

SREB Ready

Ready for High School: Prepared for High School and Beyond

Too many students don't make it to their senior year; they struggle in ninth grade and eventually drop out of high school as a result. A ninth-grade student is three-to-five times more likely to fail a class than students in any other grade, and the courses with the highest failure rates are English, algebra and science. The Southern Regional Education Board's (SREB's) Ready for High School Literacy and Ready for High School Math courses strengthen underprepared students as they enter high school, setting them on the path to success and increasing their prospects for graduation.

Ready for High School Literacy

This course utilizes a disciplinary literacy approach that teaches students strategies for reading and understanding complex texts. Students learn to develop and defend ideas and write about them in several disciplines such as English, history and science. The unit structure utilizes the framework of the Literacy Design Collaborative to prepare students for the rigors of high school studies.



English Unit 1: How the Brain Functions and What It Means to be Human

Students read the informational text, John Fleischman's "Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story About Brain Science," as well as a number of related supplemental texts. Students practice the following reading skills with an English disciplinary focus: literary epistemology; reading for argument, claim and evidence; reading for rhetorical strategies and patterns; and internal and external connections. Students learn how to connect evidence from the texts they read to prepare for a written final product. Students develop a proposal for a Brain Health Symposium station at a health fair.

History Unit 1: World War II: What Makes Nations Take Extreme Actions?

Students read accounts of incidents that took place in Germany, Japan and the United States that could be characterized as extreme. Students look for political, economic and social motivations for the war-time actions of these nations. Students draw from primary and secondary sources, video and political cartoons, investigating stories as historians would for their authenticity. Their work culminates with a compare and contrast essay.

Science Unit 1: What Will the Earth Look Like in a Million Years?

Students are introduced to disciplinary literacy in the sciences. Students learn strategies for reading multiple types of text, including science texts, research and news articles. They make connections between text explanations and graphic representations of concepts. Students examine the formation of the Earth and its current conditions as they prepare a final essay predicting what the Earth will look like in a million years, supporting their predictions with evidence from research.

English Unit 2: Creativity and Brain Function: What Can We Do to Keep Our Brains Healthy and Functioning?

In the second English unit, students read Daniel Keyes' "Flowers for Algernon" as well as related supplemental texts. Students examine the central text for its main idea and evaluate the sources and evidence used to support that idea. Students practice the skills of annotation and close reading, identification of rhetorical situation, sentence construction and type with a focus on sentence structures, and journal writing and reflection. At the unit's conclusion, students present a science symposium based on a proposal written at the end of English Unit 1.

History Unit 2: How Did the Immigration Experience of Different Ethnic Groups Compare as They Entered and Assimilated Into the United States?

This unit focuses on the issue of immigration during different time periods in American history. Students develop the skills needed to research and write a historical argument using the Document-Based Question (DBQ) format, emphasizing organization and citation of resources.

Science Unit 2: Environmental Science: Do Our Actions Really Make an Impact?

After investigating several environmental problems and issues, students write an argumentative essay that identifies a specific environmental problem and propose a solution. Students support their proposed solution with evidence from their research.