

McGraw Hill Texas StudySync Grade 6 English Language Arts and Reading Program Summary

Section 1. English Language Arts and Reading Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) Alignment

Grade	TEKS Student %	TEKS Teacher %	ELPS Student %	ELPS Teacher %
Grade 6	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Grade 7	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Grade 8	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Section 2. Texts

- The sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade materials include high-quality texts across a variety of text types and genres as required by the TEKS.
- The materials describe their approach to text complexity as a blend of quantitative and qualitative analyses resulting in a grade-band categorization of texts. The sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade materials include a variety of text types and genres across content as required by the TEKS. Texts are appropriately challenging and are at an appropriate level of complexity to support students at their grade level.

Section 3. Literacy Practices and Text Interactions

- The materials provide students the opportunity to analyze and integrate knowledge, ideas, themes, and connections within and across texts using clear and concise information and well-defended text-supported claims through coherently sequenced questions and activities.
- The materials provide students the opportunity to analyze the language, key ideas, details, craft, and structure of individual texts.
- The materials provide opportunities for students to build their academic vocabulary across the course of the year.
- The materials include a plan to support and hold students accountable in independent reading.
- The materials provide students the opportunity to develop composition skills across multiple text types for varied purposes and audiences.
- The materials provide opportunities for students to apply composition convention skills in increasingly complex contexts throughout the year.
- The materials support students' listening and speaking about texts and engage students in productive teamwork and student-led discussions in a variety of settings.

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- The materials provide opportunities for students to engage in both short-term and sustained inquiry processes throughout the year.
- The materials contain interconnected tasks that build student knowledge and provide opportunities for increased independence. These tasks are supported by spiraling and scaffolded practice.

Section 4. Developing and Sustaining Foundational Literacy Skills

- N/A for ELAR 6-8

Section 5. Supports for All Learners

- The materials offer differentiation supports for students who are performing below and above grade level.
- The materials provide support and scaffolding strategies for English Learners (EL) that are commensurate with the various levels of English language proficiency as defined by the ELPS.

Section 6. Implementation

- The materials include a TEKS for English Language Arts and Reading-aligned scope and sequence.
- The materials include annotations and support for engaging students in the materials as well as annotations and ancillary materials that provide support for student learning and assistance for teachers and administrators.

Section 7. Additional Information

- The publisher submitted the technology, cost, professional learning, and additional language supports worksheets.

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Indicator 2.1

Materials include high-quality texts for ELAR instruction and cover a range of student interests.

- The texts are well-crafted, representing the quality of content, language, and writing that is produced by experts in various disciplines.
- Materials include increasingly complex traditional, contemporary, classical, and diverse texts.

Meets 4/4

The materials include high-quality texts for ELAR instruction and cover a range of student interests. The materials include well-crafted texts representing the quality of content, language, and writing produced by experts in various disciplines. The materials include increasingly complex traditional, contemporary, classical, and culturally diverse texts.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The publisher's selection of high-quality texts for sixth-grade ELAR instruction reflects a rich and diverse group of texts from multiple genres, author's backgrounds, and accessibility for students, including works by multiple award-winning and recognizable authors. The materials contain a variety of high-quality, engaging, and relatable texts from various experts and acclaimed authors from a wide range of cultures and backgrounds, exposing students to the various genres and kinds of writing offered in well-arranged thematic units. Each unit's preface material includes helpful information about the Lexile level of texts, publication dates, and potentially challenging elements. Average Lexile levels for text increase in complexity from between 670L and 750L, which the materials label "comfortable" for students in Unit 1 to "approachable," between 940L and 1070L, in Unit 6. This academic progression demonstrates increasingly complex, traditional, contemporary, classical, and diverse texts throughout the year.

In Unit 1, students experience high-quality texts that cover a range of interests with academic challenges. The personal memoir *Eleven* by award-winning author Sandra Cisneros is told through the first-person lens of an awkwardly complex and shy 11-year-old Cisneros. Students embrace rich literary devices that analyze the characterization of the main character. The memoir *Red Scarf Girl* by Ji-Li Jiang recounts, through first-person narration, her turbulent teenage years in communist China. Thematic topics such as conformity, obedience, prejudice, and justice are exposed through the development of inferences, characterization, and citation of evidence as the award-winning text contributes to the complexity of standards and expectations.

Unit 2 includes selections in fiction, poetry, and nonfiction, pairing complementary texts to enhance complexity. *The Southpaw* by Judith Viorst fits thematically with a 2017 letter to the

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editor by NCAA Division I volleyball player Jacki Jing, “We’re on the Same Team.” This unit also explores the challenges of relationships through well-crafted and content-rich poems written by accomplished, award-winning authors. For example, excerpts from Newbery Award-winning novels *Walk Two Moons* by Sharon Creech and Mildred Taylor’s *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* are included in Unit 2, as well as optional focused-novel units for both. “Teenagers” by celebrated Mexican-American contemporary author Pat Mora uses rich vocabulary to engage students in a poetic style of inferences, synthesis, theme, and citation of textual evidence. “Tableau,” a poem by Countee Cullen, a Harvard-educated leading poetic voice during the cultural explosion of Harlem Renaissance, incorporates elaborative figurative language to explore the joys and challenges surrounding the social struggle of black and white for equality as they strive to forge relationships during the 1920s.

The Unit 4 instructional materials include excerpts from the autobiographical novel; *I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban* (2013). Malala Yousafzai, a Pakistani and youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, chronicles her decision to use a pseudonym to take a public stance against the Taliban.

Unit 5 includes an excerpt from the memoir *Warriors Don’t Cry* by African-American author Melba Patillo Beals and “The Miracle Worker” by William Gibson. This drama details the personal journey of Helen Keller, born blind and deaf, and the heroic and influential teacher who brings discipline and dignity to Keller’s life. The theme of a courageous and brave teacher who sees what’s best for his or her students appeals to students at this age.

Unit 6 explores the struggles and challenges of individuals and characters in search of their true selves. The selections range in Lexile from 730–1110, providing accessible and challenging reading opportunities for all students. The unit includes “I, Too Sing America,” a poem by Langston Hughes, “Letter to His Daughter” by W.E.B. DuBois, “Brave,” a contemporary graphic novel written by Svetlana Chmakova—a Russian and Canadian comic artist, and “My Hermitage” by Alexander Posey, a poet, journalist, political figure and member of the Muscogee Creek Nation. These texts ensure students have a solid foundation of instruction in reading, writing, speaking, and listening proficiencies.

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Indicator 2.2

Materials include a variety of text types and genres across content that meet the requirements of the TEKS for each grade level.

- Text types must include those outlined for specific grades by the TEKS:
 - Literary texts must include those outlined for specific grades.
 - Informational texts include texts of information, exposition, argument, procedures, and documents as outlined in the TEKS.
- Materials include print and graphic features of a variety of texts.

Meets 4/4

The materials include a variety of text types and genres across content that meet the TEKS requirements for each grade level. Literary texts and informational texts include those outlined in grade 6 TEKS. The materials include print and graphic features of a variety of texts.

Examples of literary texts include but are not limited to:

Hatchet by Gary Paulson (fiction)

“Eleven” by Sandra Cisneros (realistic fiction)

The Magic Marker Mystery by Rene Saldana Jr. (drama)

Walk Two Moons by Sharon Creech (realistic fiction/ short story)

An excerpt from *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* by Mildred D. Taylor (novel)

“The Southpaw” by Judith Viorst (realistic fiction/short story)

Fever 1793 by Laurie Halse Anderson (historical fiction)

An excerpt from *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan (novel)

An excerpt from *Hoot* by Carl Hiassen (novel/realistic fiction)

“Priscilla and the Wimps” by Richard Peck (realistic fiction/short story)

“All Summer in a Day” by Ray Bradbury (science fiction/short story)

“Famous” by Naomi Shihab Nye (poem)

“The All-American Slurp” by Lensey Namioka (humor)

“Helen Keller” by Langston Hughes (poem)

Damon and Pythias adapted by Fan Kissen (drama)

“Crazy Loco” by David Rice (short story)

An excerpt from *Touching Spirit Bear* by Ben Mikaelson (realistic fiction/novel)

Brave by Svetlana Chmakova (realistic fiction)

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Examples of informational texts include but are not limited to:

Red Scarf Girl: A Memoir of the Cultural Revolution by Ji-li Jang (informational/autobiography)

“We’re on the Same Team” by Jacki Jing (argumentative)

“An American Plague: The True and Terrifying Story of the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1793” by Jim Murphy (informational)

“Shree Bose: Never Too Young to Change the World” by Amanda Sherber (informational)

“This I Believe: The Practice of Slowing Down” by Phil Powers (informational)

“Malala Yousafzai’s Nobel Lecture” by Malala Yousafzai (argumentative)

Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott by Russell Freedman (informational)

Rosa Parks: My Story by Rosa Parks (informational/autobiography)

An excerpt from *The Story Of My Life* by Helen Keller (memoir)

An excerpt from *Warriors Don’t Cry* by Melba Pattillo Beals (memoir)

Eleanor Roosevelt: A Life of Discovery by Russell Freedman (informational)

I Never Had it Made by Jackie Robinson (informational/autobiography)

“Letter to His Daughter” by W.E.B. Du Bois (informational)

Examples of print and graphic features include but are not limited to:

The instructional materials provide print and graphic features to accompany the selections. A preview video accompanies each literary and informational selection. Many of the selections also include color-coded, highlighted sections of text with embedded explanatory note boxes, bolded subheadings, text bullets, and embedded graphic organizers.

In Unit 1, the informational text, “Shree Bose: Never Too Young to Change the World” by Amanda Sherber contains text headings, a map, and a website screenshot to make the information clear and easy for readers to understand.

In Unit 3, graphic elements, including multiple illustrations of the scientific concepts, including maps, accompany several texts such as Randall Monroe’s “Everybody Jump.”

In Unit 4, print features include photos and graphics for books and short stories. For example, the poem “Rosa” by Rita Dove shows a black-and-white photo of Rosa Parks seated on the bus. The informational text, “Celebrities as Heroes,” shows a man’s color photo holding a guitar.

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In Unit 6, illustrations from an excerpt from the graphic novel *Brave* by Svetlana Chmakova include images embedded in the text to support students' understanding.

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Indicator 2.3

Texts are appropriately challenging and are at an appropriate level of complexity to support students at their grade level.

- Texts are accompanied by a text-complexity analysis provided by the publisher.
- Texts are at the appropriate quantitative levels and qualitative features for the grade level.

Meets 4/4

The materials include appropriately challenging texts and are at an appropriate level of complexity to support students at grade level 6. Texts are accompanied by a text complexity analysis, provided by the publisher, at the beginning of each text. The analysis clearly explains the text’s grade-level appropriateness and includes both a quantitative measure and many qualitative descriptors.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The Lexile levels of texts range from 670L to 1130L. The majority of the texts fall within the 925L–1070L range, ideal for sixth grade. The texts’ qualitative features reflect the skills and concepts required for sixth-grade students. The units tend to build toward more complex texts requiring inferential thinking and background knowledge essential for understanding and may contain more archaic, unfamiliar, or allusive language. The three components defining text complexity are the quantitative elements such as Lexile, length, and publication of the text. The qualitative elements are the structural, linguistic, and contextual qualities that determine easier or difficult readability and the reader and task expectations, such as how the reader interacts with the text.

