

Expository  
Reading and  
Writing  
Curriculum

# ERWC

## Expository

## Reading

## and Writing

## Curriculum

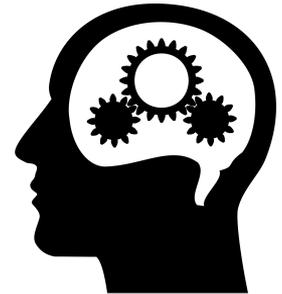
The **goal** of ERWC is to promote postsecondary **success** for all students by preparing them for the **literacy and communication demands** they are likely to encounter in college and career.

# What is **ERWC**?



The Expository Reading and Writing Curriculum (ERWC) began in 2004 as a full-year course for 11th and 12th grades employing **an inquiry-based, rhetorical approach** with an **integrated** reading, writing, and oral communication curriculum designed to increase the academic preparation of diverse students with varied learning needs.

Most recently, the curriculum has been expanded to include modules for grades 6–8 that include both integrated ELD and designated ELD lessons.



# A Few Facts about ERWC

- To date, more than **16,000** educators across California have participated in ERWC professional learning seminars. More than **1,000** CA high schools have adopted the ERWC as a full-year, 12th grade course. Expansion continues into the 9th, 10th, and 11th grades and into other states.
- The curriculum was developed by teachers in partnership with CSU faculty.
- Now ERWC is expanding into grades 6–8 with four Integrated / Designated ELD units at each grade level .

Click to see more info  
on the ERWC Website



# ERWC Modules (Units) for Grades 6–8

ERWC has newly developed modules for grades 6–8 that include designated language support (ELD) and are available in the 2025–26 school year for trained teachers to use.

## These modules include...

### 6th Grade:

- *Booked*
- *Facts of Life*
- *Keeping California Wild*
- *The Metaverse and Me*

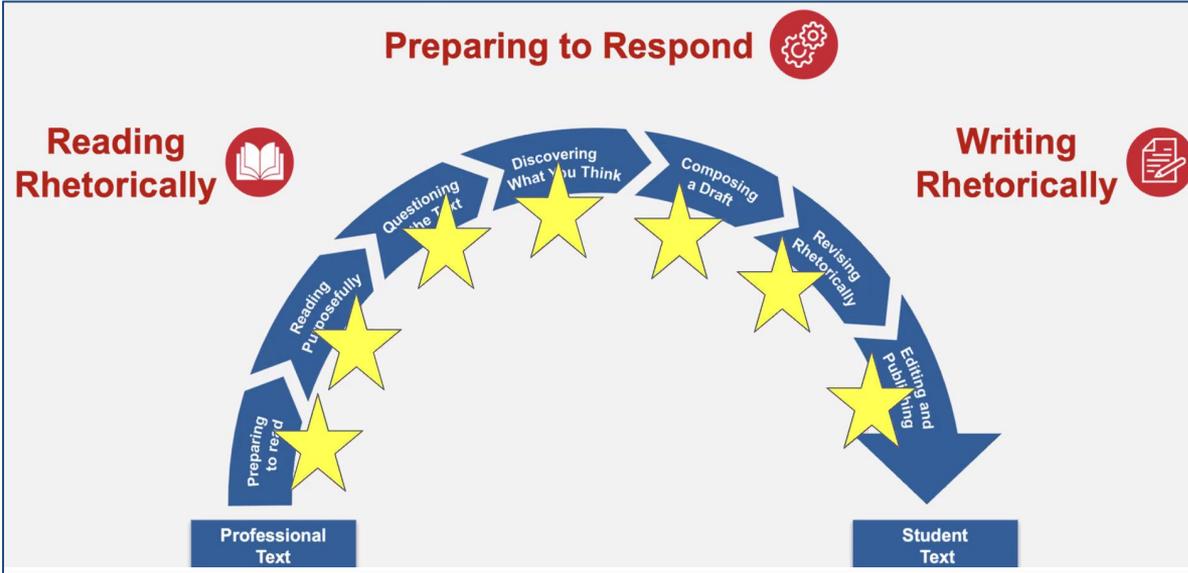
### 7th Grade:

- *My Language Journey*
- *Sharing Stories, Creating Community*
- *They Called Us Enemy*
- *Water Protectors*
- *When You Trap a Tiger*

