

### Section I: Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) Alignment

Grade	TEKS Student %	TEKS Teacher %	ELPS Student %	ELPS Teacher %
Grade 6	90.48%	90.48%	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 II. Texts (what students read, see, and hear)

- The seventh- and eighth-grade materials include high-quality texts across a variety of text types and genres as required by the TEKS; however, the sixth-grade materials do not require students to read dramas 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 materials almost always provide information about the Lexile levels and text structure, language features, meaning, and knowledge demands for the core texts of the program. The sixth-grade materials include texts that are appropriately complex for the grade level; however, the seventh-grade materials often include above-grade-level texts and the eighth-grade materials often include below-grade-level texts.

### Section III. Literacy Practices and Text Interactions: Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening, Thinking, Inquiry, and Research

- The materials provide students the opportunity to analyze and integrate knowledge, ideas, themes, and connections within 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 provide students the opportunity to develop composition skills across multiple texts types for varied purposes and audiences.
- The materials provide opportunities for students to engage in both short-term and sustained inquiry processes throughout the year.

### Section IV. Developing and Sustaining Foundational Literacy Skills (Grades K-5 only)

### Section V. Supports for Diverse Learners

- The materials offer some differentiation supports for students who are performing below and above grade level
- The materials provide some support and scaffolding strategies for English Learners (EL); however, the materials do not include supports commensurate with the various levels of English language proficiency as defined by the ELPS.
- The materials provide some support and scaffolding strategies for English Learners (EL); however, the materials do not include supports commensurate with the various levels of English language proficiency as defined by the ELPS.

## **Section VI. Ease of Use and Supports for Implementation**

- The materials do not 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.

## **Section VII: Technology, Cost, and Professional Learning Support**

- The publisher submitted the technology, cost, and professional learning support worksheets.

October 2019

## Amplify 8 Quality Review

**Indicator II.1** Materials include **high-quality texts** for ELAR instruction and cover a range of student interests.

### Guidance for Texas Quality:

- The texts are well-crafted and are of publishable quality, 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 well-crafted texts that are of publishable quality, representing the content, language, and writing produced by experts in various disciplines. The texts cover a wide range of student interests about childhood, school, heroes, and heroic adventures. The materials include well-known authors, such as Stephen King, Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, Walt Whitman, Mary Shelley, William Shakespeare, and Edgar Allan Poe, and well-known texts, such as *Life of Pi*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Frankenstein*, and the “Gettysburg Address.”

Examples include but are not limited to:

In Unit 8A, Perspectives & Narrative, students read excerpts from traditional texts, such as *Going Solo* by Roald Dahl, and contemporary and diverse texts, such as *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel, “Fish Cheeks” by Amy Tan, *The Princess Bride* by William Goldman, and *Davy and the Goblin* by Charles E. Carryl.

Unit 8B, Liberty & Equality, includes texts such as *The Boys’ War* by Jim Murphy, a collection of letters from the Civil War, and *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* by Harriet Ann Jacobs. These are thematically relevant and curated for high interest. Students also read excerpts from *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* and compare descriptions of childhood from the diverse narrators, Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs.

Unit 8C, Science and Science Fiction, includes the text *Ada, Countess of Lovelace* by Walter Isaacson, excerpts from articles about Steve Jobs, and an excerpt from a debate on *The Frame-Work Bill* by Lord Byron. *Gris Grimly’s Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley and *Gris Grimly* as well as *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley are also featured in this unit.

Unit 8D, Shakespeare’s *Romeo & Juliet*, includes classical texts, such as *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare and “Annabel Lee” by Edgar Allan Poe.

Unit 8E, Holocaust: Memory & Meaning, includes historical texts about the Holocaust, such as “100,000 Hail Hitler; The Opening Ceremonies of the 1936 Olympic Games” by Frederick T. Birchall and excerpts from *Shores Beyond Shores: From Holocaust to Hope* by Irene Butter and from “Jesse Owens’

Olympic Triumph Over Time and Hitlerism” by Lerone Bennett Jr.

Unit 8F, The Space Race, includes scientific texts, such as “Sputnik” from Rocket Boys written by Homer Hickam, in addition to pictures, news articles, blogs, and information from U.S. history in space. Examples include a picture of the ticker-tape parade from 1969, an article titled “The Cold War Space Race” by David Scott and Alexei Leonov for St. Martin’s Press, and a collection of astronaut and cosmonaut profiles included for student research.

**Indicator II.2** Materials include a **variety of text types and genres across** content that meet the requirements of the TEKS for each grade level.

**Guidance for Texas Quality:**

- 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 genres, including literary texts, such as realistic fiction, adventure stories, historical fiction, mysteries, humor, fantasy, science fiction, short stories, poetry, and drama, and informational texts, such as information, exposition, argument, and procedures. Throughout the materials a variety of graphics and pictures in a multi-modal format support the texts, in addition to embedded graphic features including photos and illustrations, as well as audio and video clips.

Examples of literary texts include but are not limited to:

*“Fish Cheeks”* by Amy Tan (humorous narrative essay)  
*Going Solo* by Roald Dahl (humorous memoir)  
*The Glass Castle* by Jeanette Walls (memoir)  
*A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains* by Isabella L. Bird (narrative in letter form)  
*Frankenstein* and *The Modern Prometheus* by Mary Shelley (science fiction)  
*The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon* by Stephen King (horror fiction)  
*Life of Pi* by Yann Martel (adventure fiction)  
*The Princess Bride* by William Goldman (modern fantasy)  
*Heroes, Gods and Monsters of the Greek Myths* by Bernard Evslin (mythology)  
*“Song of Myself”* by Walt Whitman (poetry)  
*“The Tables Turned”* by William Wordsworth (poetry)  
*“All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace”* by Richard Brautigan (poetry)  
*Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare (drama)

Examples of informational texts include but are not limited to:

*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* by Frederick Douglass (autobiography)  
*Shores Beyond Shores: From Holocaust to Hope, My True Story* by Irene Butter with John D. Bidwell and Kris Holloway (autobiography)  
*Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* by Harriet Ann Jacobs (biography)  
*Steve Jobs: Technology Innovator and Apple Genius* by Matt Doeden (biography)  
The *“Gettysburg Address”* by Abraham Lincoln (speech)

A Confederate Girl's Diary by Sarah Morgan Dawson (nonfiction)  
The Boys' War by Jim Murphy (nonfiction)  
The Declaration of Independence (historical document)

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

Unit 8B contains the emancipation files of interviewed slaves, maps of the U.S., and a table of fatalities in American Wars to accompany nonfiction articles about the Civil War.

Unit 8E includes images related to core texts. For example, the unit Holocaust: Memory and Meaning has a Hitler Youth Nazi Propaganda poster as part of its materials as well as pictures, timelines, posters, and audio excerpts.

Multimodal and digital texts can be found in the sidebar apps, including "Black, White, and Blues"; a "Mythology Quest"; and "Who Killed Edgar Allan Poe?" At the time of this review, the articles for these applications were not available.

**Indicator II.3** Texts are appropriately challenging and are at an **appropriate level of complexity** to support students at their grade level.

**Guidance for Texas Quality:**

- 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.

## Partially Meets 2/4

The materials include some texts appropriately complex for eighth-grade students; however, many texts are below an eighth-grade level. The publisher describes the “Path of text complexity” which includes quantitative measures (Lexile levels), qualitative measures, and reader/task measures. The materials use a “complexity index,” an aggregate of the three measures, to support placement of texts within appropriate grade bands. In addition, each unit has an overview which contains a Unit Background and Context section. This document provides the titles for each core text used for the unit. Contained within the document is an introduction to the texts, background and context of the authors, and cited sources. However, the materials do not contain an accurate text complexity analysis for all texts. In the ELA Resources, a grade-specific overview is provided for eighth grade, but the overview does not align with the updated curriculum. During the review process, texts within units changed and moved across grade levels and new texts were added.