Unit 1 texts fall between 670L and 750L, a “comfortable level” for beginning sixth graders. According to the publisher, the qualitative features of the texts in Unit 1 are also “accessible.” The first text in the unit, Sandra Cisneros’s “Eleven,” has a Lexile level of 1070, the highest in the unit, and the edge of what is recommended for sixth grade. However, the publisher’s materials note the number of skill lessons offered to “offset” the challenges of reading the text. The short story’s topic (the eleventh birthday of the protagonist) is relevant and engaging to students, further offsetting its Lexile difficulty. The initial range of texts in Unit 1 is lower than the 925L–1070L recommended for sixth grade. For example, *The Mighty Miss Malone* by Christopher Paul Curtis is 750L, and *Red Scarf Girl* by Ji-Li Jiang is 871L. The materials are assembled to progressively challenge students so that by the final unit, the majority of texts fall between 940L and 1070L.

Unit 2 includes an excerpt from *Walk Two Moons* by Sharon Creech. While the Lexile level at 520 is low for sixth grade, the text’s nonlinear chronology emphasizes dialogue and internal

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narration; the occasionally missing dialogue markers make the reading appropriately challenging for students. This unit “builds on the skills established in the previous unit and further develops students’ text analysis abilities.” As a unit, the range of Lexiles for prose selections is 520 to 820; the unit’s focus is poetry, but there are also fiction readings and one argumentative text. Additionally, the “vocabulary, sentence structures, text features, content, and relationships among ideas” are features easily accessed by sixth graders, allowing Lexile progress as they work through complex text. In Unit 2, “The Southpaw” by Judith Viorst has an epistolary format that students may find challenging as they try to identify and analyze plot elements and character development.

Unit 3 selections have a Lexile band of 710L–1100L. “An American Plague: The True and Terrifying Story of the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1793” is an informational text by Jim Murphy (2003) with a Lexile level of 1090L, which is slightly above the grade level. “Shree Bose: Never Too Young to Change the World” by Amanda Sperber (2017) has a 1040L and a 1,654-word count. The publisher incorporates modern informational texts with relevant topics affecting the population today of all ages, such as cancer research.

In Unit 4, an excerpt from Malala Yousafzai’s *I Am Malala* pairs with Yousafzai’s Nobel speech. The memoir excerpt has a slightly lower Lexile level of 840 than the speech. The memoir excerpt is over 1,000 words; the speech is over 2,000. The requisite background knowledge and figurative language may challenge students, but the materials support these readings with lessons focused on text structure and the author’s purpose. By Unit 6, the materials offer texts with both higher Lexile levels and complex text features, such as an excerpt from Russell Freedman’s biography of Eleanor Roosevelt and an excerpt from *Touching Spirit Bear*, by Ben Mikaelson, both above 1000L and both including a nonlinear chronology and challenging vocabulary, as well as “Crazy Loco” by David Rice (940L). This literary piece challenges students to synthesize details about the character, setting, and plot to determine the entertaining selection theme. The text includes some Spanish words and phrases. These literature studies mentioned above are both in later units, Unit 4 and Unit 6, respectively, because of their qualitative complexities.

Unit 5 includes the excerpt from the book, *Listen Slowly* by Thanhà Lai. Although the Lexile for this reading falls on the lower end of the appropriate range (820) for sixth graders, the author uses sarcasm to develop characters and inject humor to pose challenges to the reader. A voice lesson is included to remedy this issue and understand character development’s abstract concept. In Unit 5, the text complexity analysis for this unit states the vocabulary, sentence structures, text features, content, and relationships between ideas make these texts accessible to sixth graders and progress as they delve deeper into the readings.

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Indicator 3.A.1

Materials contain questions and tasks that support students in analyzing and integrating knowledge, ideas, themes, and connections within and across texts.

- Most questions and tasks build conceptual knowledge, are text specific/dependent, target complex elements of the texts, and integrate multiple TEKS.
- Questions and tasks require students to
 - make connections to personal experiences, other texts, and the world around them and
 - identify and discuss important big ideas, themes, and details.

Meets 4/4

The materials contain questions and tasks that support students in analyzing and integrating knowledge, ideas, topics, themes, and connections within and across texts. Most questions and tasks build conceptual knowledge, are text-specific/dependent, target complex elements of the texts, and integrate multiple TEKS. Questions and tasks require students to connect to personal experiences, other texts, and the world around them and identify and discuss important big ideas, themes, and details.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials' structure allows multiple opportunities to practice conceptual knowledge and deeply interact with texts. Most lesson groups are structured with a "first read" introduction to a text, then a skill lesson, then a "close read" lesson of the same text. Those lessons often link to additional lessons for independent reading, in which students practice the same skill or concept with another text or multiple texts linked by theme, topic, or concept, often from different genres.

In Unit 1, students explore a variety of texts and genres that explore different perspectives and responses to life's challenges. In *The Mighty Miss Malone* by Christopher Paul Curtis, the protagonist, 12-year-old Deza Malone, experiences the challenges of the Great Depression as it tears her family apart. The materials guide the text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world connections by providing a list of guiding questions for students to consider while reading: "Do these characters remind me of anyone I know?" (TS); "How is this text similar to other texts I have read?" (TT); "How does this relate to what I know about history, current events, or the real world?" (TW). Unit 1 also includes the short story "Scout's Honor" by Avi (pen name of Edward Irving Wortis). Students build conceptual knowledge by watching a video preview and reading the introduction in pairs before reading. Students continue to build content knowledge by making predictions about vocabulary. The teacher models and highlights context clues with the following inference prompt. Students must make an educated guess regarding what the

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word means in the paragraph: “In paragraph 29, focus on the sentence that uses the word *courteous*.” The activities integrate the following TEKS: 6.1(A), 6.5(E),6.2(B).

In Unit 2, for *Walk of Two Moons* by Sharon Creech, students answer text-dependent questions that guide them to look at complex ideas by closely analyzing the text. “What kind of relationship does Mrs. Winterbottom have with her daughters Prudence and Phoebe? Cite evidence from the text to support your answer.” Students make inferences using textual information to determine the differences between each character and their interactions with Mrs. Winterbottom.

Unit 3 includes the excerpt from Rick Riordan’s fantasy novel, *The Lightning Thief*. Students build conceptual knowledge by watching a video preview and reading the introduction in pairs before reading. Students continue to build content knowledge by making predictions about vocabulary. The teacher models and highlights context clues with an inference prompt. Students must make an educated guess regarding what the word means in the paragraph: “In paragraph 7, focus on the sentence that uses the word *rebellious*.” Unit 3 also includes “Heroes Every Child Should Know: Perseus” by Hamilton Wright Mabie. The text includes a tab with Focus questions in which students target multiple TEKS per question. For example, students use textual evidence to support a response, discuss and write about the text’s explicit and implicit meaning, and analyze how the characters’ internal and external responses develop the plot. The question reads, “Many of Perseus’s actions in his quest are prescribed by Athene. Identify one of his internal and external responses that surprise you. Then identify one of his responses that is not directed by Athene.”

In Unit 4, the materials identify and discuss important big ideas, themes, and details. The unit’s texts and tasks focus on the essential question: “Which qualities of character matter most?” The unit provides various texts about real and fictional characters who strive to achieve their personal best by overcoming familiar and realistic challenges. Students engage in a comparative reading assignment of three different texts that explore the same event. “Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott,” an informational text by StudySync; “Rosa,” a poem by Rita Dove; and *Rosa Parks: My Story*, an autobiography, focus on the challenges individuals face as they take a stand against racism. The instructional materials provide a graphic organizer to help students make connections between the texts by comparing and contrasting “the arguments that Rosa Parks, Rita Dove, and Russell Freedman make about upsetting the balance of power.”

In Unit 5, the essential question states, “What’s your story?” The introductory “Blast” lesson asks students to consider questions such as, “What is the purpose of a life story?” and “Why might others have different ideas about your identity than you do?” In the next set of lessons, students read a poem by Langston Hughes about Helen Keller, excerpts from Keller’s autobiography, and a play about her, *The Miracle Worker*, by William Gibson. Students answer

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questions that link back to the unit's theme throughout these lessons and support the genre focus on dramatic elements and skill-focused lessons on comprehension monitoring.

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Indicator 3.A.2

Materials contain questions and tasks that require students to analyze the language, key ideas, details, craft, and structure of individual texts.

- Questions and tasks support students' analysis of the literary/textual elements of texts by asking students to
 - analyze, make inferences, and draw conclusions about the author's purpose in cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding;
 - compare and contrast the stated or implied purposes of different authors' writing on the same topic;
 - analyze the author's choices and how they influence and communicate meaning (in single and across a variety of texts); and
 - ask students to study the language within texts to support their understanding.

Meets 4/4

The materials contain questions and tasks that require students to analyze the language, key ideas, details, craft, and structure of individual texts. The questions and tasks support students' analysis of the literary and textual elements of texts; students analyze, make inferences, and draw conclusions about the author's purpose in cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding. Students also compare and contrast the stated or implied purposes of different authors' writing on the same topic, analyze the author's choices and how they influence and communicate meaning (in single and across a variety of texts), and study the language within texts to support their understanding.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In Unit 1, students read "The Good Samaritan," a short story by Rene Saldana, and explore how "analyzing a main character's struggles can help you understand the author's purpose for writing and the underlying message of his or her work." The teacher, "Point[s] out Mr. Hernandez's reaction when Hernando calls him vato (dude). . . .to determine how the narrator responds to Mr. Hernandez's invitation and what that implies." In the connected skill lesson on determining the author's purpose, the materials provide students a model text with highlights and annotations. Students consider how this thinking helps readers "further explain the author's purpose and message in the text," as readers make inferences about the "message the author expresses through characters and events." In the final lesson of the series, students reread the story and note evidence in the text of what characters learn during the story, explaining how that evidence helps reveal the author's purpose. Other prompts in this section point to specific decisions a primary character makes that also explain the author's message. After reading an excerpt from "The Good Samaritan," students answer the following questions: "After reading the last 10 paragraphs, you know the author's purpose is to entertain because of

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the story....” and “Using paragraphs 48–56, what can you infer is the author’s main message?” In a culminating activity, students prepare for a debate by compiling evidence about how the story would be different if the primary character had made different choices and how those differences would have reflected a different purpose and message in the text.

In Unit 3, in a close read lesson on “An American Plague” by Jim Murphy (2003), students begin to compare Murphy’s text to other text selections. For example, students compare and contrast “An American Plague” and “Fever 1793” by Laurie Halse Anderson in written literary responses detailing how both selections relate to people living with a disease. Students must compare and contrast people’s reactions in both selections using textual evidence to support their understanding.

In Unit 4, students analyze “All Summer In a Day” by Ray Bradbury and “Priscilla and the Wimps” by Richard Peck in a written literary analysis. Students evaluate both selections and identify the common theme of bullying, citing textual evidence from both selections to support their understanding of how the author’s choices in the text influence the theme. Unit 4 also includes opportunities for students to draw conclusions about the author’s purpose in cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding. For example, the informational nonfiction piece “Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott” by Russell Freedman, the poem “Rosa” by Rita Dove, and an excerpt from the autobiography *Rosa Parks: My Story* by Rosa Parks are all set against the backdrop of the Civil Rights Movement and focus on the Montgomery Bus Boycott and Jim Crow era. Students “analyze the author’s choices and how they influence and communicate meaning across a variety of texts.”

In Unit 6, students study the language within texts to support their understanding. For example, students “describe how the author’s use of figurative languages, such as metaphor and personification, achieves specific purposes in a personal correspondence.” Students read excerpts from W.E.B. Du Bois’ “Letter to His Daughter” highlighting examples of figurative language and discussing the purpose behind the author’s use of personification and metaphor. After reading an excerpt from Russell Freedman’s biography of Eleanor Roosevelt and Catherine Andronik’s profile on Egyptian queen Hatshepsut, students make a connection between text structure and the author’s purpose. In this lesson, students examine specific word choices and relationships between details to understand how authors convey their purpose. In the response section of the final lesson on a close read of Andronik’s piece, students compare and contrast the text structures and purposes in both texts, writing about “connections between these two historical figures and what readers might learn about leadership after reading both texts.