### 8th Grade:

- *Bees: Nature vs. Technology*
- *Living Beyond Borders*
- *Our Plastic Addiction*
- *Songs of Praise*
- *Underground Abductor*

1. The **integration** of interactive reading and writing processes
2. A rhetorical approach that fosters **critical thinking** and **engagement** through **a relentless focus on the text**
3. Materials and themes that **engage student interest**
4. Classroom activities designed to model and foster the **successful practices of fluent readers and writers**
5. Research-based methodologies with a consistent relationship between **theory and practice**
6. **Built-in flexibility** to allow teachers to respond to varied students' needs and instructional contexts
7. **Alignment** with California's Common Core State **Standards** for English Language Arts and Literacy and the ELD Framework.



= opportunities for students to interact and respond.

The idea of the ERWC “arc” is an essential part of the ERWC course design. The arc enacts the recursive literacy processes that connect the texts students read to the texts they compose. Completing an ERWC module means completing the arc.

ERWC 3.0 Assignment Template Overview		
<i>Teacher Version: Setting Teaching Goals for this Module</i> Setting Learning Goals for the Module		
Reading Rhetorically	Preparing to Read	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Getting Ready to Read</li> <li>- Exploring Key Concepts</li> <li>- Surveying the Text</li> <li>- Making Predictions and Asking Questions</li> <li>- Understanding Key Vocabulary</li> <li>- Creating Personal Learning Goals</li> </ul>
	Reading Purposefully	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reading for Understanding</li> <li>- Annotating and Questioning the Text</li> <li>- Negotiating Meaning</li> <li>- Examining the Structure of the Text</li> <li>- Considering the Rhetorical Situation</li> <li>- Analyzing Rhetorical Grammar</li> <li>- Analyzing Stylistic Choices</li> </ul>
	Questioning the Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Summarizing and Responding</li> <li>- Thinking Critically</li> <li>- Synthesizing Multiple Perspectives</li> <li>- Reflecting on Your Reading Process</li> </ul>
Preparing to Respond	Discovering What You Think	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Considering Your Task and Your Rhetorical Situation</li> <li>- Gathering Relevant Ideas and Materials</li> <li>- Developing a Position</li> </ul>
Writing Rhetorically	Composing a Draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Making Choices about Learning Goals</li> <li>- Making Choices as You Write</li> <li>- Negotiating Voices</li> </ul>
	Revising Rhetorically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analyzing Your Draft Rhetorically</li> <li>- Gathering and Responding to Feedback</li> </ul>
	Editing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Editing Your Draft</li> <li>- Preparing Your Draft for Publication</li> <li>- Reflecting on Your Writing Process</li> </ul>
Reflecting on Your Learning Goals <i>Teacher Version: Reflecting on Your Teaching Process</i>		

November 7, 2025

Hello Kennedy Middle School:

It appears that you're fans of *Facts of Life*. This collection of stories was written years ago but the narratives speak to you. That's the power of short story writing. It brings characters and small problems to the page, often with laughter. Finally, isn't reading fun? I sometimes read during the day and always when I'm bed getting ready for sleep.

Here's a bit of information about me.

- 1) My favorite childhood pet was a dog named Brownie (guess what color he was?)
- 2) I like pizza with 1 finish, up with a slice of watermelon.
- 3) For pleasure I play tennis three times a week.
- 4) Our daughter is a veterinarian who specializes in cats—meow.
- 5) I like to read at night.
- 6) I was a wrestler in high school.
- 7) Yellow is my favorite color.
- 8) I can't say no to ice cream.
- 9) Our grandson is named Toshi. He's four and goes to Japanese school.
- 10) My favorite place in our household is my bed. I keep it tidy.
- 11) My favorite rock group of all time—The Beatles!
- 12) My wife and I are fans of the San Francisco Warriors—the basketball team.
- 13) I don't have a phone and have never had one.

That sums up my report. Please keep reading and above all be super nice to your most excellent teacher, Ms. Murphy.

Take care,



Gary Soto

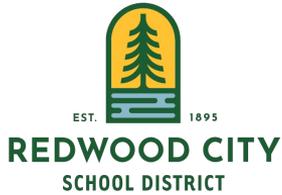
P. S. You might want to locate my comic novel *Puppy Love*. It's about love in seventh grade.