Examples include but are not limited to:

In Unit 8A, Perspectives & Narrative, students read excerpts from traditional texts, such as *Going Solo* by Roald Dahl, and contemporary and diverse texts, such as *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel, “Fish Cheeks” by Amy Tan, *The Princess Bride* by William Goldman, and *Davy and the Goblin* by Charles E. Carryl. The materials do not provide a complexity index for this unit; however, *Going Solo* and *The Princess Bride* both have ATOS scores closer to sixth grade rather than eighth grade.

Unit 8B, Liberty & Equality, contains texts such as the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* and the “Gettysburg Address.” The materials provide a complexity index of 8.5 for this unit.

Unit 8C, Science and Science Fiction, includes the text *Ada, Countess of Lovelace* by Walter Isaacson, excerpts from articles on Steve Jobs, and an excerpt from a debate on *The Frame-Work Bill* by Lord Byron (1812). The materials provide a complexity index of 8.5 for this unit.

The Program At a Glance complexity discussion lists The Frida & Diego Collection, but this unit no longer resides in eighth grade, and Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* is now Unit 8D. No complexity information is provided for the eighth-grade unit, Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*. The seventh-grade unit lists the complexity of this unit as 7.5, well below eighth-grade level for an end-of-year unit.

Unit 8E, Holocaust: Memory & Meaning, includes excerpts from the memoir by Irene Hasenberg called *Shores Beyond Shores*. This text is not mentioned in the progression document and no complexity information is provided.

Unit 8F, The Space Race, includes scientific texts, such as “Sputnik” from *Rocket Boys* written by Homer Hickam. The materials provide a complexity index of 9.5 for this unit, which is above eighth-grade level.



**Indicator III.a.1** Materials contain questions and tasks that support students in **analyzing and integrating knowledge, ideas, themes, and connections within and across texts.**

**Guidance for Texas Quality:**

- 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 require students to use text evidence to support answers, claims, and inferences. Across texts of varying genres, students make text-to-text, text-to-self, or text-to-world connections. Additionally, the questions in the materials are text-dependent and look at complex ideas. Questions and tasks support students in building conceptual knowledge and making connections related to the themes and big ideas. In addition, the materials integrate standards throughout each lesson and support applications of learning in contexts outside the classroom.

Examples include but are not limited to:

In Unit 8B, students answer questions about the text *The Boys' War* to build conceptual knowledge: "Why is this chapter titled 'What a Foolish Boy?' Give two concrete details from the chapter and tell how you think each supports your answer." Students also connect the language in the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* and the slave song "Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child" by responding to the prompt: "Think about the music you heard and the lyrics you read. Choose one quote from Douglass's description of slave songs that you think best connects with the music you heard and explain why you made that choice."

Unit 8C starts with the projection of an epigraph from *Paradise Lost*. Students are prompted to make predictions and in turn set a purpose for reading, as they "Look at the details from the text and from the illustration. What does this make you think the story is going to be about?" Students also make connections within and across texts throughout the unit; for example, "Discuss how text and images evoke each character, and use a family tree to keep track of how characters are connected" within the primary graphical text (*Gris Grimly's Frankenstein*). Students also identify "...a central idea about life or human nature that you think Mary Shelley is trying to communicate in *Frankenstein*" and are asked to "Write a statement of a theme in *Frankenstein* and explain how this theme develops over the course of the text." Students read multiple narratives and make connections via their own personal experiences.

In Unit 8E, after listening to a Holocaust survivor's story, students consider how to avoid any similar event from happening again. Within this task, students make connections to personal experiences, ideas in other texts, and society. Students then compose a literary text, such as a poem, from the

images and events of the Holocaust that most impacted them. The components of the task include: “How do survivors move on with their lives after an experience like the Holocaust?” and “After hearing Holocaust survivor Irene Butter speak about her experiences, you’ll consider what people can do to prevent anything like the Holocaust from happening again. Then, you will write your own poem to capture the images and events of the Holocaust that affected you the most.” Students examine the texts *Shores Beyond Shores* and *A Child of Hitler* to build conceptual knowledge: “Compare and contrast how Irene Butter and Alfons Heck present the Hitler youth.”

**Indicator III.a.2** Materials contain questions and tasks that require students to **analyze the language, key ideas, details, craft, and structure of individual texts.**

**Guidance for Texas Quality:**

- 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 designed to support analysis of the literary and textual elements of a text. They contain a variety of tasks and questions where students can analyze the language, key ideas, details, craft and structure of individual texts. Students make inferences about the author’s purpose and craft and analyze literary choices to understand the text. In addition, students examine identical themes across different texts to compare and contrast the author’s choices. Students also study the author’s word choice to describe characters and determine the motivations for their actions.

Examples include but are not limited to:

In Unit 8A, students analyze the techniques Dahl uses to paint a vivid picture to characterize David Coke for his readers in the memoir *Going Solo*. Students explore how Dahl’s use of dialogue is used to show emotion and “explore the language, structure, and techniques that Dahl uses to convey his feelings.” Students read and answer questions that require highlighting of text evidence indicating the feelings of both the Corporal (another character) and Roald Dahl. Following this, students infer the motivation behind the author’s actions. The task reads: “Reread paragraphs 7–12 and answer the questions. Look at the Corporal’s words in this dialogue. Highlight two details that show you how the Corporal was feeling. Look at Dahl’s words in this dialogue. Highlight two details that show you how Dahl was feeling. What do you think Dahl was thinking when he said, “Don’t say that” (12)?” Students also evaluate the reasons why an author made choices about scenes to include in their writing: “In writing *Going Solo*, Dahl chooses to put the scene with David Coke almost immediately after the scene with the Corporal. What impact does putting these scenes back-to-back have on the reader’s understanding?” Finally, students examine story formulas (arc) with the stories “Fish Cheeks” by Amy Tan and “My Mother’s Garden” by Kaitlyn Greenridge. In these texts, students look closely at the choices the authors make and the elements included, to draw conclusions related to elements of plot structure, characterization, and point of view. Students use the embedded highlighting feature to: “Highlight in red two sentences where the narrator is speaking from the point of view of the younger self? How do you know that she is her younger self in these sentences?” “Highlight in blue two

sentences where the narrator is speaking from her adult point of view. How do you know that she is her adult self in these sentences?"

In Unit 8B, students read excerpt 4 from Walt Whitman's "Song of Myself" and complete an analysis of why they were surprised by the language used by the author in the text. The task reads: "Choose one detail you were surprised to hear the speaker say does *not* define 'Me myself' (line 9) and write two or three sentences about why it surprised you." In this activity, students interact with the vocabulary and text used by Whitman. In the next lesson brief, students continue to examine the language in the text. "In lines 10-14, list the verbs and adjectives that describe Whitman's self. 2. Describe 'the Me myself' based on what you listed." Students analyze the author's purpose and craft, drawing conclusions about the effect of revision choices and purpose in language by comparing two drafts of the "Gettysburg Address": "Read the Bliss and Nicolay versions of the 'Gettysburg Address.' Note the differences from the earlier (Nicolay) version and the Bliss version. You can see which words and phrases Lincoln...revised in his speech.... Write about what the changes suggest that Lincoln was dedicated to when he wrote the 'Gettysburg Address?'" Students draw on their own schema and analysis of the author's use of details in the text to draw conclusions about the cultural and historical context of *The Boys' War* by Jim Murphy: "Based on this text and what you may know about the time period when it was written, who is the audience (who the authors were hoping to reach) for the Declaration of Independence? Which quote BEST supports your answer?"