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Indicator 3.A.3

Materials include a cohesive, year-long plan for students to interact with and build key academic vocabulary in and across texts.

- Materials include a year-long plan for building academic vocabulary, including ways to apply words in appropriate contexts.
- Materials include scaffolds and supports for teachers to differentiate vocabulary development for all learners.

Meets 4/4

The materials include a cohesive, year-long plan for students to interact with and build key academic vocabulary in and across texts. Materials include a year-long plan for building academic vocabulary, including ways to apply words in appropriate contexts, and include scaffolds and supports for teachers to differentiate vocabulary development for all learners.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Students “encounter new vocabulary in each reading selection found in the Core ELAR Program and the StudySync Library.” Each selection in the core program includes vocabulary instruction and student practice, with the “aim of building vocabulary knowledge and improving students’ ability to access complex texts.” Each unit contains a Novel Study section that provides reading guides to several novels that connect to the unit’s theme and an introductory lesson that explicitly presents academic vocabulary. The Novel Units provide Reading Guides that preview key vocabulary, providing definitions. Students gain vocabulary knowledge during the First Read lessons, albeit in a limited context. The pre-selected, presumably unfamiliar, words are highlighted in bold, but they are not defined. Practice questions in the “Think” section for each First Read “help students strengthen their vocabulary through various strategies—including using context clues, identifying Greek and Latin roots and affixes, and using print and digital resources—to determine the possible meanings of two of the selected vocabulary words.” The materials include additional support, specifically for English Learners and students whose skills are “approaching” grade level. Students also have access to a visual glossary, which adds a photo or illustration to each word and its definition.

In Unit 1, the teacher helps students understand the word *obtain*, part of a list of words explicitly related to academic work, which the materials describe as “vocabulary that will help you explore the process of digging deep to understand information.” The teacher reads, “You should obtain information from different sources first, and once you have the information, examine the evidence,” and then asks questions to help students understand and use the word. Questions such as, “If someone wanted to obtain information about a local event, what sources might the person use?” After discussing all of the words, students break into pairs and attempt to work the words from the list into a “casual conversation.” They then work with the words

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individually through a scaffolded sequence of activities, including completing and generating sentences using the words.

In Unit 2, the materials include a year-long plan for building academic vocabulary, including ways to apply words in appropriate contexts. For example, this unit includes a section in “The Big Idea” entitled “Skill: Academic Vocabulary.” Students review ten academic vocabulary words, and the teacher models the words in context, reminding students that “academic vocabulary consists of words that are commonly used in academic texts, lectures, and discussions across a number of disciplines.” In this skill lesson, the teacher models academic vocabulary to strengthen students’ conversational abilities. Students drag-and-drop examples and non-examples for academic vocabulary previously reviewed for independent practice.

Unit 3 includes scaffolds and supports for teachers to differentiate vocabulary development for all learners. *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan on the StudySync Platform contains a preview window which, when clicked, exposes the students to drag-and-drop interactive vocabulary activity that has the term, part of speech (form), definition part (to be dragged and dropped by the student when selected), and a sample sentence space where students should type their response.

In Unit 4, the materials include scaffolds and supports for teachers to differentiate vocabulary development for all learners. For example, the instructional materials provide scaffolds for English Learners (ELs) and approaching learners’ various proficiency levels. The “Point of View activity” for “All Summer in a Day” by Ray Bradbury provides scaffolds for ELs and approaching learners by including a visual glossary of key terms related to the point of view. The materials include a vocabulary workbook that provides additional scaffolds and supports for “struggling students who are below grade level and are in need of more explicit examples and differentiated support.” The workbook contains various activities for each unit to support students’ working acquisition of vocabularies, such as identifying synonyms/antonyms, sentence completion, word parts exploration, word webs, and word family associations. The materials contain a “Student Progress Chart” to self-evaluate as they work through the lessons.

Unit 5 includes scaffolds and supports for teachers to differentiate vocabulary development for all learners. For example, “Amigo Brothers” by Thomas Piri provides educators with lesson plan guidance when reading, annotating, and determining unfamiliar vocabulary words. Beginning and Intermediate ELLs are encouraged to use the dictionary or thesaurus as they read and utilize a visual glossary as a resource tool.

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Indicator 3.A.4

Materials include a clearly defined plan to support and hold students accountable as they engage in independent reading.

- Procedures and/or protocols, along with adequate support for teachers, are provided to foster independent reading.
- Materials provide a plan for students to self-select texts and read independently for a sustained period of time, including planning and accountability for achieving independent reading goals.

Meets 1/1

The materials include a clearly defined plan to support and hold students accountable as they engage in independent reading. Procedures and protocols, along with adequate support for teachers, are provided to foster independent reading. The materials provide a plan for students to self-select texts and read independently for a sustained period of time, including planning and accountability for achieving independent reading goals.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Every teacher has access to StudySync’s Library of texts with “hundreds of short stories, poems, excerpts of novels and dramas, essays, speeches, and primary source documents, including a wide selection of full-length novels and dramas, as well as an array of Spanish language texts.” New texts added monthly support teachers with ongoing resources; also, students can access the complete library from any device, at any time, so assigning independent reading practice is doable. A “Self-Selected Blast” is provided to the students at the end of each unit. Students answer a unique driving question and learn a strategy they can use when they self-select a text. The materials provide online resources of various texts in the StudySync library for their self-selected reading with information about the theme and Lexile range for that particular unit; this range ensures the students’ text options are appropriate. A Self-Selected Response lesson is included after the Blast, where a writing prompt gives students the opportunity for deep thinking about the self-selected text to hopefully develop lifelong readers.

The materials offer multiple opportunities for structured and supported independent reading in every unit. Independent reading lessons are linked with related readings that follow the first-read, skill lesson(s), and close-read sequence and provide opportunities for comparing and contrasting, making connections across texts, and examining how different authors and text structures approach similar topics or themes. All units include at least three independent reading lessons. While students read and annotate the text selection independently, the lesson includes multiple opportunities for engagement about the reading with others, including teacher-led portions. Independent reading lessons begin in the same way as first-read lessons: with an initial introduction video and discussion, vocabulary preview activities, and

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opportunities to apply related comprehension skills. Students read and annotate the text independently in the digital platform and then discuss the reading with the teacher and other students in a section of the lesson plan called “Text Talk.”

In Unit 1, three of the ten text selections are designated independent reading. According to the publisher, all units include at least three independent reading lessons. While students read and annotate the text selection independently, the lesson has multiple opportunities to engage in reading with others. Independent reading lessons begin in the same way as first-read lessons, with an initial introduction video and discussion, vocabulary preview activities, and opportunities to apply related comprehension skills. The Independent Read Lesson Plan for “The Southpaw” by Judith Viorst includes a “Beyond the Book” activity; students re-read the text at home to create a text conversation in which two friends argue over a frustration similar to the characters in the story. Students include emojis and a resolution to their problems in the text conversation activity. This text-to-world connection activity is a way to motivate and engage students to apply text synthesis with real-world connections to further clarify and dig deeper into the content.

In Unit 2, the Independent Read, “The Circuit” by Francisco Jimenez, includes a Beyond activity, “Have students read *Children of the Dust Bowl: The True Story of the School at Weedpatch Camp* by Jerry Stanley in the StudySync Library.” Students have Independent Read Lessons given to them twice per unit, with opportunities to compare texts within and across genres by clustering two or three texts. One selection is read independently alongside a core text that receives full instructional support with the end goal of students reading independently and making connections from text-to-text as they progress linguistically.

In Unit 3, the students use active links to read “A Short Walk Around the Pyramids” and “Through The World” by Philip M. Isaacson; “The Great Fire” by Jim Murphy; and “The Pigman” by Paul Zindel, to name a few. All units provide suggested readings with hyperlinks as part of the publisher’s Library Tab at the top of the StudySync online platform.

In Unit 4, the materials support student accountability for achieving independent reading goals by having students complete a comparative writing response that connects the ideas within the core and independent reading assignments. For example, students read Ray Bradbury’s “All Summer in a Day” in a class setting with full instructional support and Richard Peck’s “Priscilla and the Wimps” independently. Students write a personal response to the independent reading assignment. Students complete comparative writing that compares and contrasts the “narrative point of view” in “Priscilla and the Wimps” and “All Summer in a Day” to illustrate essential bullying themes. Students cite evidence from both texts to support their understanding of the text.

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In Unit 6, the Self-Selected Reading Blast links provide five texts similar to those read in the unit. Students self-select one text to read independently for a sustained period of time. Before students begin, they set a purpose for reading the self-selected text.

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Indicator 3.B.1

Materials provide support for students to develop composition skills across multiple text types for a variety of purposes and audiences.

- Materials provide students opportunities to write literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas.
- Materials provide students opportunities to write informational texts to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes.
- Materials provide students opportunities to write argumentative texts to influence the attitudes or actions of a specific audience on specific issues.
- Materials provide students opportunities to write correspondence in a professional or friendly structure.

Meets 4/4

The materials provide support for students to develop composition skills across multiple text types for a variety of purposes and audiences. Students have opportunities to write literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas as well as opportunities to write informational texts to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes. Students write argumentative texts to influence the attitudes or actions of a specific audience on specific issues as well as correspondence in a professional or friendly structure.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In Unit 1, students write literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas. Students write a personal response to the memoir *Red Scarf Girl: A Memoir of the Cultural Revolution* by Ji-Li Jiang. Reflecting on the challenging decisions that Jiang faces between defending her father and protecting herself, students are prompted to think about a time they had to make a difficult decision. Students explain the decision, why they had to make it, and who, if anyone, helped them. Using text evidence for support, students reflect on whether this experience helped them empathize with Jiang. Students choose language that aligns with the appropriate voice for the chosen narrator.

In Unit 2, the materials provide students opportunities to write argumentative texts to influence the attitudes or actions of a specific audience on specific issues. For example, a lesson involving “We’re on the Same Team” by Jacki Jing includes an opportunity for students to write a 200-word essay about a topic they care passionately about that is often misunderstood or disputed. Students use Jing’s letter as a reference and to craft a response that respectfully explains their reasoning while providing factual evidence to support their claims. The students get to choose their topic, increasing their interest and allowing them to take ownership of their learning by influencing other readers. Also, in Unit 2, the materials provide students

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opportunities to write correspondence in a professional or friendly structure. For example, after reading “We’re on the Same Team” by Jacki Jing, the students get an opportunity to write a correspondence to the author, analyzing the question, “Do you think the author missed any opportunities to improve their response to the SportsNews article?” Students write a 250-word letter to the author explaining how Jing’s letter could be more effective or detailing why some parts of the argument are strong while including textual evidence to support their claims.

In Unit 3, students write informational texts to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes. For example, students read several stories and informational texts within the unit about individuals and characters who take action in the face of uncertainty. Students identify three individuals or characters from the unit texts and write an informational essay explaining what drives individuals to take action or make a decision. Students reflect on information texts and other texts from other genres in preparation for this more extended writing task throughout the unit. For example, after reading an excerpt from *An American Plague: The True and Terrifying Story of the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1793* by Jim Murphy and *Fever 1793* by Laurie Halse Anderson, students compare and contrast how people understood and responded to yellow fever in their communities, drawing on the texts for support.

In Unit 4, the informational text *Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott* by Russell Freedman provides students the opportunity to write a speech about courage using the story of Claudette Colvin and their own life as a reference. Students think about the following questions before writing: “What motivates courage? How is it driven by emotion? How is courage influenced by one’s values and strong beliefs?” This unit also includes opportunities for students to write argumentative texts to influence the attitudes or actions of a specific audience on specific issues. For example, the argumentative text “Celebrities as Heroes” by StudySync resource requires students to think about the question: “What makes someone a hero?” Students read the text, “Celebrities Should not be Idolized as Heroes,” and, in a written response, answer the question: “Which of the two arguments is less persuasive?” Students include an “analysis of the reasons, evidence, rhetorical devices, and logical fallacies the author uses in the argument [they] feel is less persuasive” as they counterpoint the text, “Celebrities Can Be Cultural Heroes.” Students cite evidence from both arguments, contrasting the rhetorical devices and logical fallacies each writer incorporates for a well-crafted argument.