What brilliant letters! I'm lucky to have written.  
A  
G.P.S.

What brilliant letters!

# Gary Soto

## Responds to Kennedy Students' Letters



# Why is ERWC a Good Fit for RCSD?

- Teachers and students desire a **broader selection of texts** with greater **appeal** for our student demographics.
- We have **past experience** with the original ERWC lesson series and training that teachers found beneficial and engaging.
- Modules, training, and class sets of trade books are fully **grant funded** and are provided for free to partner districts.
- Modules were developed to align with the **ELA/ELD Framework** using **Universal Design** concepts and language supports to make rigorous texts more accessible for all learners.
- The philosophy aligns with our **RCSD goals** and Learner Framework.
- Some sites have specific literacy classes where the modules provide needed supplemental support



## ERWC Events in Redwood City School District

- **August 2025 - 4 Day Summer Institute**

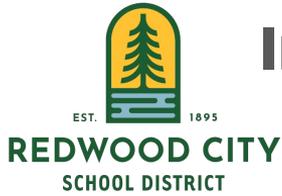
Redwood City hosted the county training

### ERWC Staff

- ❖ Dr. Roberta Ching  
Professor Emerita, English Department, CSU Sacramento
- ❖ Debra Boggs  
Language & Literacy Coordinator, Merced COE
- ❖ Dr. Cyndi Paik  
Co-Director - Center for the Advancement of Reading & Writing,  
Office of the Chancellor, CSU

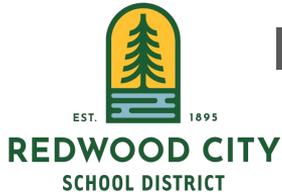
- **January 2025 - Feedback and Planning**

Program staff returned to RCSD



# Initial Implementation - Successes

- **Built-in Community Building:** The first modules successfully establish a sense of purpose and a collaborative classroom culture through embedded activities.
- **High Student Engagement:** Students are actively engaging with the contemporary topics and instructional strategies, which increases their stamina for analyzing complex texts.
- **Micro-Level Literacy Growth:** Deep analysis of texts translated into stronger student writing, particularly at the sentence and phrase level.
- **Diverse Representation:** Teachers have praised the inclusion of contemporary Latino authors, noting that the content resonates with student demographics



# Initial Implementation - Challenges

- **Resource Navigation:** Teachers experienced increased planning time while navigating the dual "Integrated" and "Designated" ELD pathways.
- **Timing Adjustments:** Several classroom activities took significantly longer to complete than the timeframes advised in the modules.
- **Attendance-Related Continuity:** Extended group work and collaborative projects were difficult to maintain in classes with frequent student absenteeism.
- **Foundational Gaps:** Students with weak foundational literacy (K-2 level) or newcomers with interrupted educational backgrounds struggled to access the rigorous materials.



# Teacher Feedback

As with all new curriculum, it takes extra time and effort to implement in Year 1, and there is a learning curve as a teacher.

## **My overall assessment:**

- This is a much needed addition to the Amplify curriculum.
- I really like the amount of interaction and reflection built into the unit.
- The anthology is great: the module does not feel as long as it is when we have a variety of texts to read, and contemporary Latino authors are a welcome addition to our ELA curriculum.
- Students have been engaged in all aspects of the module.



EST. 1895

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## Teacher Feedback

**Writing as a Process of Inquiry:** I used to think of writing mainly as a final product, but ERWC helped me see it as a thinking tool. Now I focus more on the pre-writing, drafting, and revising stages to help students develop deeper analytical skills.

**Strategic Use of Visuals and Multimedia to Build Background Knowledge:** I learned the importance of building schema before introducing complex texts, especially for ELs who may lack cultural or background knowledge. Moving forward, I will systematically incorporate images, videos, and realia to pre-teach key concepts and vocabulary before reading.



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## Moving Forward

- Continue to work with the ERWC project as they develop and offer training opportunities, both in-person and online
- Through coaching, facilitate planning opportunities for ELA teachers to refine implementation and integrate successful strategies into other instructional units
- Provide opportunities for ELA teachers to work with social-science and science teachers to share and align instructional strategies & practices



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# Questions