In Unit 8E, students examine a Nazi propaganda poster and its depiction of the Nazi party versus Jews. After close inspection, students respond to the following: "Based on the text you read [the excerpt '2 Berlin, Germany, Winter 1937' from *Shores Beyond Shores* by Irene Butter], what impact do you think this image had on the people of Berlin? Think about the impact on both Jews and non-Jews." Through the questioning students compare and contrast the author's purpose illustrated in each of these works. Students also discuss "the responsibility of memory" as they read Alexander Kimel's "I Cannot Forget." For this activity, students must complete the following tasks: "1. Highlight in one color the question Alexander Kimel repeats in the poem. 2. Highlight in another color the answer Alexander Kimel gives to each question." After students have identified the text evidence that answers the aforementioned questions, they must participate in the poll that reads: "What do you think is Kimel's intended meaning of the final phrase, 'I Have to Remember' (30)?" In question 9 the student answers "What do you think Kimel is trying to communicate about the power and importance of remembering the Holocaust?" The questions throughout the unit examine the author's craft and how language is used within a text, such as, in *The Son of a Sharecropper*, "The writer states: 'He had been running hard against the Hitlers of the world since he was sent to the cottonfield to pick cotton at the age of seven' (11). 1) What does the writer mean by this phrase? 2) What information does the writer include to support this idea? 3) Why do you think the writer includes this information?"

**Indicator III.a.3** Materials include a cohesive, year-long plan for students to interact with and build key **academic vocabulary** in and across texts.

**Guidance for Texas Quality:**

- 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 academic vocabulary instruction. The platform uses a variety of tools and techniques to make the building of vocabulary and vocabulary instruction engaging, individualized, and relevant via the Reveal words, Vocabulary Apps, and the videos and GIFs incorporated in and out of the context of primary reading lessons. Each unit contains a vocabulary activity as a part of daily lessons and instruction. Students practice their understanding of academic vocabulary and build key academic vocabulary both within and across texts.

Examples include but are not limited to:

In the materials, students practice vocabulary skills in three main ways: Reveal words, a Vocab App, and videos or GIFs. The materials contain resources that educators can use to teach vocabulary terms during small- and whole-group instruction. The resources target speaking, listening, reading, and writing to help students learn vocabulary terms. In addition, teachers can access Vocabulary Word Walls organized by grade and unit and vocabulary and idiom videos organized by grade and unit.

The materials feature an eReader component that includes a Reveal tool. Students build Tier 2 vocabulary by using the Reveal tool to see a contextual definition of a word highlighted within a text. When students click on a word, a contextual definition is provided, allowing students to understand how the word is used in that specific passage to quickly continue reading. The number of dots over each Reveal word indicates the difficulty of the word, which is determined by considering the following questions: “Are there contextual clues to help a student understand the word? Has the student seen the word elsewhere in the passage or another text? Is this a word that students may encounter in texts across content areas? Has research shown that the majority of students at this grade level are unfamiliar with this word?” The eReader keeps track of which words students have “revealed,” and students can easily access their specific list of words in a personal glossary within the Amplify Library.

The Vocab App (located on the left sidebar) is a self-guided and adaptive means of learning new vocabulary. It introduces students to words that are integral to understanding the texts and key concepts in each unit. Students receive a new set of approximately six words each time they open the Vocab App in a new lesson (two text-sourced words common across all levels, two academic words common across all levels, and one to two words unique to the student’s level (set by the teacher). Students also view videos and GIFs in order to learn vocabulary words. Students answer questions to

further their understanding of vocabulary words that appear in videos and in GIFs. In general, students spend the first five minutes of class working with vocabulary.

In Unit 8A, the vocabulary activity uses the Vocab App. It is a lesson titled “Roots Exist” and focuses on Greek and Latin root words as well as affixes. Students are able to read a short, illustrated description of root words before they answer questions about the meaning of specific root words. For example, students connect word parts, read short texts with root words and affixes, and view images that illustrate the meanings of terms. The following examples appear within the Vocab App: terra, geo, sub, -anean, -graphy, -ism, and -logy.

Unit 8B utilizes Reveal words, differentiated levels, and visuals, as tools to assist students with understanding the text. For example, students can click on highlighted Reveal words within an excerpt of “Song of Myself” by Walt Whitman. Students can read synonyms of words unfamiliar to them to assist in their vocabulary development. For instance, when students click on the Reveal word “idle,” the words “do nothing” pop up to help students understand the meaning of the word. Students can type notes about the words that appear within the text as well as bookmark works. Students list words that describe Whitman’s self which appear within lines 10 and 11 of the text. Lastly, students are asked to discuss responses to questions about the text. Vocabulary development, awareness, and understanding is needed for students to be able to take part in the discussion.

In Unit 8C, students read a fictional excerpt that contains highlighted vocabulary words. Students can click on each of the highlighted Reveal words to read synonyms. For instance, when students click on the word “looms,” the following phrase appears “machines used to weave fabric.” Students then answer questions based on the text they read. The unit also utilizes the Vocab App. The App continues where the student left off in previous units to support vocabulary development throughout the year. The Vocab App also contains sections in which students read sentences and short paragraphs to identify the meanings of words. Each slide focuses on one word that is used within context. Students learn about new words and phrases as they progress and demonstrate their understanding by answering the questions correctly.

In Unit 8D, students read short texts to identify the meanings of six vocabulary words. Students are asked to read a sentence and select the meaning of the word “elated” as it is used in the example. Students are able to read an explanation of the correct answer. The texts contain vocabulary words written in sentences and short paragraphs. Students are also asked to work in pairs by reading and listening to the words that appear within a poem. Students stomp their foot when they hear syllables. Students view illustrations and read the captions to assist in understanding the language of the text.

**Indicator III.a.4** Materials include a clearly defined plan to support and hold students accountable as they engage in **independent reading**.

**Guidance for Texas Quality:**

- 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 clear plan for students to engage in independent reading. The Teacher’s Guide embeds suggested reading within units of study, and sidebar apps support students with self-selected independent reading goals. The materials also provide teachers with support for students in selecting texts by offering book recommendations for diverse learners, varied levels, and differing interests, available as part of the Amplify Library of reading materials or in most school or public libraries. Through gamification and self-assessment logs, students are held accountable for their reading progress and success.

Examples include but are not limited to:

The materials support teachers in creating independent readers by offering tips to connect students with independent reading suggestions and motivations. The materials suggest teachers encourage students to plan for their reading by interest, Lexile, or genre, all searchable in the library of materials provided by the publisher. Each lesson brief also provides suggested reading, available either as a part of the publisher’s library of reading materials, or as the materials state, available in most schools or public libraries.

On the eighth-grade home page, under the Tools heading on the left, the library link connects students to a library of reading materials from which students can self-select and save items they are interested in reading. Each lesson brief also provides suggested reading, available either as a part of the library of reading materials, or as the materials state, available in most school or public libraries.

The materials include prompts and lesson activities for students to set goals for independent reading, reflect on what they notice while reading, and respond to reading preferences and progress. They also include an “Independent Reading Handout” that teachers can give to students to track the materials they are reading, the time they have spent reading, and distractions they have encountered.

In Unit 8A, suggestions for related texts include *No-No Boy* by John Okada.

Unit 8F, offers a list of suggested websites students can access for further independent reading and research about the Space Race.

**Indicator III.b.1** Materials provide support for students to develop **composition skills** across multiple text types for a variety of purposes and audiences.

**Guidance for Texas Quality:**

- 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 text types, purposes, and audiences. Students write a variety of literary, informational, and argumentative texts. The materials provide example texts to read within each genre as well as opportunities to compose narratives to express personal feelings, beliefs, and ideas. The materials provide limited opportunities to compose correspondence.

Examples include but are not limited to:

In Unit 8A, students are asked to write narratives responding to the following prompts: “One time you were doing something you really enjoyed;” “One awful moment from a recent day at school (or one great moment);” and “A moment when you took a risk.”

In Unit 8B, students craft a speech for recitation at a fictitious Anti-Slavery Fair and write an essay from one of two prompts: “How does Lincoln in the ‘Gettysburg Address’ try to change what his readers/listeners believe about what it means to be dedicated to the American idea that ‘All men are created equal?’” or “How does Douglass, in the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, try to change what his readers believe about what it means to be dedicated to the American idea that ‘All men are created equal?’”

Within Unit 8D, students write either a play or a poem relating to Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*. The task and questions read as follows: “Rewrite the passage in a different format: as a play, poem, song, or social-media post. Experiment with the language but keep the main ideas and details the same.”

