



## TRANSCRIPT FROM: Stand Up to Opt Out Zoom Call

Aug 24, 2021  
6-8 pm

### **1) Why are there no replacement books mentioned? Have they provided replacements yet?**

They are asking that everyone go on and opt out of all materials they want to opt out of now so that they can prepare and plan with alternative texts and lessons. My understanding as of now is they are doing things as they come up. They will do Module 1 replacements first. For everything else (except the Woods Runner replacement) they are waiting on the results of the 4.403 committee. Here are the replacement texts we know of so far:

- Amos & Boris replaced by The Snail and the Whale
- Shark Attack! Replaced by Shark Lady and Language of Dolphins and other Sea Animals
- Love that Dog replaced by Little Dog, Lost
- Thunder rolling in the Mountains replaced by Island of the Blue Dolphins
- Woods Runner replacement: Woods Runner will be replaced with two primary source documents, King George's proclamation about the rebellious colonies and the Declaration of Independence. We will use excerpts from both. The lessons that accompany these documents will not be ready until December.

The Snail and the Whale, Shark Lady, and Little Dog Lost are all available to read/hear on youtube.

### **2) Is the River Between Us being replaced?**

No. Unofficially we have been told that the original review committee (a separate committee from the 4.403 Reconsideration committee) decided to to remove one chapter. The Official statement is that Central Office is waiting to see what the 4.403 Committee decides/recommends.

### **3) Is there an alternative text list for those in the gifted program?**

My understanding is that the gifted program does not use the Wit and Wisdom curriculum. However, that is what I was told at my school and it might not be the same at every school. If you have a child in the gifted program, please check with your school to see if they use Wit and Wisdom for their gifted program.

#### **4) How long does the process take to opt out?**

It differs at every school.

#### **5) How do I know when they are reading which book?**

Your teacher should be sending home a Wit and Wisdom parent tip sheet at the beginning of each module. If you haven't received these tips sheets, please reach out to your child's teacher to request it. The tip sheet tells you what books are being used as well as any supplemental materials.

#### **6) What do you think about the literacy coach participating in the opt out meetings?**

So far, I have only attended one meeting where the literacy coach attended. I found the literacy coach to be very helpful. She actually brought out the teacher's manuals which was the first time I had seen this happen. She was able to specifically open to the lessons and reference what they did or didn't do for each last year.

#### **7) Do the teachers notify us about read along books?**

No, they do not have notify parents about the read along books. Reach out to your child's teacher for a list of the read along books they will be using in class. We have already had one parent report a read along book that was used that their child found to be very scary. It was called Wild Robot and was read to 2nd graders.

#### **8) How long is one Wit and Wisdom module?**

Typically, each module lasts about 9 weeks.

#### **9) How do we trash this curriculum?**

The 4.403 reconsideration committee is currently reviewing the books and teachers lessons that have received complaints. We have also been told that the waiver that allowed Wit and Wisdom to "pass" the state standards will expire on 1/1/23, and therefore will render the curriculum unusable. However, Mr. Golden has recently stated that he doesn't believe that to be true.

#### **10) How can I view the Wit and Wisdom teacher's manual?**

As of now, you will have to contact Jenny Lopez the WCS Curriculum Director to set up a time to go and review the teacher's manuals at Central Office.

### **11) Do teacher's lessons align with teacher's manuals.**

Yes, my understanding is that the teacher's lesson is specifically how the teacher puts the manual into play for their specific class.

### **12) What do I need to know when meeting with my Principal and/or teacher to opt out?**

Make sure they give you specifics and not a general and vague statement such as, "We love the kids and would never teach them anything harmful". That is not to say that isn't true. However, we have heard that Central Office has said no modifications or changes of the curriculum is allowed. In order to make sure your child isn't exposed to the inappropriate content you need to know specifics. For example, just saying we will skip over parts in the book is not acceptable. They need to say something like "we will not read paragraph 7 in Chapter 4, Paragraph 3 in Chapter 10, and Paragraph 8 in Chapter 11". Or they should say, "we will remove the part where they act out the suicidal ideation", or "we will focus on the more factual book of Galileo instead of the anti-church version". Also keep in mind that the teacher's manuals are just as concerning as the content in the books in many cases. Having a teacher just skip over a part in a book doesn't mean it doesn't show up in the teacher's manual so make sure you ask about that.

### **13) Can we opt out of the entire Wit and Wisdom curriculum?**

No, unfortunately this is not an option. You can only opt out of specific books and lessons.

### **14) Is the repetition of the curriculum why the teacher's say they like it (if they do)?**

Some teachers like the format of the curriculum and the way it teaches writing. The problem is when you are using inappropriate content and teaching it with repetition there is no way to "skim" over the inappropriate content. Many people have said, "Oh we have been teaching these books in the schools for years." However, the problem with that was that they have been reading these books in higher grade levels in the past where the content might not be so inappropriate for those ages. Many teachers have said they chose Wit and Wisdom because it seemed like "the lesser of the evils". Unfortunately, they didn't have any of the actual books to read during the adoption process.

### **15) Was Wit and Wisdom piloted in Williamson County?**

No it was not. It was piloted in Sumner County and I believe two other counties in TN.

**16) Would it be ok if the teacher is saying they can just skim through the Ruby Bridges book?**

Unfortunately, no it isn't. The teacher's lessons have them repetitively go over the content in the books, so even if you skip it in the book it gets covered over multiple lessons through the teacher's manual.