERENCES THAT MAKE A DRAMATIC DIFFERENCE TO YOUNG WRITERS

Grades: K-2, 3-5, 6-8, or 3-8

This training was out of the park. I would definitely say, without a doubt, the best training I’ve been to in 18 years. Everything helped a beginner to embrace new concepts, or a veteran of workshop training, like me, to embrace all aspects of workshop to make it more functional and beneficial for myself and students.”

—Middle School Teacher, Large Suburban School District, California
The institute is designed to provide K-2 teachers, literacy coaches, and school leaders with a grounding in the new K-2 Reading Units of Study and the Jump Rope Readers, and with the confidence and skills necessary to bring research on the science of reading into a joyful and responsive reading workshop.

You’ll be given an overview of how you can use universal screeners and formative in-class assessments to provide readers with the texts and the teaching they need to accelerate their progress. You’ll overview the research that can help you understand where your students are in a progression of phonics, phonological awareness, vocabulary, monitoring for sense, fluency, and comprehension skills so that you can accelerate their progress forward. You’ll tap into the power of the high-leverage small groups in the new Units of Study, learning to adapt these so they can become a ready resource, helping you to teach responsively.

Young readers need it all. They need to be welcomed into the joyful world of literacy and to know they belong in that world. They also need to be able to slide across the letters in a word, translating squiggles on the page into meaning. They need to grow to understand how stories unfold and to use that knowledge to predict that a character will encounter trouble and will somehow emerge okay. They need to be able to learn from texts of all kinds—and to carry what they learn from one text to another, developing knowledge that informs comprehension.

The institute will be especially helpful for experienced K-2 workshop teachers and literacy coaches who are interested in rethinking balanced literacy practices, reclaiming and rejuvenating the best of balanced literacy while also drawing on the rich and important trove of insights that the science of reading and knowledge generation research offers. But there will also be special sections for teachers who are new to K-2 reading instruction, and need lean, practical help leaning on the new Units of Study to teach in responsive ways.

Across the institute, you will learn how to be sure your students are taught with curricula that support orthographic mapping and that also values growth mindset, culturally-responsive pedagogy, authenticity, accountability, agency, and choice.

The institute will assume that you have access to the new Units of Study—whether digital or on paper—although some of you may attend, wanting to decide if this new curriculum is right for your district. You’ll also explore our new Jump Rope Readers, a series of high-interest decodable books, learning ways these books can help you give kids opportunities to apply the phonics they are learning.

You’ll explore new read alouds embedded into the Units of Study, most of which are by underrepresented authors, and you’ll learn to read aloud these texts to support rich comprehension work. The week, then, promises to be a full one!
USING TCRWP’S NEWLY PUBLISHED JUMP ROPE READERS TO SUPPORT EARLY READERS

*2 Days, Offered Virtually Only*

Grades: K-2

This institute will focus on the contribution decodable texts can make to your primary classrooms. You’ll dive into TCRWP’s newly published, state-of-the-art decodable texts, Jump Rope Readers. We’ll share the research that informs these texts and show you some of the ways in which they support phonic decoding as well as sight vocabulary, semantic vocabulary, syntax, and knowledge building. You’ll see ways in which these meaningful decodable texts allow your students to apply the phonic skills they are learning to authentic tasks, keeping their volume of reading high.

You’ll be coached in ways to evaluate other published decodable texts, so you can thoughtfully select those that will be especially supportive for your students.

In addition to getting a behind-the-scenes look at the making of Jump Rope Readers, we’ll help you write your own decodable texts. You’ll find that doing so helps you develop a deeper understanding of phonics, and is also terrific fun. Once you begin writing these texts, it’s hard to not imagine ways in which your students can also be invited into the fun.

This institute will study ways to assess your readers so as to match them to decodable texts that will work for them. You’ll study ways to support students’ phonic and decoding work as they read these texts, ways to group and create text sets for students, and ways to coach and prompt students to support accuracy and comprehension. You’ll explore a handful of high-leverage small groups you can use with decodable texts, including small group shared reading, guided reading, and partner reading.