In Unit 8F, students respond to an informational writing prompt: “How did Katherine Johnson and the other women who worked with her at NASA impact the Space Race? Write an informative essay about Katherine Johnson and the other key women who worked at NASA during the Space Race era. Who were the other key women who worked with Katherine Johnson and what roles did they play? What barriers did they face? How was the Space Race impacted by their work?” Students also respond to an



argumentative writing prompt: “Was animal testing necessary during the Space Race? Research and discover what the Soviets and the Americans were trying to understand when they sent animals into space. Was animal testing necessary? Was it fair or moral to send animals into space for research purposes? Could the scientists have found the answers they were looking for without sacrificing animals? If so, how? Research sources in the Collection and on the Internet as you collect evidence and prove your case. Write an argumentative essay persuading your reader of your way of thinking. Be sure to include a list of the resources you used in your research.” The unit also provides students their only opportunity for correspondence writing in the course in the form of a blog; students write, in character, “at least three blog entries describing a series of experiences and observations from the perspective of the astronaut or cosmonaut they are role-playing.” They are instructed to write about their experiences and feelings during their mission. Students analyze and discuss an example of a successful blog entry prior to writing, and they review and refer back to the “Elements of a Compelling Blog” before and as they write.

Unit 8G, focuses on story writing. Students create a character and develop a story emphasizing rising actions and problems. They also create a second character and dialogue paying attention to developing each character’s point of view. Students focus on character development and how the character changes over the course of the story. Finally, students write the story and practice revision.

**Indicator III.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.

**Guidance for Texas Quality:**

- 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

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. Students must support their understanding by highlighting textual evidence and/or providing thoughtful responses that include text evidence to support their claim, opinion, and/or position.

Examples include but are not limited to:

In Unit 8B, students use text evidence to support their opinions in the task “Frederick Douglass describes the attack on Aunt Hester as ‘the blood-stained gate, the entrance to the hell of slavery’ (9). How does his telling of the event support this description? Examine Douglass’s description to find details to use in your explanation”; and in the task “In Chapter 1, Jacobs writes, ‘Such were the unusually fortunate circumstances of my early childhood’ (3, 1). Do you agree with Jacobs’s claim that her early life was ‘unusually fortunate’? Note that there is no wrong answer here, but you must support your reasons for agreeing or not agreeing with evidence from the text.” Students also provide a written response about what they have learned from a text: “Why is this chapter titled ‘What a Foolish Boy’? Give two concrete details from the chapter and tell how you think each supports your answer.”

In Unit 8C, students use both images and text to support their opinion in writing: “Is Victor more focused on life, on death, or on both as he investigates and makes his creation? Explain your answer using specific details from the text or illustrations.” Students use multiple texts to develop their understanding, such as in the task: “In his poem, Brautigan imagines a world where humans ‘are free of our labors / and joined back to nature’ (20, 21) while being ‘watched over/by machines of loving grace’ (24, 25). What would Ada Lovelace, Lord Byron, or the speaker in Wordsworth’s poem (choose two) say about the world Brautigan imagines? Use textual evidence from Brautigan’s poem and from two other passages in your answer.” Students also listen to texts and use the knowledge they have acquired about the text to respond to questions in a written format: “Chapter 2 of Volume II ends with Victor Frankenstein saying, ‘For the first time I felt what the duties of a creator towards his creature were’ (85). What does this mean, and why does he say it?”

In Unit 8E, students answer the following prompt and provide text evidence in writing: “The Holocaust did not happen overnight. As the Nazis laid the groundwork for what would eventually become known as the Holocaust, they used a number of strategies to isolate, oppress, and control the Jewish population of Europe, and to convince others to go along with their plan. Choose two of the strategies that stood out to you as you explored this unit. Using examples from the texts and images you analyzed, describe each strategy and the impact it had.” The lesson also includes sentence starters for students who may be struggling with answering the prompt. Students synthesize their understanding from two different texts when they respond in writing to: “Compare and contrast how Irene Butter and Alfons Heck present the Hitler Youth. What do you understand about the Hitler Youth as a result of reading both interpretations?”

**Indicator III.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.

**Guidance for Texas Quality:**

- 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

The materials include opportunities for students to write, edit, and revise texts in increasingly complex ways. Grammar, usage and mechanics are taught throughout the units. The resources contain assignments for students to apply writing conventions within their writing and assignments requiring learners to identify the correct use of writing conventions. Answer keys are provided for educators to verify students' mastery of skills. The Grammar unit follows a pacing guide providing systematic instruction that applies to increasingly rigorous texts and student writing throughout the year. Opportunities to practice grammar are abundant across the program. In addition, the students' writing can be saved within the online platform to allow students to return to their writing for study and revision. The materials include essay rubrics, sample essays, essay-planning graphic organizers, sentence starters, relevant related texts, and lessons on finding evidence, writing claims, citing and punctuating dialogue, and revision techniques.

Examples include but are not limited to:

The Amplify Resources provide the documents "Grammar" and "Grammar Instruction and Pacing" within each grade level. Both documents provide a breakdown of the pacing used to teach grammar and writing for each unit by including lesson activities, progressive language standards, and a description of each lesson. The "Grammar" document also includes a rubric that can be used to score essays. The materials also include three "Mastering Lessons" conventions resources that can be used to introduce students to grammar and writing skills. Students read texts about applying grammar skills, apply the skills they have learned, identify skills, and write sentences that include grammar/punctuation skills. The skills featured within the document start at the foundational level and increase with complexity. The document can be used to give students opportunities to edit their writing as the year continues and to teach grammar/writing skills.

The Grammar unit in each grade contains 35 lessons in seven sub-units that cover key grammar topics for the middle grades. Sub-units are paired around a given grammar topic; within each pair, one sub-unit covers foundational aspects of the topic, and another provides both grade-level and stretch instruction about the topic. The activities in each lesson are largely self-guided so that students can

move independently through the lessons. For example, students engage in activities to practice the use of commas, parentheses, dashes, and ellipses. After students learn each new skill, the materials include a “Go to My Work” activity where they find a recent writing activity and apply the new skills to their writing. Students must find interesting sentences from their own writing and revise them. The last steps to the task read: “Copy into the new writing space two sentences where you use a comma to indicate a pause or a break. Rewrite both sentences in a different order and note how you need to change the punctuation.”

Each unit contains a sub-unit called “Write an Essay.” They use all the steps in the writing process and include essay rubrics, sample essays, essay-planning graphic organizers, sentence starters, relevant related texts, and lessons on finding evidence, writing claims, citing and punctuating dialogue, and revision techniques. For example, in the Materials section of Unit 8F, there are PDF files titled “Grade 8 Essay Rubric,” “Essay Graphic Organizer,” and “Essay Sentence Starters.”

In Unit 8A, students use art to develop language for strong verbs. One lesson begins with students studying a Breugel’s painting *Children’s Games*. As the activities continue, the teacher focuses on various sections of the painting. Students collaborate with a partner in discussing the actions taking place in the painting, thereby identifying strong verbs. In the next lesson brief, students must change weaker verbs to stronger verbs with a partner; they receive the explanation: “Strong verbs describe actions precisely. They can capture the image, emotion, and impact of the action. Weak Verb: The student put his backpack onto his shoulder and closed the door. Strong Verb: The student yanked his backpack onto his shoulder and slammed the door.” After practicing with strong verbs, students respond to a personal narrative prompt: “Write about a moment when you took a risk. Use strong verbs to show what happened.” Students also work to add vivid details to revise their writing to help them focus in on the moment. The materials include a Rules for Writing Chart: “1. Use the whole time to write; 2. Ask for help once, if necessary, then continue writing; 3. Keep focused on your own work—don’t distract your classmates; 4. No: talking, trips for water, or surfing.”

