

Diocese of Boise Reading – English/Language Usage Curriculum Guide

May 2009

Introduction:

The following curriculum guides for Reading and Language Usage have been developed to align with the online version of the Northwest Evaluation Association's Descartes Continuum. NWEA is the provider of our diocesan testing program known as Measure of Academic Progress (MAP). These tests have been used continuously by the diocese for several years. The Descartes Continuum is a sequential list of all the skills tested in the MAP database. It also contains all the elements found in the Idaho State Curriculum Standards, as well as those in most other states. It is useful because, rather than being organized by grade level, the continuum is organized in a sequence of skills. Thus, when a student has mastered certain skills, regardless of the grade he/she is in, the continuum indicates the next skills the student is ready to learn.

Our new curriculum guide is organized by grade level so teachers will know what topics are expected to be covered each year. However, when preparing to teach students, the teachers have the tools to use the MAP results to group students and move them forward through the skill continuum no matter what grade they are in. To use the system, the teacher needs to match the students' MAP RIT score with the Descartes Continuum list of skills. This task can be done for you electronically by using another feature, the Dynamic Reports on the NWEA website. Look at the next column on the continuum to see what skills should be taught next. For grade level planning, review the skills listed in the more generalized grade level sequence, comparing the detailed skills with the grade level topics to see if students are where they are expected to be in a particular grade. Used correctly, every student in every class in the Catholic schools of Idaho has the opportunity to advance his/her knowledge in Reading and Language Usage most efficiently.

In addition, we have incorporated listening and speaking curriculum guides, which are not necessarily tested on standardized tests, but which are of critical importance to all students as they progress in school and life.

The Diocese thanks the members of the Curriculum Committee for their excellent work on this project. We hope you will find these documents useful.

Note: Additional training is being planned for teachers to be able to use the features described above more effectively.