In Unit 5, students write a literary text by imitating a poet’s style as they compose a lyrical conversation after reading “Saying Yes” by Diana Chang. The writing prompt offers students a guiding question and directions about how to imitate Chang’s style: “As in Chang’s poem, be sure to have lines of dialogue at the beginning and a concluding stance at the end that details what your poem’s speaker wants to say. Title your poem either ‘Saying Yes’ or ‘Saying No.’”

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In Unit 6, students engage in an extended research project in which they create an informational text after researching a topic of their choice related to the unit's theme and readings: "Consider the texts included in the True to Yourself unit, identify a topic you would like to know more about, and write a research report about that topic." The materials also provide students opportunities to write correspondence in a professional or friendly structure. For example, after reading an excerpt from Ben Mikaelson's *Touching Spirit Bear*, students write a letter in the voice of one of the characters, explaining his reasons for his choices and what he hopes it will mean for his son's future. The writing prompt reminds students to "use descriptive details from the text" in the letter.

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Indicator 3.B.2

Most written tasks require students to use clear and concise information and well-defended text-supported claims to demonstrate the knowledge gained through analysis and synthesis of texts.

- Materials provide opportunities for students to use evidence from texts to support their opinions and claims.
- Materials provide opportunities for students to demonstrate in writing what they have learned through reading and listening to texts.

Meets 4/4

Written tasks within the materials require students to use clear and concise information and well-defended text-supported claims to demonstrate the knowledge gained through analysis and text synthesis. The materials provide opportunities for students to use evidence from texts to support their opinions and claims and to demonstrate in writing what they have learned through reading and listening to texts.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In Unit 1, after reading *The Mighty Miss Malone* by Christopher Paul Curtis, students answer questions in the “Think” section and cite textual evidence to support their answers: “What are the differences between Deza’s old school in Gary, Indiana, and her new school in Flint, Michigan? What does Deza’s attitude toward the little boy she meets in the camp reveal about her character?”

In Unit 2, after reading “The Treasure of Lemon Brown” by Walter Dean Myers, students answer the Think Question and cite textual evidence from the selection to support their response: “Why does Lemon Brown consider a harmonica and some newspaper clippings his ‘treasure’?” The materials also allow students to demonstrate in writing what they have learned through reading and listening to texts. Students compare and contrast the themes of Francisco Jimenez’s *The Circuit*, David Kherdian’s “That Day,” and Nikki Giovanni’s “A Poem for My Librarian, Mrs. Long,” considering “what motivates each author to share his or her message.” Students “[w]rite a response in which you compare and contrast each author’s purpose and message.” Students support their ideas with evidence from all three texts and use newly acquired vocabulary as appropriate.

In Unit 3, students use evidence from texts to support their opinions and claims. For example, students write a personal response to Laurie Halse Anderson’s *Fever 1793*, expressing their opinion about whether “it’s more important for Matilda to follow her dreams or help out the people who are sick in her community? What would you do if you were in her situation?” Students use text evidence to support their ideas. The materials also provide opportunities for

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students to demonstrate in writing what they have learned through reading and listening to texts in Unit 3. For example, after reading an excerpt from *The Mighty Miss Malone* by Christopher Paul Curtis, students “use the information [they] learned about” two primary characters to “write a short scene that describes” a key event in the text between them and what could happen in the next similar encounter.

In Unit 4, after reading “All Summer In A Day” by Ray Bradbury, students provide written responses to prove their understanding of expectations after reading the text. For example, “The thoughts, words, and actions of the characters in a story help to develop a story’s plot. Find examples in ‘All Summer in a Day,’ where dialogue drives the plot forward. Explain how the dialogue does this.” The students’ responses prove their understanding of the plot using textual evidence in their writing to make their responses more valid.

In Unit 5, students identify the author’s message in an excerpt of *Warriors Don’t Cry* by Melba Patillo Beals and “describe how the use of a chronological text structure helps her develop that message effectively.” Then, students “choose two to three paragraphs from the text and explain the essential role that each one plays in developing the text structure. What information does each paragraph contribute to the order of events that Beals describes in her story?” Students use text evidence to support their ideas.

In Unit 6, after reading “Letter to Xavier High School” by Kurt Vonnegut, students complete a written response answering the question: “Do you think schools today do enough to nurture and promote creativity?” Students support their responses with evidence from the text and opinions drawn from their own experiences. The materials in Unit 6 also provide opportunities for students to use evidence from texts to support their opinions and claims. For example, students reflect on their reading of an excerpt from *The Giver* by Lois Lowry: “What do you think are the positive and negative aspects of living in a society in which each person’s future occupation is decided for them? Would you want to live in such a society?” Students cite evidence from the text to support their responses.

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Indicator 3.B.3

Over the course of the year, composition convention skills are applied in increasingly complex contexts, with opportunities for students to publish their writing.

- Materials facilitate students' coherent use of the elements of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text.
- Materials provide opportunities for practice and application of the conventions of academic language when speaking and writing, including punctuation and grammar.
- Grammar, punctuation, and usage are taught systematically, both in and out of context, and materials provide editing practice in students' own writing as the year continues.

Meets 4/4

Over the year, composition convention skills are applied in increasingly complex contexts, with opportunities for students to publish their writing. The materials facilitate students' coherent use of the writing process elements (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose multiple texts. The materials also provide opportunities for practice and application of academic language conventions when speaking and writing, including punctuation and grammar. Grammar, punctuation, and usage are taught systematically, both in and out of context, and materials provide editing practice in students' own writing as the year continues.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials facilitate students' coherent use of the writing process elements (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text. Each grade 6 ELAR unit contains an Extended Writing Project and Grammar section that guides students through writing multi-paragraph essays in one of the following forms: Narrative, Informational, Argumentative, Correspondence, Research, and Oral Presentation. The Extended Writing or Oral Project draws on the texts studied during the unit. It facilitates students through the writing process elements (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text. The lesson begins with planning activities that review the targeted genre's characteristics, examine the writing prompt, and provide an opportunity for students to summarize their writing plans. The lesson's draft portion focuses on developing ideas and organizational skills as the students compose their rough draft. In the Revise portion of the project, the materials provide specific skill lessons on style, format, and elaboration. The edit and publish phase of the project contains skill lessons on targeted grammar skills that the writer can apply before publishing. Each of the extended writing projects follows the same format. The skill lessons vary based on the genre characteristics and targeted grammar instruction.

In Unit 1, grammar, punctuation, and usage are taught systematically, both in and out of context, and materials provide editing practice in students' own writing as the year continues.

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For example, the groups of lessons in each extended writing project are revising and editing sections that include explicit grammar lessons, generally connected to the genre in which students are writing. The materials provide lessons on writing and punctuating dialogue and revising consistent verb tense and pronoun usage during the fiction writing project when these conventions are most relevant. Later, after focused lessons on fragments and run-ons, students edit their drafts. The materials also contain a Sixth Grade End of Unit Assessment workbook. In Unit 1, the Fictional Narrative writing prompt encourages students to “tell a made-up story about a character that must face a challenge, organize and develop your story effectively by putting events in a logical order, choose your words carefully when writing descriptions and dialogue, use correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and sentences.” The materials also facilitate students’ coherent use of the writing process elements (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text in Unit 1. For example, students write a narrative in which a character faces a major challenge due to an unexpected event. Students begin the planning stage of their essay with the following prompt: “How can an unexpected event turn into a major challenge?”

In Unit 2, the materials provide opportunities for practice and application of academic language conventions when speaking and writing, including punctuation and grammar. For example, the Revise Skill lessons address transitions and comma usage after transitions. The Edit and Publish portion of the lesson provides direct instruction on basic spelling rules, capitalization of abbreviations, initials, acronyms, and organizations, as well as subject-verb agreement. Each lesson includes a StudySync Skills video that addresses the convention, a model text, a section with multiple-choice questions to assess student learning, and a write section to apply the targeted skill to the narrative. After the skill lessons, students apply the knowledge to their projects.

In Unit 3, grammar, punctuation, and usage are taught systematically, both in and out of context, and materials provide editing practice in students’ own writing as the year continues. For example, to support students’ revision of their informational compositions, the materials offer a focused skills lesson on Subject-Verb Agreement with Intervening Prepositional Phrases. The materials offer three related lessons on complex sentences, subordinating conjunctions, and commas in complex sentences during the editing section.

In Unit 5, the materials provide opportunities for practice and application of academic language conventions when speaking and writing, including punctuation and grammar. Each extended writing project includes an editing section in which students apply the grammar lessons from the unit to editing their own work. For example, students edit their extended projects, which are also presented orally; the materials offer a set of lessons on relative pronouns, correlative conjunctions, and commonly misspelled words. In the Editing section, students edit their work in response to their peers’ feedback and an editing checklist that applies the grammar concepts they have studied during the project. For example, “Have I followed the rules for using relative

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pronouns to connect a clause or phrase to the rest of the sentence? Have I followed the rules for using correlative conjunctions to connect words and groups of words of equal importance? Have I caught all of the words that I frequently misspell because they do not follow basic spelling rules? Do I have any sentence fragments or run-on sentences? Have I spelled everything correctly?"

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Indicator 3.C.1

Materials support students' listening and speaking about texts.

- Speaking and listening opportunities are focused on the text(s) being studied in class, allowing students to demonstrate comprehension.
- Most oral tasks require students to use clear and concise information and well-defended text-supported claims to demonstrate the knowledge gained through analysis and synthesis of texts.

Meets 4/4

The materials support students' listening and speaking about texts. The speaking and listening opportunities are focused on the texts being studied in class, allowing students to demonstrate comprehension. Most oral tasks require students to use clear and concise information and well-defended text-supported claims to demonstrate the knowledge gained through analysis and synthesis of texts.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In Unit 1, students watch the StudySync TV episode of the poem "Jabberwocky" by Lewis Carroll. While listening, students depict important information to participate in a class discussion. Afterward, students discuss the following: "What setting did Isaiah and Daniela imagine 'wabe' described? Why do you think they both had the same image in mind? Isaiah calls the structure of the poem a 'ballad stanza.' How does this structure make the students feel? What contrast does Ethan point out? How do Daniela and Erica feel about the made-up language in the poem? Do you agree?"

In Unit 2, students discuss the poem "Teenagers" by Pat Mora by orally expressing and listening to each other's thoughts and ideas about the message and the author's purpose. Students use text evidence to infer what the speaker says when she writes "a code I knew but can't remember." Students identify similes and metaphors in the poem and explain what purpose the poet achieves by using this figurative language while also explaining the poem's exploration of how relationships impact our lives. After analyzing and synthesizing key points in a video that correlates with the lesson, the teacher pauses at specific points in the video to discuss the students' discussion elements. For example, "What strategies do the students use to get the conversation on track during their call? How does Adriana explain the concept of a speaker's point of view to the other students?"