In Unit 8B, students write a speech they will present at a fictitious Anti-Slavery Fair. Students draft the body of their speech. Prompts are provided that support students as they draft and include relevant information within the body. For example, students are asked to select two or three ideas that support their position. Prompts and explanations are provided to support students as they create an introduction and a conclusion. Students write paragraphs in isolation and also work to write the entire speech in sequential order.

In Unit 8C, students develop an outline for their essay by planning their position about a topic. Students begin by reading several quotes and are asked to determine if the quotes indicate if a “creature is human.” Students then write about the position they will select in their essays and describe a main reason that supports their position. A graphic organizer is provided for students to write evidence that supports their position as well as analyze why the evidence is important for supporting their argument. Graphic organizer outlines are provided for the second and third paragraphs. The utilization of the outlines supports students as they plan the information that will be included within their body paragraphs.

In Unit 8F, students tackle the writing process over several lesson briefs throughout the unit. The lesson brief overview reads: “At the end of each unit, students write a longer, more developed essay over a sequence of 4-5 lessons. Students draw on their core lesson-writing practice, in which they focus on one claim or idea in response to a prompt and develop text evidence to support their claim or idea. In the essay lessons, students then apply those skills to a more developed piece of writing, and also practice additional skills as they create an introduction, craft a strong claim statement, develop a conclusion, and revise and polish their writing for an audience.” Students create a properly punctuated works cited page for sources used in their essays. The activity includes a “Guidelines for a Works Cited Page” document that students can use as a reference when writing sources.

**Indicator III.c.1** Materials support students’ **listening and speaking about texts.**

**Guidance for Texas Quality:**

- 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 provide opportunities to listen to and talk about texts prior to and after reading. The materials include response starters to facilitate discussions and specific talking points to show students’ comprehension of texts. Most oral tasks require students to use information gathered through reading and well-defended text-supported claims to demonstrate knowledge through culminating activities.

Additionally, students participate in speaking and listening to engage in meaningful discourse by summarizing, asking questions, making comments as they demonstrate comprehension, and participating in the process of synthesizing and analyzing texts. Throughout the materials, lessons walk teachers and students through a variety of activities that promote speaking and listening through a balance of independent work, partner and team activities, and whole-group discussions of primary class texts.

Examples include but are not limited to:

In Unit 8B, students watch and listen to a dramatic reading from *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*; then, “Students discuss the importance of Douglass’s ideas to his time and our own.” Students use their understanding of the text to discuss their responses as a whole group. Later in the unit students share their writing and have the opportunity to respond to a peer’s writing. They are given response starters to facilitate the conversation, such as: “I could picture (person, process, idea, action, place) when you wrote...” and “When you used the word..., it helped me understand...” Students fill in the blank spaces with information based on the text.

In Unit 8C, prior to reading about Frankenstein, the students discuss “Who’s Frankenstein?” Students recall any prior knowledge they have of the name “Frankenstein” and clarify the popular misconception about which character is actually named Frankenstein. Students also perform and critique dialogues they have written in response to the primary text *Gris Grimly’s Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley and Gris Grimly: “Student pairs deliver their dialogues while other students observe active listening guidelines and make notes to share with their peers.” Students are then tasked with discussing information that was presented as a whole group. After reading *Frankenstein*, Volume I, Chapter 4, Pages 41-49, students analyze the text evidence to find the various ways that the author uses “wretch.” After finding the evidence and discussing questions with a partner, students discuss the meaning of “wretch” and determine how it fits with Frankenstein’s use of the word. Later in the unit, students read aloud and listen to an audio recording of the poem “The Tables Turned” written by William Wordsworth in 1798. Students discuss the text with a partner. Students are asked to

discuss what stood out to them in the poem, what they noticed about the poem, and why the repetition of words was used.

In Unit 8E, students view a video about Irene Butter, an author who warns students not to judge people based on their skin color, religion, or preconceived notions. Students listen to the information that is presented in the video and then discuss the content of the video with their peers. Students also read and discuss the poem “I Cannot Forget,” by Alexander Kimel. After analyzing the text and finding text evidence to support discussion, students answer larger overarching questions that touch upon Kimel’s own personal experiences and consider the importance of remembering the Holocaust. In this activity students engage in speaking and listening to demonstrate knowledge gained through analysis and synthesis.



**Indicator III.c.2** Materials engage students in **productive teamwork and in student-led discussions**, in both formal and informal settings.

**Guidance for Texas Quality:**

- 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 include Socratic seminars, debates, partner discussion, and dramatic readings. The materials provide guidance and opportunities to practice with grade-level protocols for discussion to express their own thinking. Additionally, the materials provide opportunities for students to give organized presentations/performances and speak in a clear and concise manner using the conventions of language. The materials provide sentence and discussion stems and guiding questions throughout the lesson activities. These protocols encourage students to give feedback and express their thoughts, opinions, and ideas with their peers during classroom learning and discussion.

Examples include but are not limited to:

In Unit 8A, students share and give feedback in partners on one of their short pieces of writing. As a part of the Partner Workshop, response starters focus student discourse on written text. In addition, guided questions give student partner groups a focus on the writer’s craft workshopped in previous lessons. Response starters for a narrative include “I could picture [character, scene, action] when you wrote....”

In Unit 8B, students deliver a mock speech to the U.S. Senate to counter the claims of John C. Calhoun. Materials provide students with writing scaffolds and speaking stems to use while presenting their information aloud. Students practice delivering a select portion of the speech, using appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation. Directives and reminders of appropriate speaking and listening are discussed.

In Unit 8C, after reading *Frankenstein*, “Students learn about paraphrasing dialogue and discuss how particular lines of dialogue propel the action, reveal aspects of characters, and provoke decisions.” In the next lesson brief, students must paraphrase the text using more modern language as students are instructed to “rewrite the encounter between Victor and his creation.” Students repeat this with a different part of the text in the next lesson brief. Finally, in lesson brief 8 students must present a monologue of either the creature or Dr. Frankenstein.

In Unit 8F, students prepare for a Socratic seminar. Class discussion focuses on the importance and power of open-ended questions when engaging in a thoughtful discussion. Students learn that a successful Socratic seminar requires an emphasis on inquiry and thoughtful discussion over debate. Students prepare for a Socratic seminar by creating a protocol for the rules, procedures, and roles they follow to produce a thoughtful and thought-provoking dialogue. Creating questions engages students in analyzing information as it deepens comprehension. The unit also provides opportunities for students to give an organized and evidence-based presentation predicated on student-created, open-ended questions.

**Indicator III.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.

**Guidance for Texas Quality:**

- 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.

## Partially Meets 2/4

The materials provide multiple opportunities for both formal and informal research tasks throughout the platform. Students organize research data and build paragraphs using organizational maps or outlines. The structure of the research lesson allows students to practice the skills of research with a purpose. Skills such as framing questions for research, paraphrasing effectively, analyzing source validity, and evaluating both print and Internet sources are taught and practiced in a variety of ways with increasing independence, a clear and engaging purpose, and a variety of options to share along the way. Students determine source credibility and must look for evidence to support claims in each of the units. Tasks within the units and throughout the curriculum build students' ability to gather evidence from given texts to support a claim, assertion, and/or thesis. Research opportunities are provided throughout the year; however, the materials do not support student identification of primary sources when compared to secondary sources.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

In Unit 8B, the teacher guides students to identify a topic of interest related to the unit. After choosing a topic, the students research their topic and write a speech: "Select the two or three pieces of evidence that you think best support this argument. Skip a line after each and explain why you made that choice." Students practice close reading and synthesis across a variety of texts, images, and documents exploring the claim "all men are created equal." The unit focuses on the skill of summarizing information from historical texts.

In Unit 8E, a variety of primary and secondary sources are available for students to use for close reading and synthesis skills when responding to a variety of text-dependent, teacher-led inquiries. Students are prompted to read from a variety of texts and accounts of holocaust survivors. After they "have examined the records of history and explored the images that testify to the Holocaust," students write an essay that uses the facts and "evidence" to describe "the strategies used to unleash genocide and the human impact and responses." Students are prompted to use a chart to organize their observations and evidence related to their task; these ideas are built into the context of the lesson on essay writing, including writing strong claims, composing body paragraphs with key ideas as textual evidence, and explaining points and relevance clearly.

