# Core Program Summary

## Wonders (2020)

### Information

**This program was approved for use in:**

* **Kindergarten**
* **First Grade**
* **Second Grade**
* **Third Grade**

**Core (Universal) Programming:** A reading program that is used to help guide both initial and differentiated instruction in the regular classroom. It supports instruction in the broad range of reading skills (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension) required to become a skilled reader. It contains teacher’s manuals with explicit lesson plans and provides reading and practice materials for students (FCRR, n.d.).

**Please access the scored rubric online to review the specific criteria and feedback for each approved core reading program.**

Rubrics are available for all instructional program reviewed from the CDE upon request. Please contact Marisa Calzadillas at Calzadillas\_m@cde.state.co.us.

The Colorado Reading to Ensure Academic Development Act (READ Act), passed by the Colorado legislature in 2012, focuses on early literacy development for all students kindergarten through third grade and especially for students at risk of not reaching grade-level proficiency in reading by the end of third grade. Included in the READ Act is the requirement that the department shall create an advisory list of evidence-based or scientifically based instructional programming in reading, pursuant to C.R.S. 22-7-1209.

The main purpose of the READ Act Advisory List of Instructional Programming is to provide districts and schools with a choice of instructional programming that adequately enhances teacher quality and is a major vehicle that schools/districts can utilize to upgrade their capacity as it relates to the implementation of the evidence-based literacy practices.

### CDE Core Program Rating Summary

**Kindergarten:** Meets Expectations in all reading components

**First Grade:**

* Phonological and Phonemic Awareness – Meets Expectations
* Phonics and Word Study – Meets Expectations
* Vocabulary – Meets Expectations
* Text Reading and Fluency – Partially Meets Expectations
* Reading Comprehension – Meets Expectations

**Second Grade:**

* Phonics and Word Study – Meets Expectations
* Vocabulary – Meets Expectations
* Text Reading and Fluency – Partially Meets Expectations
* Reading Comprehension – Meets Expectations

**Third Grade:** Meets Expectations in all reading components

**Usability:** Does Not Meet Expectations

* Review Comments – The following resources should not be accessible to Colorado schools online or in print; the "Teach it your way" section viewed in online materials, the Running Record assessments, or the balanced literacy tools. These resources are not aligned to the rubric or call to action around implementing scientifically and evidence-based reading instruction within the CO READ Act.

**Review Comments:** Grades K-3 The program meets the overall criteria outlined within the rubric; reviewers do have the following comments regarding student texts used.

* Program materials include controlled, decodable texts with phonics patterns that have been previously taught.
* It also has clear structured phonic lessons that are built upon over time and include weekly assessments which includes phonics and PA.
* The program design guides teachers to use leveled readers which include many phonic elements and word types that have not been previously taught.
* Students are guided to read these texts in small group and independently.
* Reviewers noted that there is a separate book for running records which is in the assessment materials and references the three-cueing system through MSV analysis. This book should not be utilized in Colorado.
* Lexile levels are also provided on the student materials and vary from week to week.

Although there are leveled readers as a part of the program, determining the appropriate use should not be reliant on running records or any assessment based on the three-cueing system. The program aligns to scientifically based reading constructs such as having a clear scope and sequence of phonic skills, common vocabulary that goes through all levels of texts, consistent instructional routines are included to support instruction in all 5 reading components and clear gradual release model is embedded.

### Vendor Information and Program Summary

**Vendor: McGraw Hill**

**Publication year (or edition): 2020**

**Contact Information**

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**Vendor provided summary:**

*Wonders*is a comprehensive, K-6 reading program that combines research-based instruction with robust tools to meet today's instructional challenges. Every component and every lesson are designed for the central purpose of interacting with text and making meaning. *Wonders*incorporates research-based best practices grounded in the science of reading. The program provides a balance of whole group, small-group, and independent and partner work, addresses all aspects of sound literacy instructional practices and strategies, and tightly integrates reading and writing throughout.

In *Wonders,* students are explicitly taught the sound/symbol relationships of letters and how to blend the sounds of the letters to decode the words. To ensure that students develop proficiency in decoding words by translating the letters and spelling patterns into phonemes and pronunciations, a large proportion of the instruction, especially in Kindergarten and Grade 1, is focused on the direct and explicit instruction of phonological awareness and phonics (Adams, 1991; National Early Panel, 2008; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). Daily whole-class instruction, supplemented with daily differentiated small-group instruction, and ample, daily opportunities for instruction and practice reinforce the idea that people read words by attending to the sound/spelling relationships in the word. With continued instruction and practice, children build automaticity in decoding and word recognition.

*Wonders* includes extensive assessments and opportunities for determining children’s ability to use sound/symbol relationships to decode words (e.g., *Check for Success* Teacher's Edition feature*, Placement Diagnostic Assessment, Fluency Assessment, Progress Monitoring Assessments*, *Unit Assessments, Benchmark Assessments*). It also includes an optional *Running Records* assessment. The full program can be implemented without the use of this optional assessment.

At Grades K and 1, children read at least two decodable readers per week which are written to be highly decodable. At these grades the books have been carefully crafted to ensure that students have the skills necessary to read the words using the decoding skills they have developed up to that point in the program. These decodable texts include some not-easily-decoded high-frequency words and these are taught explicitly to prevent or minimize guessing.

Additionally, in *Wonders,* children read a third text each week, the Shared Read, in the *Reading/Writing Companion)*. The words in these texts are also mainly constructed from decodable words, high-frequency words explicitly taught, and at Grade 1, a few "story words" which are introduced to children before they begin to read the text. At Grade 1, the anthology texts are introduced and are also highly decodable based on the scope and sequence of phonics elements previously taught. They include high-frequency words that are explicitly taught as well as "story words" that are introduced to children before reading the text. This mix of words in instructional text is consistent with the best scientific evidence on the effects of decodability and statistical learning on reading proficiency as well as the cognitive research on massed versus distributed practice and developing an appropriate mental set for diversity when learning decoding skills (Baddeley, 1997; Gibson & Levin, 1975; Jenkins, Peyton, Sanders & Valdasy, 2009; Seidenberg, 2017).

At the instructional heart of *Wonders* is the *Reading/Writing Companion*. The new interactive student edition ensures students master the close reading routine, respond to shared reads, apply skills and strategies, talk, cite text evidence, and write all in the same place. The *Literature anthology* is a collection of rich, complex, high-quality anchor texts.

The *Wonders* program:

* Offers a balance of rich complex text including Informational and Literary texts
* Focuses on academic language for developing content knowledge
* Provides intentional instructional support for Accessing Complex Text (ACT)
* Uses text-dependent questions so reading and writing are grounded in the text
* Utilizes Dr. Douglas Fisher's close reading routine of Read, Reread, and Integrate to guide students in making meaning of text
* Provides opportunities for analytical and genre writing
* Promotes inquiry-based learning through research projects and tasks
* Provides structures for engaging all students in collaborative discussions

Finally, as part of each text set, *Wonders* delivers a curated, connected set of leveled readers. Students build knowledge through reading multiple texts that share the same genres, themes, skills, strategies, and domain-specific vocabulary, with a 50/50 balance of literary and informational texts to foster cross-curricular connections. Wonders offers the opportunity for students to “level up” by moving to a higher reading level once the background knowledge and vocabulary has been mastered.