In Unit 4, students discuss and annotate Ray Bradbury's "All Summer in a Day," using skills-focused prompts that recall paired readings, such as "Although the narrator occasionally addresses the reader, 'Priscilla and the Wimps' is told from the first-person objective point of view. Highlight a passage in 'All Summer in a Day' that deals with bullying. Compare the

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effectiveness of the point of view in that story with how the narrator describes bullying in ‘Priscilla and the Wimps.’” After their discussions, students watch a short video of a small group of students discussing the text and reflect on how the students in the video apply the skills they’re learning, including how a student in the video “spark[s] further discussion about Margot being an outsider” and the conclusions the group in the video make as a result. Then, students engage in a “Collaborative Conversation” in groups, applying their previous discussion to a final analytical writing task. Unit 4 also provides speaking and listening opportunities focused on the texts being studied in class, allowing students to demonstrate comprehension. For example, students engage in a collaborative discussion about Malala Yousafzai’s Nobel Lecture. Students “Identify places in the video and transcript of the speech where Malala effectively uses tone and voice to communicate her message, and explain why her word choices and use of language are effective.” Students also identify “qualities in Malala that they believed made her worthy of receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014. Identify evidence in the speech that illustrates qualities of character that help Malala in her efforts to promote education for all. Explain why you think these qualities matter.” Conversation protocol guidance includes “listening to each other’s perspectives is the key to reaching a new understanding about a text.”

In Unit 5, “Charles” by Shirley Jackson allows students to analyze point of view, character, and summary to participate in a collaborative conversation and write an argumentative response. The following questions are used for group conversations: “What details in paragraphs 4–8 help you determine the point of view? Why do you think the author chose this point of view? Why is this point of view important in paragraphs 64–72?”

Unit 6 includes the informational texts “Eleanor Roosevelt: A Life of Discovery” by Russell Freedman and “Hatshepsut: His Majesty, Herself” by Catherine M. Andronik. Before their writing assignment and in small groups, students engage in a Collaborative Conversation to discuss the Close Read prompt below. The teacher encourages students to take notes to jot down ideas, conclusions, and questions. “Compare and contrast the text structures each author uses, as well as their purposes for writing ‘Eleanor Roosevelt: A Life of Discovery’ and ‘Hatshepsut: His Majesty, Herself.’ In your comparison, think about any connections between these two historical figures and what readers might learn about leadership after reading both texts. Be sure to use evidence from both texts in your response.”

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Indicator 3.C.2

Materials engage students in productive teamwork and in student-led discussions, in both formal and informal settings.

- Materials provide guidance and practice with grade-level protocols for discussion to express their own thinking.
- Materials provide opportunities for students to give organized presentations/performances and speak in a clear and concise manner using the conventions of language.

Meets 4/4

The materials engage students in productive teamwork and student-led discussions in both formal and informal settings. The materials provide guidance and practice with grade-level protocols for discussion to express their thinking and provide opportunities for students to give organized presentations or performances and speak clearly and concisely using language conventions.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In Unit 1, students engage in their first “first read” lesson of Sandra Cisneros’s “Eleven”; they begin by reading an introduction, watching a video preview, and then discussing it. The teacher offers this purpose to students for the instructional routine: “By reading and listening to the introduction of ‘Eleven,’ I can begin to think about and generate questions about the genre, author, and characteristics of the text I am about to read.” As students read the first line of the introduction, they begin to wonder what the main character, Rachel’s, exceptional thoughts will be. These questions help students start thinking about the story they are about to read. In the “Text Talk” portion of first read lessons, students reflect on their understanding of their reading. Teachers ask questions to monitor student understanding and clarify any lingering questions. In Unit 1, the students create an External Oral Project (EOP), which allows them to apply speaking techniques as they give an oral presentation to their peers. Under the ELL Extended Oral Project tab, students write a dramatic scene in response to the prompt, “Imagine that you are lost in a crowded place like a mall, a museum, or a zoo. What do you do? Work with a group to write and perform a realistic scene. Make sure your scene is easy for your audience to understand. Include dialogue so that your group members know what to say. Use stage directions that show how the characters act or feel.”

Unit 3 includes an excerpt from *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan. Students in small groups participate in a “Collaborative Conversation” activity to discuss the Close Read prompt, using their Skills Focus annotations. Protocols for discussion include “How does the author cast Percy as an outsider?” Students think about how the author’s use of flashbacks and Percy’s internal and external responses to events in the plot contribute to Percy’s characterization. Students

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elicit and consider suggestions from other group members during the collaborative discussion, take notes, and identify points of agreement and disagreement.

In Unit 4, after reading the short story “Priscilla and the Wimps” by Richard Peck, students engage in a Collaborative Conversation in small groups, breaking down the writing prompt below before discussing relevant ideas and text evidence. Students’ prompt includes, “Write about a time that you have seen someone stand up to a bully or a threat, similar to the way Priscilla confronts Monk and the Kobras.” In their response, students compare the situation, the confrontation, and the result after the bully or threat was challenged.

In Unit 5, the Oral Presentation extended project draws on argumentative text elements. Readings and skill lessons throughout Unit 5 focus on argumentation, and students apply those skills in the planning and preparation for their presentation. This set of lessons also includes individual-focused skill lessons on planning, organizing, drafting, and revising an oral presentation. It focuses on lessons that communicate ideas effectively while considering audience and purpose, in which they “learn and practice strategies that demonstrate the use of appropriate register, vocabulary, tone, and voice for a specific audience and purpose.” After this set of lessons, students edit and deliver an oral presentation using relative pronouns and correlative conjunctions. These specific elements showcase knowledge from previous lessons in which students correctly use standard English conventions to correct spelling errors. In Unit 5, after reading *Farewell to Manzanar* by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James D. Houston, students create a multimedia presentation about the Japanese internment. The teacher breaks the students into small groups and assigns each group a topic to research, such as the evacuation process, what families were allowed to bring to the relocation camp, locations of the relocation camps, living conditions in the camps, daily life in the camps, and how the internment ended. Each group creates a multimedia presentation to present information to the class. Groups present their findings to the class in a formal presentation, in order by group assignment.

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Indicator 3.D.1

Materials engage students in both short-term and sustained recursive inquiry processes to confront and analyze various aspects of a topic using relevant sources.

- Materials support identification and summary of high-quality primary and secondary sources.
- Materials support student practice in organizing and presenting their ideas and information in accordance with the purpose of the research and the appropriate grade level audience.

Meets 4/4

The materials engage students in both short-term and sustained recursive inquiry processes to confront and analyze various aspects of a topic using relevant sources. Materials support the identification and summary of high-quality primary and secondary sources and support student practice in organizing and presenting their ideas and information in accordance with the purpose of the research and the appropriate grade-level audience.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In Unit 1, the materials support student practice in organizing and presenting their ideas and information in accordance with the purpose of the research and the appropriate grade-level audience. For example, students engage in informal collaborative research and present their findings through various optional “Beyond the Book” activities embedded within each unit and connected to the ideas and themes presented in the readings. The lessons provide a basic overview of the activity and do not include explicit instructions for the teacher or student. The activities require students to work in small groups to conduct informal research on a topic and present their findings to the class. Students work in small groups to research topics related to the Great Depression. The groups design a visual aid to present their findings to the class informally.

In Unit 3, students research Greek mythology to create a board game in connection to the excerpt from *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan. Else, after reading “Everybody Jump” by Randall Munroe, they create “what if” questions as part of a group game challenge to “use research skills and teamwork to correctly answer questions.”

In Unit 4, the materials support the identification and summary of high-quality primary and secondary sources. For example, the materials direct teachers to discuss primary and secondary sources in two different lessons, both focused on publisher-produced readings, “Bullying in Schools” and “Celebrities as Heroes.” In one lesson, the materials note for teachers that in order to “evaluate the effectiveness of each argument, students will need to assess the evidence” and direct teachers: “Lead students to differentiate between primary and secondary

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sources that are presented as evidence.” In the other, the materials note that “These arguments fall into the genre of expository nonfiction,” and teachers “Help students differentiate between primary and secondary sources offered as evidence to support claims.” The materials provide no other direction or information on primary and secondary sources in this unit. The materials do provide a skills lesson on evaluating details (though there is no explicit mention of primary or secondary sources in the skills lesson), which prompts students to judge or decide “whether a detail suggests or supports a larger key idea.” Teachers listen for evidence that students understand this concept, such as “The detail that the statistic comes from the National Center for Education statistics seems to have been included for the purpose of lending credibility to the author’s evidence.”

Unit 6 includes a Primary and Secondary Sources Skills Lesson. Students “prepare to write a research paper by differentiating between primary and secondary sources.” Students watch a Concept Definition video and read the definition for Primary and Secondary Sources. Using Turn and Talk, students discuss how primary and secondary sources help understand a topic. Students review the vocabulary words *primary source* and *secondary source* through a drag-and-drop activity. The teacher directs students back to the unit’s readings, including “Letter to His Daughter” by W.E.B. Du Bois, *I Never Had it Made* by Jackie Robinson, and *Hatshepsut: His Majesty, Herself* by Catherine M. Andronik. The teacher asks students to determine the clues from the title, text, and generic conventions that help them determine whether it is a primary or secondary source and how they might “use the source in research.” The teacher then leads the discussion by asking the following questions: “What clues do the title and author provide about whether this is a primary or secondary source? What is the genre of the source? What does this tell you about whether it is a primary or secondary source? How might you use this source in research?” Students read a model text and answer questions to differentiate between primary and secondary sources while completing a primary and secondary source drag-and-drop activity. The materials also support student practice in organizing and presenting their ideas and information in accordance with the purpose of the research and the appropriate grade level audience. For example, the materials remind students of the recursive nature of research with the note that they “may also have new ideas” as they begin drafting and can “feel free to explore those new ideas as you have them.” Students also consider the following questions, which reflect the grade-level appropriate concepts and skills they have studied in this section of the project, as they begin their drafts: “Have I fully supported my thesis statement? Have I analyzed information from various sources, including features, to gain background information on my topic? Have I synthesized information from a variety of sources? Have I included supporting evidence (facts and details) from my sources? Does the text structure help me to communicate my ideas?” Finally, during the revising and editing sections, the materials offer focused lessons on citing sources and a series of relevant grammar lessons (commas, capitalization, and using quotation marks).

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Indicator 3.E.1

Materials contain interconnected tasks that build student knowledge and provide opportunities for increased independence.

- Questions and tasks are designed to help students build and apply knowledge and skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, thinking, and language.
- Materials contain a coherently sequenced set of high-quality, text-dependent questions and tasks that require students to analyze the integration of knowledge and ideas within individual texts as well as across multiple texts.
- Tasks integrate reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking; include components of vocabulary, syntax, and fluency, as needed; and provide opportunities for increased independence.

Meets 4/4

The materials contain interconnected tasks that build student knowledge and provide opportunities for increased independence. Questions and tasks are designed to help students build and apply knowledge and skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, thinking, and language. The materials contain a coherently sequenced set of high-quality, text-dependent questions and tasks that require students to analyze the integration of knowledge and ideas within individual texts as well as across multiple texts. Tasks integrate reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking; include components of vocabulary, syntax, and fluency, as needed; and provide opportunities for increased independence.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Each unit includes a culminating project that provides an opportunity for students to integrate reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking. For example, in Unit 1, the Extended Writing Project requires students to draw on their analysis of the unit’s text structure and author’s craft to write a suspenseful narrative, “creating suspense from an unlikely source, such as a familiar place or everyday situation.” This unit also contains questions and tasks designed to help students build and apply knowledge and skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, thinking, and language. For example, after reading an excerpt from *A Wrinkle In Time* by Madeleine L’Engle, students view a “Concept Definition” video and read the definition for mood. In a “Turn and Talk” activity, they read the following questions and discuss: “What is the mood or emotional feeling in one of your favorite stories? How do you think the author creates this mood? What is an example of a setting that helps create the mood in a story or poem you have read?”

In Unit 2, *The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child* by Francisco Jimenez includes a coherent and sequenced set of text-dependent questions through a “Text Talk” activity. Students use what they have read to answer the following, “What happens in the writer’s world

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during that time of year? What are working conditions in Fresno like for the writer? Why do the writer and his brother hide from the school bus? When the writer goes to school, how is he treated by his teacher, Mr. Lema?" The students provide textual evidence to support their responses to specific questions through the Text Talk activity.