In Unit 8F, students learn how to frame direct quotes, provide basic bibliographic information as references, and paraphrase source information in order to avoid plagiarism. Students read texts within the Collection to find answers to prepared research questions. Within this unit, students have opportunities to share their responses and create an individual response to the information. Students work individually to compare a text with different images, summarize their findings within a group, and collectively share their information. Within this unit the materials provide a drag-and-drop feature where students match the URL with the corresponding domain. This chart allows students to organize their Internet sources according to the type of website where the Internet source is found. Students are prompted to review evaluating sources and avoiding plagiarism. Students participate in writing and evaluating paraphrases of source information. Students practice the skills of the inquiry process and research by exploring Internet sources and issues of reliability. Students analyze good questions for research and look at the domain and established criteria for source credibility. The platform uses a scavenger hunt format for students to practice applying research skills across a variety of texts. Students analyze a series of primary sources ranging from photos of the spacewalk to Soviet posters of the Space Race. Paired with the media, students answer questions to demonstrate an introspective investigation of the material. After studying two photos of the spacewalk, questions and tasks include “1. Compare the two spacewalk photographs. List two differences and two similarities.” In another example, students compare two historical artifacts: “1963: Hail the Soviet People—the Pioneers of Space!” and “1969: Apollo 11 commemorative button.” Students then answer questions about their observation. One question reads: “The poster and the button are propaganda, or advertising. Which do you think is most successful? Explain your answer.” At the end of the unit students generate a research question, identify credible Internet sources, and conduct Internet research to find the answer. This unit focuses more exclusively on the full process of research and research skills. As with sixth- and seventh-grade materials, the structure of this unit allows students to learn the skills of research related to the overarching theme, the Space Race. The printable Teacher’s Guide for this unit notes: “The dramatic story of the Space Race offers students a rich research topic to explore. They will examine primary source documents and conduct independent research to develop a deep understanding of this unique international competition.”

**Indicator III.e.1** Materials contain **interconnected tasks** that build student knowledge and provide opportunities for increased independence.

**Guidance for Texas Quality:**

- 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

Throughout the materials, high-quality, text-dependent questions and tasks help students build knowledge and skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and language. The Grammar unit includes opportunities for students to build and apply knowledge in writing, thinking, language, listening, and speaking. Text-dependent questions are integrated within a text and across multiple texts. Throughout the materials, students are presented with tasks that are interconnected and allow students the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills consistently throughout the materials. Furthermore, the tasks and questions within the units integrate reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking; they include components of vocabulary, syntax, and fluency, as needed; and they provide opportunities for increased independence. Students are introduced to a concept at the beginning of each unit; subsequent lessons are spiraled. Students engage in all tenets of the ELA curriculum, reading, analyzing the core text, speaking, and writing.

Examples include but are not limited to:

In Unit 8B, students focus on the writings of Americans engaged in a critical debate during the Civil War era about whether all men are created equally. The lessons require students to read texts related to the same topic. Students are asked to reflect, discuss, write, and debate ideas aligned with equality. Students are asked to read and write a poem similar to “Song of Myself” by Walt Whitman. The theme of equality continues with *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* in which the author delivers a poignant tale of his journey from slavery to freedom as he reflects on the continued injustices of society. *The Boys’ War* is a tale of the young men who enlisted and served during the war. The stories describe the brutality of war. Finally, students read and analyze President Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address” and connect the famous line “...all men are created equal” across multiple texts. Students are asked to make a list of individuals that soldiers would have turned to for support. Students then use text evidence to justify if the individuals they listed would have been helpful or not. Students write their justification within a graphic organizer. Students create a written response to the following question “Now that you have read about the boys’ experiences, do you think the government was effective in helping the boys when they needed help? Why or why not?”

Unit 8E introduces students to the historical period of the Holocaust (1932-1944). Students are presented with two images; students describe and compare the images, listen to the poem “I Cannot Forget” by Alexander Kimel, and compare the poem to the images they analyzed. Students then construct a written response to the following questions: “Where are the people at the beginning of the poem?” “Where are they at the end?” “Which line or image gives you a powerful sense of what Alexander Kimel experienced?” and “Describe the world that Kimel remembers in this poem.” Students end the unit reading two passages from *Shores Beyond Shores* and answering questions that are supported by text evidence.

**Indicator III.e.2 Materials provide spiraling and scaffolded practice.****Guidance for Texas Quality:**

- 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 support distributed practice over the course of the year. The materials include scaffolds and practice at increasing levels of complexity. Students demonstrate integration of literacy skills, as information and activities spiral across the school year.

Examples include but are not limited to:

Within the Program Overview the Path of Skill Development section states: “As students move from earlier units to later units within a single grade, they learn, practice, and gradually master reading and writing skills that grow increasingly sophisticated, and learn how to apply these skills on texts that grow increasingly complex. The Complexity Index includes a quantitative measure that indicates a text’s Lexile level, a qualitative measure regarding the background knowledge needed to comprehend a text, and a reader and task measure which indicates the rigor of reading-based activities. As the curriculum introduces more challenging tasks, like working independently to pull together an analysis of a whole novel, the units sometimes focus on texts with lower Lexiles. When the units challenge students to master sentences of great complexity and new vocabulary, the lesson activities pose carefully calibrated and scaffolded tasks.” In addition, the Scope and Sequence from the Program Overview notes: “Instruction first focuses on developing several key habits and skills that support the rigorous work with complex text. Reading habits and skills are taught and practiced in order to simultaneously build and strengthen writing habits and skills.” Students move from “Identify characters, events, topics, facts, ideas, and settings in a variety of texts” to “Examine how writers vary sentence beginnings, manipulate subjects/ predicates, achieve different styles, and establish pace.”

The design of a daily lesson is as follows: “Build Vocabulary (building vocabulary or teacher-student check-ins), Collaborate and Interpret (working with text out loud, working visually, working with text as theater, choosing the best evidence, or using the text as reference), Produce (writing for an authentic audience, revising, or debating), Prepare for Independent Work (share, discuss, and introduce solo), Independent Work (complete solo, read independently, play in the world of Lexica, create a video for Project Ed, or build more vocabulary with Vocab App).” This design allows for integration and spiraling of literacy skills throughout the year in a familiar pattern.

Unit 8B, Liberty & Equality, students start by looking inwardly at themselves and move into a broader view of America. Reading and writing lessons are spiraled within and across texts to support the development of these skills. Students analyze arguments made by pro-slavery supporters in order to understand the purpose of a text. Students are given opportunities to discuss claims about slavery,

refute claims, and use text evidence to support their views. Students continue to spiral and revisit writing skills by writing a speech against slavery that includes multiple paragraphs. Students read a text and details to understand the experiences of characters. Students compare the advantages and disadvantages of slave music as it pertained to slaves. Students continue to spiral their writing skills by evaluating Douglass’s claims about the importance of slave music.

Students are able to practice close reading, discuss ideas presented in a text, read complex texts, and practice their fluency skills. In addition, students are able to practice grammar skills, write to answer a question about a text they have read, and revise their writing samples.

Students then use the steps of the writing process to write an argumentative text that includes a claim, supporting evidence, and multiple paragraphs. Activities within the lessons are sequenced and provide opportunities for students to build their writing skills and complete a published draft. Students determine the claim they write about, gather evidence to support their claim, write two body paragraphs, write an introduction, and write a conclusion. Students are also given opportunities to revise and edit their writing.

In Unit 8C, students work on developing an argumentative essay based on the question “Is Frankenstein's creature human?” Students are provided with opportunities to include details, use text evidence to support their claim, write paragraphs, and revise their essays.

In Unit 8D, students use the skills they learned in previous years and units to comprehend a difficult text. Students read, analyze, and write about a text by expanding on the ideas they learned about after reading a text. Text analysis, context clues, comparing and contrasting information, and theme are some of the skills that are taught and assessed within the unit.