You’ll leave the institute with a new vision of the ways you can use decodable texts to help students grow as word solvers, and as critical thinkers and observers of the world.
Helping all kids become proficient readers has to be our most urgent work. In every corner of the world, educators are asking, “How can teachers in upper and middle grades provide kids who need foundational help with the sequenced instruction and significant opportunities to practice what they need, while also giving them access to grade-level challenges?” During this institute, we will equip you with methods, knowledge, and access to resources so you can help kids whose reading skills are far below benchmark.

Part of this institute will involve helping you know and prioritize units that give access to the widest range of readers. We’ll share recommended sequences with you, helping you understand the logic behind them, and explore the role of digital texts, read-alouds (and video-alouds) that give kids access to grade-level complex texts.

We know your students may have gaps in their phonics knowledge, so part of the institute will help you build your phonics knowledge, so you’re ready to support students as they decode multisyllabic words, build their phonemic awareness, and strengthen their sight vocabularies. You’ll hear about quick assessments that can give you a snapshot of students’ phonics knowledge, providing a starting point for instruction. We’ll share our newest thinking about how upper-grade teachers can teach phonics with brief, everyday instruction that can fill in gaps for some kids—and illuminate students with deeper needs that will require more intensive support.

We’ll dive into the research about fluency instruction and help you tap the power of shared reading and targeted partner work around fluency. You’ll get practice coaching on the run as kids read aloud.

Chapter book reading has its own set of challenges, so you’ll study bands of text complexity and learn powerful ways to support kids in transitioning into chapter books and moving up levels. You’ll learn about tools from TCRWP that can support your students in this work. And you’ll learn about research-based comprehension skills that can equip your readers to tackle challenging texts.

In many places, the lingering effects of the pandemic have led to more behavioral challenges than in prior years. We’ll look at how to help kids regulate their emotions and affirm kids’ quirky selves so they want to engage in becoming more powerful readers. And we’ll share the kinds of series, authors, and titles that get kids to want to read, including easier books that kids don’t mind holding as they get older. We’ll also study the significance of mirrors and windows, and help you build libraries where kids see themselves in books.

*This institute is geared toward 3-6 teachers and interventionists.

**FOUNDATIONAL READING IN THE UPPER-GRADE WORKSHOP**

Supporting Data-Based Phonics, Comprehension, and Fluency

Grades: 3-6
ARGUMENT WRITING AND RESEARCH SKILLS ACROSS THE DISCIPLINES

ELA, Social Studies, and Science

Grades: 9-12

This institute aims to bring teachers together across the disciplines to study the art of argumentation. You’ll dive into debate, into research skills, and into argument writing. One of the great skills of participatory democracy is the ability to argue on behalf of oneself and others. When students are taught to argue with logic as well as passion (and to listen to and read the arguments of others, testing them for their logic and credibility), they become discriminating and credible, influential, and engaged. They have learned not only a skill but an identity and a way of life. You’ll practice debate protocols, with an emphasis on arguing to learn versus arguing to win. You’ll learn about high-leverage coaching in logical reasoning, in adapting arguments for specific audiences, and in acknowledging complexity and counterclaims.

You’ll also gain access to TCRWP’s resources for teaching argumentation, including mentor texts, text sets and teaching tools. An express goal of this institute is to help teachers improve cross-grade, cross department cohesion. It is helpful if students can carry skills and practices from one part of the curriculum to another. You’ll have the opportunity to think vertically in department teams about progressions, and standards such as NGSS and the Social Justice standards. You’ll also have the opportunity to think laterally across grade level teams about questions such as which department will teach the foundations of argument writing or of research skills? How will other teachers and disciplines build on those foundations?

Inside of argument writing, you’ll explore what makes some argument writing so compelling. You’ll have the chance to write yourself, and to develop teacher demonstration texts that you can use in your classroom. You’ll gather a repertoire of argument writing strategies to help your students become not only more proficient as argument writers, but also more gripping, so they get their audience to care while also teaching about an issue. You’ll also explore how to teach argument writing that allows for complexity and conditionality.

You’ll also learn an array of strategies to improve students’ skills at nonfiction reading and research. All too often, what looks like trouble in argument writing is actually trouble with reading—students are struggling to have enough knowledge to write well because they find the texts and resources hard. You’ll learn a variety of ways to support students who find print hard, and ways to build text sets that are multi-modal, so more students can thrive as writers. Expect to research, debate, and write, and to leave with an armful of resources, some authored during the institute, that will help you teach argument writing and research skills with more grace and power.