In Unit 3, students examine a topic covered in two different literary genres. Students make cross-genre connections by reading excerpts from the nonfiction text, *An American Plague: The True and Terrifying Story of the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1793* by Jim Murphy and the novel, *Fever 1793* by Laurie Halse Anderson. As students read the nonfiction account of the yellow fever epidemic, they highlight places where the text is "interesting, surprising, or complex" and consider how the nonfiction text is similar or different from the novel excerpt. Students complete a short-answer response using text evidence to describe yellow fever symptoms. Students engage in a small group discussion exploring the Skills Focus guiding questions, including, "In *Fever 1793*, Mrs. Bowles, the driver, and Matilda provide insights into how Philadelphians are reacting to the spread of yellow fever."

In Unit 5, students apply what they learned from reading and studying argumentative texts and write an argument-based proposal in Unit 4. After reading a "Letter to Xavier High School" by Kurt Vonnegut, students consider Vonnegut's central claim that "any creative pursuit, whether as a hobby or career, has a significant and positive impact on a person's life." Students write a response to the question, "Do you think schools today do enough to nurture and promote creativity? Support your response with evidence from the text as well as your own experiences." At the end of the unit, students construct and present the Unit 5 extended oral project, in which they take a "stand and position," illustrated or supported by an experience from their own lives.

Unit 6 includes the short story "Crazy Loco" by David Rice. Students gain practice through a "First Read" of the text, where they "use the reading comprehension strategy of generating questions, use context clues to define new vocabulary, and demonstrate comprehension by responding to questions using text evidence." During the "Close Read," they analyze the cultural setting of "Crazy Loco," explain how it influences character development, and how this in turn affects plot development.

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Indicator 3.E.2

Materials provide spiraling and scaffolded practice.

- Materials support distributed practice over the course of the year.
- Design includes scaffolds for students to demonstrate integration of literacy skills that spiral over the school year.

Meets 4/4

The materials provide spiraling and scaffolded practice and support distributed practice over the year. The materials' design includes scaffolds for students to demonstrate the integration of literacy skills that spiral over the school year.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials support distributed practice over the year. Each unit, throughout the year, includes a predictable Unit Overview, Integrated Reading and Writing Lessons, Extended Writing Project and Grammar Lessons, ELL Resources, Novel Study, and an End-of-Unit Assessment. The Unit Overview includes what content and which genres students expect to find when they delve into the readings. There is also a Pacing Guide detailing the scope and sequence of texts and skills taught in the unit. Every unit is built around a theme, essential question, and genre focus. Charts are included and suggest pacing, along with "guidance on opportunities for practice and reteaching to standards mastery." The Integrated Reading and Writing Lessons and Instructional Path begin with The Big Idea. Lesson Overview/Progress Monitoring begins each lesson and or a combination of First Reads, Skills Lessons, Close Reads, Independent Reads, and Blasts follow.

Unit 1 includes scaffolds for students to demonstrate the integration of literacy skills that spiral over the school year. For example, students are scaffolded through *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle. Students read and analyze a novel on the StudySync platform. They have a PDF file titled "Novel Study Reading Guide" that includes key passages, vocabulary, and comprehension questions. The platform also has a tab with Comparative Reading and Writing tasks in which students connect their learning and work on writing prompts. Unit 1 includes an excerpt from the novel *Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen. Students make predictions about vocabulary with teacher support during the First Read activity. For students unable to make predictions, the teacher directs them to revisit the Identification and Application section of the Grade 6 Context Clues lesson. Students practice making connections with the text with teacher modeling and examples which provide support. In a Close Read activity, students engage in a Collaborative Conversation activity with scaffolding questions that provide support, such as, "What is the context of each text's main conflict or problem? How do the settings affect the characters? How do the settings affect the events?" Students work in groups, using discussion prompts and speaking frames as a scaffold. With the assistance of scaffolds, the integration of

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skills becomes a strength and enables students to complete a challenging compare and contrast writing assignment at the end of the lesson.

In Unit 2, the materials support distributed practice over the year. For example, students read “A Poem for My Librarian, Mrs. Long” by Nikki Giovanni and analyze how text structure contributes to the author’s purpose. Students engage in a skills lesson about the author’s purpose; read and discuss a model text with annotations about the author’s purpose; and answer multiple-choice questions related to the author’s purpose. Unit 4, students read *I Am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai and analyze how text structure supports the author’s purpose. The materials scaffold the skill by having students participate in a Collaborative Conversation and respond in writing to the following prompt: “What message is Malala trying to convey about “the power of the media? How does she structure this passage to show how the media supports her cause and endangers her at the same time?” In Unit 6, students analyze how text structure contributes to the author’s purpose in the StudySync text, *Hatshepsut: His Majesty, Herself*. The materials extend students’ understanding of the author’s purpose by having them compare and contrast the author’s purposes across texts in *Eleanor Roosevelt: A Life of Discovery* and *Hatshepsut: His Majesty, Herself*. Students use text evidence from both texts to support their responses.

In Unit 3, students prepare to discuss the connection between plot and characterization with an excerpt from *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan. Tasks progression follows the same pattern as in Unit 2: Students use their annotations from multiple readings of the text. As students read, materials guide them with prompts (e.g., “Identify evidence of flashback in the excerpt and explain how the author’s use of this non-linear plot element helps establish Percy as an outsider.”) After reading, students use sentence frames such as “The author uses flashback to...” “The flashback helps cast Percy as an outsider by...” This prepares students for the close reading prompt and the culminating discussion: “How does the author cast Percy as an outsider?” Students think about how the author’s use of flashbacks and Percy’s internal and external responses contribute to Percy’s characterization. As students prepare for the discussion, the teacher encourages students to find plenty of text evidence to support their ideas.

In Unit 4, “All Summer in a Day” by Ray Bradbury, the activities are interconnected to other texts throughout the materials with similar themes. Students compare and contrast the narrative point of view of “Priscilla and the Wimps” by Richard Peck and Bradbury’s “All Summer in a Day” to illustrate important themes and topics like bullying. Students cite evidence from both texts to support their responses.

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Indicator 5.1

Materials include supports for students who demonstrate proficiency above grade level.

- Materials provide planning and learning opportunities (including extensions and differentiation) for students who demonstrate literacy skills above that expected at the grade level.

Meets 2/2

The materials include supports for students who demonstrate proficiency above grade level. Materials provide planning and learning opportunities (including extensions and differentiation) for students who demonstrate literacy skills above that expected at the grade level. The materials provide mostly for whole-class instructional engagement with opportunities for above-grade-level students to craft activities that reflect above-grade-level literacy skills expected at the grade level.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Throughout the year, the materials include extensions, such as leading a discussion, conducting additional research, or responding to prompts using a set of target vocabulary words. The materials' optional section extensions include opportunities for students demonstrating above-grade-level proficiency to engage in more sophisticated work, such as additional activities to support student choice to extend and explore new learning. Every reading selection is accompanied by a minimum of one planning and learning opportunity for students who demonstrate proficiency above grade level. The textbook uses the term "Beyond" to indicate differentiated or extension materials for students performing above grade level. These extensions are provided in the lesson plan's optional section. The extension activities focus on all aspects of literacy (e.g., reading, writing, speaking, and listening).

In Unit 1, students actively watch and listen to a preview video and make text-to-self connections based upon the student expectations defined in the lesson. The materials provide an optional "Beyond" independent reading activity for above-grade-level students. Students read "Teenagers" by Pat Mora and make text-to-text connections as they read "Eleven" by Sandra Cisneros in a whole class instructional lesson. Students performing above grade level exercise their metacognitive skills to dig deeper and understand the author's message.

In Unit 2, teachers are provided an optional section in the lesson plan to read *Walk Two Moons* by Sharon Creech. Above-grade-level students lead a discussion about family relationships and problems family members sometimes have, such as lack of communication. Students have equal opportunities to share, discuss, and generate a list (on the board or paper) of their peers' responses.

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Materials include increasingly complex traditional, contemporary, classical, and diverse texts. In Unit 3, *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan is a modern piece of literature among middle school students because the characters share interests and situations that middle school students can personally connect with across curriculums with a mythology genre tone. The materials evolve to another lesson in Unit 3, where above-grade-level students interpret and analyze grade-level vocabulary. The lesson prompts them to “Look at Jacobs’s description in paragraph 67,” pointing them to a specific line. The teacher explains key vocabulary in the sentence and then asks students leading questions: “How does this word choice affect your interpretation of the scene? How does the author use this word to create a contrast to the events in Part I of the story?”

In Unit 5, the instructional materials prepare students to read the poem “Helen Keller” by Langston Hughes by having students watch and listen actively to a preview video included in the publisher’s lesson plans. Students read an introduction to the text and generate questions to help clarify meaning or understanding about the discussion topic. Along with their generated questions and knowledge of the text, students synthesize information from both sources and connect the importance of Helen Keller’s role in history. An optional Beyond extension suggests that above-grade-level learners lead the discussion about Helen Keller, considering her physical limitations and how she overcame those limitations with her peers.

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Indicator 5.2

Materials include supports for students who perform below grade-level to ensure they are meeting the grade level literacy standards.

- Materials provide planning and learning opportunities (including extensions and differentiation) for students who demonstrate literacy skills below that expected at the grade level.

Meets 2/2

The materials include supports for grade 6 students who perform below grade level to ensure they meet the grade-level literacy standards. Planning and learning opportunities, including extensions and differentiation, are evident for students who demonstrate literacy skills below that expected at the grade 6 level.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Materials provide scaffolds such as visual glossaries, question and annotation guides, and writing supports to address the needs of approaching-grade-level learners who demonstrate literacy skills below that expected at grade level. The materials provide a proficiency tab for each activity.

In Unit 1, students read background information about “Blasts” (an interactive platform that captures students’ imaginations with short read/write assignments) and interactive articles about relevant and newsworthy topics. Each Blast background is written at three differentiated Lexile levels (approaching, on-level, and advanced) to meet all learners’ needs. Students leveled at grade level and beyond read and annotate the Blasts article, answer questions, and interact with other students through polls and Twitter-style posts, while approaching students read the Blast in pairs. The materials include a visual glossary as a scaffold for these students who perform below grade level.

In Unit 2, during the whole class reading of an excerpt from Mildred Taylor’s *Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry*, teachers pair students with more skilled peers as they read and generate questions. The materials include a “scaffolding” tab that includes additional prompts for students as they encounter vocabulary and “speaking frames” for discussing the text. For example, the “Text Talk” section of the lesson plan asks all students, “Why is Thurston Wallace upset?” In the scaffolding section of the reading selection, the speaking frame for responding to this question is “Thurston Wallace is...because...,” with the additional reminder to “check paragraph 4” for help. The materials identify a possible unfamiliar literary allusion to the world of Narnia that C.S. Lewis created. The materials also identify specialized vocabulary—*corridor* and *stereoscope*—that may be unfamiliar to approaching grade-level students. The materials

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include scaffolds for approaching grade-level learners by providing a vocabulary guide that guides questions to help students predict the meaning of boldfaced words in the poem.

In Unit 4, in the “Close Read” for the “Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech,” the Lesson Plan includes the author's purpose and collaborative conversations. Students complete a vocabulary chart in StudySync by dragging and dropping words with their corresponding definitions for on-grade-level in this lesson. In contrast, the approaching students have an additional scaffold in the form of a visual glossary. Once students begin to read, discuss, and annotate “Focus Questions” the teacher has available on the lesson plan, the approaching students can access an annotation guide to answer the same questions in pairs or small groups for support.