In Unit 8E, students focus on the big ideas surrounding the Holocaust. Information from previous units spiral into students being able to analyze more complex ideas and texts. Students write an essay utilizing information they learned in within the unit and applying the skills they learned from across the year.

Unit 8G is the story-writing unit. Writing is scaffolded throughout the grade. In each unit, students are writing shorter pieces and then a larger essay. In Unit 8G, they use the full writing process to work through advanced story writing which builds on previous writing knowledge by using more difficult writing process skills.



**Indicator V.1** Materials include **supports for students who demonstrate proficiency above grade- level.**

**Guidance for Texas Quality:**

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

## Partially Meets 1/2

The materials provide some supports for students demonstrating above-grade-level proficiency. The learning opportunities (extensions and differentiation) for students who perform above grade level appear sporadically across activities. The materials signal an available differentiation strategy or activity to challenge students performing above grade level with an orange pentagon. These differentiation activities can be found in the printed Teacher’s Guide, in the Differentiation notes for the lesson, and in the Differentiation tab for each activity for each grade level. Some of these activities provide opportunities to explore a topic in a more complex way; however, some extensions are merely extra work for students without additional cognitive challenge. The materials provide more resources for differentiation in writing than in reading; the materials provide little guidance integrating supplemental texts for students demonstrating literacy skills above that expected at grade level.

Examples include but are not limited to:

In Unit 8B, students read two passages from the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* in which Douglass relates an account of one of his masters who horribly beat one of Douglass’s aunts, and in the second passage, provides a detailed first-hand account of Douglass’s witness to the gruesome beating of his Aunt Hester. For prewriting, students engage in a warm-up where they raise their hand in response to statements about their own experiences and others related to Frederick Douglass’s experiences. To differentiate for “challenge”-level students, students can respond to a prompt about the mood that was created as a result of Douglass’s aunt being beaten. Students are asked to write 200 words for 10 minutes. “Core” level students at grade level and “challenge”-level students who are above grade level are provided with the same assignments. In a different core activity, students use text evidence to describe how Lincoln used the word “delicate” in the “Gettysburg Address.” The above-level activity suggests students explain Lincoln’s purpose for using the word “delicate” in more than one way.

In Unit 8D, one lesson suggests a “challenge”-level differentiation where students write a counterargument to Mercutio’s claims and cite textual evidence. The rest of the students write about Mercutio’s reason for blaming the Montagues and the Capulets for his murder.

In Unit 8E, one core activity asks students to think of how changes in Germany impacted ordinary people. The above-level activity suggests challenging students to explain which texts they used to learn about the Holocaust.

In Unit 8F, the core activity has students read and answer questions about the Space Race. Since the text is organized top to bottom from easiest to hardest, the teacher can guide students demonstrating proficiency above grade level towards more difficult texts to examine.

**Indicator V.2** Materials include **supports for students who perform below grade-level** to ensure they are meeting the grade level literacy standards.

**Guidance for Texas Quality:**

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

## Partially Meets 1/2

The materials provide supports for students demonstrating below-grade-level proficiency, such as sentence starters, differentiated writing prompts, and other scaffolding techniques. When the materials have a differentiation strategy or activity to differentiate for students performing below grade level, it is noted with a blue trapezoid (substantial), teal square (moderate), or a green triangle (light). These differentiation activities can be found in the printed Teacher’s Guide, in the Differentiation notes for the lesson, and in the Differentiation tab for each activity.

Examples include but are not limited to:

The materials include a Quick Reference Guide for Differentiation Levels. According to the guide, students who perform below grade level need significant scaffolding to read complex texts. Students may be provided with shorter texts to read, questions that require short responses, guiding questions, sentence starters, and a simple writing prompt. A Differentiation section is located within the Amplify Resources tab. Teachers are encouraged to use audio and video when providing instruction to students who perform below grade level. The text further instructs teachers to assign short texts for students to practice reading and presenting on the “Flex Days.”

In Unit 8A, the materials outline the supports for students demonstrating below-grade-level proficiency. The supports include sentences starters, a graphic organizer, Reveal words, visuals, and text previews. The following discussion starter is one example provided for students: “One narrative technique I noticed was....” Students write a narrative sample that includes emotions, a place, and a time. Students demonstrating below-grade-level proficiency can be provided an alternative writing prompt that “provides guiding questions and sentence starters.”

In Unit 8C, a core activity is to use a poem to analyze a text. Shorter texts, guiding questions, sentences starters, and quotes are used to scaffold for students needing supports. Students may use the following sentence starter to construct a written response: “The speaker in Wordsworth’s poem thinks learning from books and science is....” In addition, a shortened text and sentences starters are provided to help students answer questions.

In Unit 8D, students use synonyms to paraphrase Shakespeare. Students demonstrating below-grade-level proficiency can be provided with two synonyms for each word they need to change to help them complete the activity.

**Indicator V.3** Materials include **supports for English Learners (EL)** to meet grade-level learning expectations.

**Guidance for Texas Quality:**

- 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.

## Partially Meets 1/2

The materials provide some support for English Learners (EL), such as vocabulary and idiom videos, Vocabulary Word Walls, and an English Language Development Cause and Effect Graphic Organizer. The materials also include sentence frames, graphic aids, and Spanish translations but do not include study of cognates, bilingual dictionaries, or thesauri. Some EL-recommended supports within the materials are identical to the supports provided to students performing below grade level. The materials do not include supports commensurate with the various levels of English language proficiency as defined by the ELPs (beginning, intermediate, advanced, and advanced high); rather, the materials identify students' language proficiency as "emerging," "expanding," and "bridging."

Examples include, but are not limited to:

The materials provide an English Language Development Conversation and Collaboration Outline. The outline contains language objectives for each of the sub-units and lessons within the materials. The materials do not include cognates lessons or games in the Vocabulary App; however, the app is adaptive and contains three streams (emerging, expanding, bridging) for EL students. The materials include Spanish-language versions for some of the required text selections within the units. In the Amplify Library, the teacher can find a glossary under the Reference section containing multi-language translations of important unit vocabulary. Scaffolds for English Learners are denoted by three different symbols: yellow circle for emerging, light blue square for expanding, and green triangle for bridging.

In Unit 8B, the materials provide an alternate activity for EL students; students read a quote from an excerpt of *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* by Harriet Ann Jacobs and use sentence starters to discuss the quote.

In Unit 8C, the teacher can toggle audio on or off for EL students. Students can hear the computer read the questions and answer choices if needed.

In Unit 8D, sentence starters are provided to support students as they begin to draft an essay.

In Unit 8E, the materials suggest EL students receive support understanding the word “society” and ensure they can provide examples of the word. Educators are asked to pair EL students with non-EL students or with EL students who have a higher fluency in English.

**Indicator VI.1** Materials include **assessment** and guidance for teachers and administrators to **monitor progress** including how to interpret and act on data yielded.

**Guidance for Texas Quality:**

- 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.

## Partially Meets 1/2

The materials contain formative and summative assessments that are aligned with content; however, they do not contain any explicit references to the TEKS. These assessments and the functionality of the gradebook connect content and purposefully align to intended student learning and performance objectives. The gradebook and formative and summative assessments provide many options for connected, year-long ELA development of students across the middle school grades.

Examples include but are not limited to:

Amplify Resources contain a webinar recording titled “Assessments: The where, when, and how of assessment in Amplify ELA” that gives more information about assessments. The Unit Reading Assessments Guide in the Amplify Resources gives information about administering the assessment and reviewing and using the assessment data. In addition, the pacing guides demonstrate a plan and purpose for formative/summative assessments related to the literacy objectives and foundational skills throughout the units.

The materials include a variety of formative and summative assessments; some are scored by the interactive online features of the platform, affording students the opportunity for timely feedback on formative skills and tasks for both reading and writing. The solo activities at the summation of each lesson provide examples of this, providing platform-scored reading response that can inform students of progress and also provide assessment data that teachers can use in preparing for Flex Day instruction and for what the platform calls OTSCs (over-the-shoulder conferences).

