

Up the Ladder Units: Accessing Grades 3–6 Writing Units of Study
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FAQ Video Transcripts

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Question: *What are some of the ways to use the Up the Ladder units with the Units of Study?*

Kelly Boland Hohne:

I think there's a variety of ways that teachers can begin to think about how you might bring Up the Ladder into your scope and sequence for the year. And I've heard teachers bringing it in and trying it out in a variety of ways, and I think that's really important that it shouldn't feel like this is the way. It should feel like think about your kids, think about the needs of your kids, and make decisions that feel right as a grade team, as a school, in the way that feels best for your situation.

So, one possibility that some teachers is to teach the Up the Ladder units in sequence one after another. So, you teach Up the Ladder narrative then some people teach Up the Ladder information next and then Up the Ladder opinion following that. And then after Up the Ladder then they move into looking at the unit of study that come in the grade level kit and starting with the first one that's suggested in that grade level kit. That's one way teachers might bring Up the Ladder in.

Another way is that I've seen people teach Up the Ladder narrative and then go into their grade level narrative unit in their kit that comes with the units of study. So, then teachers can be alternating Up the Ladder, grade level, Up the Ladder, grade level. And the other thing about Up the Ladder is that the bends, for the most part, are pretty self-standing. If you do a bend or two of Up the Ladder and you see your kids really making tremendous, dramatic progress you might decide I'm not going to do bend three. I'm going to go right to the kit. I'm going to go right to the grade level curriculum. So, it's really about looking carefully at what your kids are doing, keeping tabs on how is their progress going, and if they feel like their energy is up and their engagement is up and you see a lot of progress. You might decide I'm not going to go and do the entire Up the Ladder unit. I'm going to move.

Another thing about Up the Ladder is that the content is also completely transferrable. So, if you are doing Up the Ladder opinion writing and you don't want to have a collection of dragons, because maybe, a couple grades in your school are doing Up the Ladder, you could take out the dragon collection and put it in a different kind of collection. So, that you can give your own spin to it, as well.