In Unit 5, all students practice applying the reading comprehension strategy, “Monitoring Comprehension,” to the first ten paragraphs of “Amigo Brothers” by Piri Thomas. A built-in, clearly titled strategy for approaching-grade-level students has them teaming with on-grade-level peers for additional support as they practice reading and monitoring comprehension.

In Unit 6, in response to “Hatshepsut: His Majesty, Herself,” all students answer the question, “Before Hatshepsut became pharaoh, what experience does the text say she had for the job? Include evidence from the text to support your answer.” Students requiring additional scaffolding use these questions from the question guide to help them respond: “Who trained Hatshepsut to rule? How did this training take place? What skills did Hatshepsut have as a ruler?”

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Indicator 5.3

Materials include supports for English Learners (EL) to meet grade-level learning expectations.

- Materials must include accommodations for linguistics (communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded) commensurate with various levels of English language proficiency as defined by the ELPs.
- Materials provide scaffolds such as adapted text, translations, native language support, cognates, summaries, pictures, realia, glossaries, bilingual dictionaries, thesauri, and other modes of comprehensible input.
- Materials encourage strategic use of students' first language as a means to linguistic, affective, cognitive, and academic development in English (e.g., to enhance vocabulary development).
- Vocabulary is developed in the context of connected discourse.

Meets 2/2

The materials include supports for English Learners (ELs) to meet grade-level learning expectations. Accommodations for linguistics commensurate with various levels of English language proficiency as defined by the ELPS are included. Materials provide various scaffolds, such as Spanish translations of each unit's essential components and cognates for unit vocabulary. Students are encouraged to use their first language as a means to linguistic, affective, cognitive, and academic development in English. Vocabulary is developed in the context of connected discourse.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials provide a grades 6–12 “Newcomer EL Support Guide” to help students build their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in English. The “Start Smart” introduction focuses on developing students' knowledge of the alphabet and phonics, basic greetings, geometric shapes, and numbers. Also included in the support guide are songs/chants and other progress monitoring tools, and newcomer cards provided for extra visual support. Every text selection offers a summary, and students can select from languages diverse as Cantonese and Haitian Creole for a translation and audio reading of the summary. 25–30 texts for grades 6–8 are available in Spanish in the library.

Each unit contains twenty lessons that are developed around two texts. Lessons provide scaffolded practice using high-frequency words in a variety of contexts. Beginning ELs complete the “Your Turn #1” activity, matching “structural and thematic models of authentic texts.” These are written at four levels of proficiency: Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced, and Advanced High. EL lessons modify the routines used with texts in the “Integrated Reading and Writing” section by pairing EL students with on-grade-level peers, giving students the option to annotate in their native language and share their responses with a partner before participating

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in the group discussion. All StudySync lesson plans contain a section that lists the TEKS and ELPS per activity under Standards Instruction/Application.

In Unit 1, the materials provide an alternative assignment to the Extended Writing Project for EL learners. Students write a dramatic scene in response to the prompt: “Imagine you are with a friend or family member, and something scary happens.” Students write and perform a suspenseful scene with a group: “Students create an easy scene for the audience to understand, including dialogue, stage directions, and scene descriptions.” The beginning and intermediate ELs use speaking frames that teachers modify using the Proficiency tab in the StudySync platform. The advanced and advanced ELs follow the same activity but connect their background knowledge with the text, developing additional questions to interact with peers.

In Unit 2, the close read of “The Treasure of Lemon Brown” by Walter Dean Myers includes a writing activity accommodated for students at different learning proficiency levels. The teacher directs the class to reflect on the text by free writing in their Writer’s Notebooks. The teacher reads the prompts to the beginning and intermediate EL students. Teachers “encourage students to draw their reflections or allow students to write in their native language.” The teacher prompts their responses and encourages oral responses along with gestures.

Each unit includes an introductory reading focused on the unit’s theme called a “Blast,” which can be simplified by Lexile level. Publisher-produced readings can also be adapted according to students’ proficiency levels. Many publisher-produced texts are included as an alternative or extended reading assignments for ELs, such as the nonfiction text “Tracking Down Typhoid Mary” by Gail Jarrow and the fictional “The Notice” by Taran Matharu in Unit 3, which may be used in place of, or as extensions to, *An American Plague* by Jim Murphy or *Fever 1793* by Laurie Halse Anderson.

In Unit 4, all students read the poem “Famous” by Naomi Shihab Nye. Proficiency-leveled summaries and summaries in multiple languages are available digitally. Also, EL audio and audio text highlighting are available with this text. Beginning and intermediate ELs practice the reading comprehension strategy by reading the text synopsis as a scaffold. Students generate two or three visualizations based on sensory details and identify each sensory detail as appealing to sight, sound, smell, taste, or touch. A visual glossary is provided as a comprehensible input scaffold.

In Unit 5, with the informational text “Warriors Don't Cry” by Melba Pattillo Beals, the teacher puts students in small groups to discuss a given prompt. Beginning, advanced, and advanced high ELs use an annotation guide to work with peers in the group to answer the questions as the teacher facilitates the learning. Advanced high EL students also have access to the guide but work independently with their peers to engage in a verbal discussion of the given prompt.

In Unit 6, all students read the informational text, *Eleanor Roosevelt: A Life of Discovery*, by

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Russell Freedman. As a scaffold for the writing assignment to assist with comprehensible input, beginning EL students listen as the teacher reads aloud the word bank and paragraph frame for the assigned writing task.

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Indicator 6.1

Materials include assessment and guidance for teachers and administrators to monitor progress including how to interpret and act on data yielded.

- Formative and summative assessments are aligned in purpose, intended use, and TEKS emphasis.
- Assessments and scoring information provide sufficient guidance for interpreting and responding to student performance.
- Assessments are connected to the regular content to support student learning.

Meets 2/2

The materials include assessment and guidance for teachers and administrators to monitor progress to interpret and act on data yielded. Formative and summative assessments are aligned in purpose, intended use, and TEKS emphasis. Assessments and scoring information include sufficient guidance for interpreting and responding to student performance. Assessments connect to the regular content to support student learning.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Assessments and scoring information provide sufficient guidance for interpreting and responding to student performance. The program overview states that “progress monitoring charts” detail which standards are covered in each instructional sequence, identify standards tested on state assessments, and guide teachers toward resources for reteaching and remediation.

In Unit 1, assessments are connected to the regular content to support student learning. The summative Unit 1 End-of-Unit Assessments uses grade-level-appropriate passages and writing prompts to assess student performance against the key reading, writing, and language standards covered in the unit. In Unit 1 End-of-Unit Assessment, students answer questions about vocabulary, including, “What does the word ruefully mean in paragraph 10?” Students answer similar questions throughout the units before this summative assessment. For example, in Unit 1, students read an excerpt from Gary Paulsen’s novel, *Hatchet*, and answer formative assessment questions such as: “Use context to determine the meaning of the word obvious as it is used in paragraph 11. Write your definition of obvious here and explain how you figured it out.”

Unit 2 has formative and summative assessments aligned with purpose, intended use, and TEKS emphasis. For example, the materials introduce TEKS: 6.7(A) (infer multiple themes within and across texts using text evidence) in the first read lesson of an excerpt from *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* by Mildred Taylor through a comprehension assessment. One multiple-choice quiz question asks, “Which theme in the text is mainly expressed by the final paragraph?” In the

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skills lesson that focuses on a theme, students apply the concept by answering the question, “What theme can readers infer from the dialogue between Mr. and Mrs. Logan?” Then, in the close read lesson, students annotate the text, including one that asks them to construct themes from the text elements: “Reread the last paragraph of the excerpt. Analyze how the trees in the Logans’ backyard symbolize or represent their relationship with people like Thurston Wallace.” Finally, students write in preparation for a small group discussion that focuses on the theme: “In this excerpt, the author builds and releases tension through events in the plot. With each new challenge that the characters have to face, a new theme is revealed or suggested. Overall, do you feel that the author’s themes, or messages, are positive or negative?”

In Unit 4, formative and summative assessments aligned with purpose, intended use, and TEKS emphasis. For example, “Rosa” by Rita Dove includes a formative assessment that comes in the form of TEKS-aligned writing prompts that are specific to the unit’s content. If teachers feel they need to assess reading comprehension through writing, there are prompts in the StudySync online platform’s “Write” tab. Library Prompt 1 asks, “What action does the speaker describe in the third stanza when she states, ‘Doing nothing was the doing’?” The student response addresses TEKS 6.11B (Compose Informational Texts) and 6.9D (Author’s Use of Figurative Language). Assessments in this unit are also connected to the regular content to support student learning. The End-of-Unit Assessments “mirror the genre focus of the unit, speak to the unit’s essential question, and are written to complexity levels appropriate to the grade level.” In Unit 4, students read several argumentative texts analyzing the characteristics and structure by identifying the author’s claim and support.

In Unit 5, assessments connect to the regular content to support student learning. For example, each set of lessons includes multiple-choice comprehension and skill assessments and ends with student writing to assess the skills and concepts from those lessons. Each unit ends with a standardized assessment aligned to the TEKS addressed in that unit. In Unit 5, students read “Saying Yes” by Diana Chang and “The All-American Slurp” by Leslie Namioka. In the set of lessons connected to these paired readings, students review the concept of setting in a focused skills lesson. The set of lessons offer multiple short assessments on the concept of setting, including the “Your Turn” quiz at the end of the setting lesson. The assessments include the question “How does the setting influence the Lin family’s behavior in the excerpt?” and the annotation prompts during the close read lesson of “The All-American Slurp,” which draws on students’ building knowledge of culture and setting. At the end of the set of lessons, students “Compare and contrast the relationships between setting, plot, and character in the two texts,” explaining how each makes use of its “distinct cultural settings” to “influence the development of plot and character.” At the end of Unit 5, the standardized summative assessment includes four reading selections, three of which have items about the setting.

The materials provide sufficient guidance for interpreting and responding to student performance in various ways. The materials provide mastery tracking and reteaching tools to

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help teachers guide every student toward achievement. Teachers are provided with progress monitoring charts that detail which standards are covered in each instructional sequence, identify standards tested on state assessments, and guide teachers toward resources for reteaching and remediation. Additionally, assessments can be used to inform subsequent instruction, aid in making leveling and grouping decisions, and point toward areas in need of reteaching or remediation. Assessments are provided with instructions that guide teachers on how to administer and score the various assessment components, use student assessment data in designation and grouping decisions as well as determining which assessments to use, and review the assessment with students to have them self-correct incorrect responses. The teacher uses the results to determine reteaching or enrichment opportunities based on the needs of the students. Finally, administrators are provided with the Administrator Assessment Database with exclusive access to passages and questions to create three additional tests that mirror Texas state assessments.

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Indicator 6.2

Materials include year-long plans and supports for teachers to identify needs of students and provide differentiated instruction to meet the needs of a range of learners to ensure grade-level success.

- Materials provide an overarching year-long plan for teachers to engage students in multiple grouping (and other) structures. Plans are comprehensive and attend to differentiation to support students via many learning opportunities.
- Teacher edition materials include annotations and support for engaging students in the materials, as well as support for implementing ancillary and resource materials and student progress components.
- Annotations and ancillary materials provide support for student learning and assistance for teachers.

Meets 2/2

The materials include year-long plans and supports for teachers to identify students' needs and provide differentiated instruction to meet a range of learners' needs to ensure grade-level success. Materials include support for teachers to address the needs of approaching- and beyond-level learners. Materials provide an overarching year-long plan for teachers to engage students in multiple grouping structures. Plans provide differentiation support to all levels of students via many learning opportunities. Teacher edition materials include annotations and support for engaging students in the materials. The materials provide support for implementing ancillary materials and student progress components. Lesson plans for the core instructional materials contain comprehensive annotations to support student learning and assistance for teachers.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Teacher edition materials include annotations and support for engaging students in the materials; they also include support for implementing ancillary and resource materials and student progress components. The materials provide minimal guidance to support teachers in implementing the ancillary resources. The units' lesson plans do not address when and how the teacher should embed the ancillary resources into the daily lessons to support student progress.

Annotations and ancillary materials provide support for student learning and assistance for teachers. The program overview document has additional resources in the library through its search functions. Teachers can access it on the page labeled "Additional Resources." The library of additional readings and a limited number of "spotlight" skill lessons is available and searchable by skill, standard, and concept. Other ancillary materials, including workbooks and additional practice materials for vocabulary, grammar, spelling, foundational skills, and test

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preparation, are available in the materials' additional resources section. However, the relationship between these two different sets of "Additional Resources" is unclear. The pacing guide for each unit also contains a column called "Additional Program Lessons for Reteaching." These include connected lessons in other units as well as additional skills lessons called "Spotlight Skill Lessons," which teachers can use to review any skills or concepts with which students may be struggling. The vocabulary and spelling workbook includes a Student Progress Chart to track students' scores on the 30+ worksheets, unit review, and unit test. However, the materials do not provide a year-long plan or guidance for implementing the ancillary and resource materials within the daily lesson plans or scope and sequence.

Additionally, the Strategies Glossary, located in the additional resources section of each grade level, is a tool for educators that includes thoroughly detailed, research-based strategies. The Strategies Glossary is divided into five sections, each focused on a different domain or type: Vocabulary, Speaking and Listening, Reading, Writing, and Formative Assessment. The strategies in this document can be used for a variety of lessons and learners within the classroom. They are flexible, adaptable, and allow educators to differentiate lessons seamlessly.

In Unit 1, the materials provide an overarching year-long plan for teachers to engage students in multiple grouping (and other) structures. Plans are comprehensive and attend to differentiation to support students via many learning opportunities. Each lesson plan includes a chart titled "Suggested Grouping for Activities," with the lesson plan elements labeled as either whole group, pairs/small groups, or "on their own." Each lesson plan includes a column labeled "Scaffolding/Differentiation," with suggestions for grouping English learners or providing additional scaffolding or extensions to students, as necessary. Differentiation through grouping and scaffolding focuses only on identified groups (students approaching grade level, students beyond grade level, and English learners). Those options are often the same across groups and grade levels. Unit 1 identifies the visual glossary as the scaffolding tool for the vocabulary section for students approaching grade level and all levels of English learners. The next section, annotation, prompts teachers to "work directly with" Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced English Learners to "read and annotate the paragraphs identified in the differentiated Skills Focus questions."

In Unit 2, the materials provide an overarching year-long plan for teachers to engage students in multiple grouping (and other) structures. Plans are comprehensive and attend to differentiation to support students via many learning opportunities. For example, this unit includes an optional activity in "The Big Idea Blast" section entitled "Jigsaw Research Links." In this activity, all students divide into seven small groups. Each group discusses information found in different research sources. In the Skills lesson for Academic Vocabulary, the teacher divides the vocabulary words into two lists, pairs students, and gives each student one-half of the list. In the First Read of an excerpt of the novel, *Walk Two Moons* by Sharon Creech, students watch the video preview, and students read the introduction in pairs to make connections to the

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video preview. When making predictions about vocabulary in the same excerpt, students work with a partner to determine the meaning of the rest of the bold vocabulary words.

In Unit 3, annotations and ancillary materials provide support for student learning and assistance for teachers. In a Close Read Lesson Plan, “Heroes Every Child Should Know: Perseus,” the teachers have additional helpful annotations to guide students so they can be academically successful when working with their peers in collaborative conversations. If students are confused by the discussion prompt in the materials, teachers remind them, “The plot is the sequence of events that form a story. In your discussion, focus on how Perseus’s internal and external responses to people and events drive the plot forward.” If students continue to struggle with beginning their conversation, teachers help jumpstart their discussion by asking a scaffolding question such as, “How does Perseus’s response to the Grey Sisters drive the plot forward?”

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Indicator 6.3

Materials include implementation support for teachers and administrators.

- Materials are accompanied by a TEKS-aligned scope and sequence outlining the essential knowledge and skills that are taught in the program, the order in which they are presented, and how knowledge and skills build and connect across grade levels.
- Materials include additional supports to help teachers implement the materials as intended.
- Materials include additional supports to help administrators support teachers in implementing the materials as intended.
- Materials include a school years' worth of literacy instruction, including realistic pacing guidance and routines and support for both 180-day and 220- day schedules.

Meets 2/2

The materials are accompanied by a TEKS-aligned scope and sequence outlining the essential knowledge and skills taught in the program, the order in which they are presented, and how knowledge and skills build and connect across grade levels. The materials include supports to help administrators support teachers in implementing the materials as intended. Materials include a school year's worth of literacy instruction, including realistic pacing guidance, routines, and support for a 180-day schedule, but there is no pacing option for a 220-day schedule.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials provide a TEKS-aligned scope and sequence outlining the essential knowledge and skills taught in the program broken down by unit. The Scope and Sequence includes the TEKS alignment for all the elements covered in each unit, including Academic Vocabulary, Genre, Text Selections, Blasts, Extended Writing Project, and Novel Studies. The Scope and Sequence denotes if the activities are "Practice/Application Only" or "Instruction and Practice/Application." The program guide's appendix includes scope and sequence documents for all grade levels in the grade band, arranged with each TEKS student expectation listed across the top by letter and number. Each expectation addressed in a given lesson is marked as either Practice/Application Only or Instruction And Practice/Application. Charts provide pacing suggestions, along with guidance on opportunities for practice and reteaching to standards mastery. However, the materials do not provide a Scope and Sequence that demonstrates how the TEKS connect across grade levels.

The materials provide explicit guidance with both digital and print supports to ensure teacher success. The resources help teachers provide instruction that builds both the essential student skills and knowledge, as listed in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills and English Language Proficiency Standards. This guide outlines every aspect of the curriculum and product support

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afforded teachers, including working collaboratively with other content-area teachers to develop student literacy. Each unit includes a pacing guide which “outlines the scope and sequence of texts and skills” included and addressed in the unit. The pacing guide includes columns indicating “Days for suggested pacing,” titles and grouping of readings, the targeted skills lessons paired with each text or group of texts, “Spotlight Skill” lessons, and texts in future units that teachers can use to review any skills or concepts with which students may be struggling. There is also a list of lessons that review material previously taught in other units. The pacing guide also previews both the extended writing project and end-of-unit assessment, breaking down the assessment by reading passage title, genre, Lexile level, length, and the corresponding TEKS and skills addressed in the assessment’s questions.

The Core Program Guide states that the “Administrator Assessment Database provides administrators exclusive access to passages and questions to create three additional tests that mirror Texas state assessments.” Also, the guide states: “Regularly scheduled public webinars are offered for teachers and administrators. These webinars are an ideal environment for asking questions, connecting with other users, and discussing best practices.” If teachers or administrators need “immediate assistance,” the materials recommend contacting Customer Support, who will provide quick solutions for a successful implementation. The overview document mentions a responsive team of curriculum experts who will work with teachers to offer advice on learning, implementing, and customizing the curriculum.

Materials include a school years’ worth of literacy instruction, including realistic pacing guidance and routines and support for a 180-day schedule. The materials provide a thematic Unit Pacing Guide that outlines the scope and sequence of texts and skills taught in the units based on a 180-day schedule. The program overview document states the materials meet the “challenges of the latest Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for English Language Arts and Reading as well as the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) with 180 days of instruction broken into six Core ELAR units at each grade.” The guide includes suggested pacing, along with guidance on opportunities for practice and reteaching to standards mastery. The guide provides additional program lessons for reteaching as well as identifying spiraling skills. A 220-day schedule including realistic pacing guidance and routines and support is not evident within the materials.

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Indicator 6.4

The visual design of the student edition (whether in print or digital) is neither distracting nor chaotic.

- Materials include appropriate use of white space and design that supports and does not distract from student learning.
- Pictures and graphics are supportive of student learning and engagement without being visually distracting.

Meets 2/2

The student edition's visual design (whether in print or digital) is neither distracting nor chaotic. The materials include appropriate white space and design that supports and does not distract from student learning. Simultaneously, pictures and graphics are supportive of student learning and engagement without being visually distracting.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The overall visual design is clean and easy to navigate, with an appropriate amount of white space on all borders to focus readers on each screen center. The student pages' design for each lesson makes the content easy to read. The page format, margins, and empty spaces are consistent throughout the lessons. The lesson pages make good use of white space, bold-faced font, bullets, and line spacing to create a clean design that is easy to navigate and free from distractions. Fonts and graphics are simple and accessible, drawing the eye to the text, reading, or concepts students focus on each screen. The materials use a standard font, using boldface and darkened text boxes with white lettering to draw attention to the lesson's subtitles and sections. The navigation path is user-friendly and straightforward, easily identifiable, and visually appealing through the student preview of each lesson. Every unit receives ample space and has a predictable structure: Unit Overview, Integrated Reading and Writing, Extended Writing Project and Grammar, ELL Resources, Novel Study, and End-of-Unit Assessment.

Images within the student lesson pages support student learning by directing attention towards important information, clarifying content, and breaking up text into digestible chunks. The images are crisp, using contrast and faded images to highlight text within the image. The images are appropriate and relatable for the intended audience's age, grade, and experience level. The images effectively highlight and connect to the content. Images are clean, crisp, and free of clutter. Text is of appropriate size and clear font. However, it is unclear if the web-based graphics with text are legible when scaled down for viewing on a mobile device. Images are balanced, representing a wide range of people, locations, topics, and cultures.

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The pictures and graphics provided in the materials support student learning and are not visually distracting, such as video introductions, drag-and-drop charts, and student library novel titles. The color, narration, and pace of each text introduction video often mirror the text’s content. For example, the video introducing the concept of the plot begins with a student telling another student a story. They stop and tap the screen, which fades them into the background and brings the word “plot” to the forefront in large print, followed by the word’s definition. Then, they take turns explaining and defining elements of the plot, pausing briefly to point to their print versions on the screen. Video images fade into the background long enough for students to read the text but briefly enough to be engaging.

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Indicator 6.5

If present, technology components included are appropriate for grade level students and provide support for learning.

- Technology, if present, supports and enhances student learning as appropriate, as opposed to distracting from it, and includes appropriate teacher guidance.

Not Scored

Technology components included in the materials are appropriate for grade-level students and provide support for learning. The technology supports and enhances student learning as appropriate, as opposed to distracting from it, and includes appropriate teacher guidance.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials reviewed are an online platform, so technology is the primary support and publication mechanism for the materials, though PDF printing is an option. For example, teachers and students can print the hard copies by selecting the Actions tab. The materials are user-friendly and support navigation in multiple areas through searching and clicking on relevant tabs and links. The digital materials support and enhance student learning with an organized, visually appealing, and easy to navigate design. The students have a top of the webpage per selection of four buttons; the first one controls the Audio with options to highlight the text as it is being read or slow the speech. The digital materials provide clear tabs to support ease of navigation through the materials. The materials also offer multiple redundant lists and outlines for ease of navigation. Teachers and students access readings, activities, and assessments through the online platform, which provides opportunities for annotation, differentiation, and peer review. Program features are designed to mimic the style of communication on social media, encouraging student engagement. There are various online student learning opportunities, including Blasts, where students complete an online QuikPoll and online Drag-and-Drop activities in the Your Turn section. The videos embedded in each lesson are relevant to the materials, good quality, and clearly labeled. The interactive writing tools are simple to use with clear instructions and action tabs. The editable charts, annotation boxes, and drag-and-drop interactive features are easy to navigate and free from distracting extraneous information. Additionally, the materials provide educators' professional development through videos, relevant articles, and other aids to meet the classrooms' changing needs.