The materials contain interim assessments designed to give teachers baseline data on students’ proficiency with reading and writing standards and to measure students’ progress with these standards over the course of the year. There are two reading and two writing interim assessments that teachers are encouraged to administer at the beginning of the year, and prior to state assessments.

The summative assessments at the end of each unit of study provide students with a variety of question types and passages designed to collect data on growth and understanding of key skills and literacy concepts at the end of the unit’s instruction. Students do not get that data immediately. The interactive gradebook features collect that data for documenting growth and responding to the

individual skills of the student. Units and tests are genre-focused and centered on essential elements and skills of various genres.

In addition, within the Amplify Resources, teachers can find a rubric for writing that includes three categories: “Focus,” “Use of evidence,” and “Conventions.” To clarify these sections, teachers have access to definitions for the writing categories. Based on student performance on the assessment tools, students are placed in the following brackets: 4. Exceeds Expectations, 3. Proficient, 2. Developing Proficiency, 1. No Progress Toward Proficiency. Each of these brackets includes a short description of the characteristics of students that fall within these areas. In addition, within the Amplify Resources, teachers can find the “Student Works Collection and Rubric for Teacher” that contains exemplar essays demonstrating mastery, along with rubrics and a color-coded breakdown depicting the components of an effective composition.

In the Preparation section of Assessment Lesson briefs, teachers are walked through how to prepare students for the assessment, key terms and ideas that students will need to remember, as well as item types they will need to look for. It is suggested for educators to allot thirty minutes for students to answer multiple-choice questions and ten minutes for students to write constructed responses.

The materials contain a “Teacher Tip: Summative Reading Assessment” video that explains how to unlock and prepare for the reading assessment. A summative reading assessment also covers the skills taught throughout the unit. Students engage with the text as they read an excerpt and answer questions to complete a summative assessment.

**Indicator VI.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.

**Guidance for Texas Quality:**

- 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 the needs of students and provide differentiated instruction to meet the needs of a range of learners to ensure grade-level success. There are annotations within units, ancillary materials and resources, online and print resources, as well as a Help icon where teachers have access to the Amplify support team.

Examples include but are not limited to:

According to “Rigorous instruction for all students; Universal Design in Amplify ELA,” the materials support teachers as they establish routines and procedures that allow for lessons to serve the needs of all learners. The curriculum is structured to support students who are at different levels, enables educators to gain assessment data, and provides opportunities for educators to adjust instruction to meet the needs of their students. The materials offer students multiple ways of learning skills, demonstrating their understanding, and engaging with the content included within lessons.

The ancillary materials in the Teacher Resources provide a variety of support for teachers and students in their guidance and overall approach to students’ learning and success. Two examples of this are the “Homeschool Connection” document and suggestions as well as the interdisciplinary study connections (“Content Knowledge and Interdisciplinary Skills”) for vocabulary and concept extension and connection between ELA and other disciplines.

Amplify’s interim assessments are designed to give teachers baseline data on students’ proficiency with reading and writing standards and to measure students’ progress with these standards over the course of the year. Two reading and two writing assessments are provided for each grade level. A suggested timeline for administering the assessments is provided within the materials.



**Indicator VI.3 Materials include implementation support for teachers and administrators.**

**Guidance for Texas Quality:**

- 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.

## Partially Meets 1/2

The materials provide some implementation support for teachers. The materials do not include a TEKS-aligned scope and sequence, nor do they include administrator supports to help teachers implement the materials. The materials provide an abundance of resources for teachers and support personnel, but they lack a user-friendly structure. The resource materials include numerous occurrences of repeated ideas and information as well as inaccuracies in content for each grade level.

Examples include but are not limited to:

The materials include an “ELA Navigational Tour” in the Amplify Resources, which can be used to have educators navigate through different sections of the materials to become familiar with the content.

The resources include links to webinars designed to promote best practices.

The Tutorials section of the Amplify Resources contain resources on topics such as “Differentiation Teacher’s Guide” and “Strategies for Struggling Writers,” as well as videos and screencasts like “Start and End Class,” “Close Reading,” and “Supporting Struggling Readers” that lend additional support to teachers.

No clear evidence of support to assist administrators in supporting teachers was identified.

There is a lesson standard drop-down which contains the lesson and the standard alignment that do not align to the TEKS.

The materials contain a Teacher’s Guide for each unit which includes an overview, and a section on planning for the unit which includes differentiation.

The “Planning Your Year” document in the Amplify Resources includes “core” lessons for 180 days of instruction and a “Pacing and Flexibility” guide to extend or support learning. Materials do not contain

a pacing guide for 220-day schedules. The lessons and units are carefully sequenced to build knowledge and skills across the year and throughout the program.

**Indicator VI.4** The visual design of the student edition (whether in print or digital) is **neither distracting nor chaotic**.

**Guidance for Texas Quality:**

- 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 visual design of the student edition is neither distracting nor chaotic. The visual design uses white space and graphic elements effectively and does not distract from the content. The graphics that correspond with the title of each unit aid students' navigation through the lessons and give students a sneak peek into what the unit will be about. Information is presented in a logical order, progressing throughout each sub-unit and within each lesson. Information on each page is minimal with only the necessary questions and directions. Space is given for students to engage with text by highlighting and/or responding to a question—typically one question per page. The student edition meets the needs of students by providing a variety of graphical pictures and videos, illustrations, and graphical features, carefully organized for variety and clarity as well as interest and appeal. The primary texts included in the various units of study and throughout the library of materials allow for individual adjustments of white space to be made and provide a layout that allows students to focus on intentional elements that promote key learning concepts. The color and layout of learning units and interactive features of close reading and response boxes effectively support student learning by maximizing engagement and focus through an uncluttered, user-centered design.

Examples include but are not limited to:

The written texts included in the Amplify Library materials include the ability to adjust font size according to student preference or need in order to affect white space to maximize student focus and avoid distraction.

The eighth-grade student edition materials include a thoughtful layout and appealing visual design. The graphic banners across the title slides of each unit maximize student engagement and connection to the learning objectives by providing, in some cases, a keyword or even a quote connected to the lessons contained in the unit.

Each unit has a large, engaging thumbnail picture showing the big idea on the home page. Space is allocated for student response without any distractors. Where appropriate, graphics are used to further depict the descriptions and messages the author is trying to convey. Titles are provided in a larger font and bolded for easy reading.

Where applicable, an activity is presented with limited text and a white box for student responses. Consideration for space is given, as no more than three directions, which are succinct, are provided when appropriate.

In the close-reading activities throughout the units of study in the student text, the simple design and neutral tones against the ample white backdrop contribute to the focus of key learning concepts and feel soothing, purposeful, and focused.

**Indicator VI.5 If present, technology** components included are appropriate for grade level students and provide support for learning.

**Guidance for Texas Quality:**

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

## Not scored

The technology present in the materials supports and enhances student learning. The format and graphics are consistent across materials. The color and layout of interactive features and close-reading responses effectively support student learning by maximizing engagement and focus through uncluttered and user-centered design. The consistency and relevancy allow the student to recognize the various components of the lesson.

Examples include but are not limited to:

Materials at this grade level, in totality, are in a digital platform with an option to print hard copies. The first unit contains assignments designed to acclimate the student to the publisher platform.

Within each lesson, a tab is provided at the top of the page that allows students to easily navigate through the various components. For example, under “Lesson Briefs,” students can navigate through tabs labeled “Vocabulary,” “Class,” and “Individual,” which are accompanied by icons such as the letter “v,” a light bulb, and a person icon.

The sidebar apps include interactive features carefully designed to be visually vibrant with bold colors and moving features that engage learners. For example, quest applications allow students to choose their own challenges. The self-selecting areas and features to unlock options make the apps engaging.

When students write essays, they use an online format. Students can also adjust the texts using the following features: bold, italicize, underline, align, add bullets, undo, and redo.

When students interact with texts online, they can take notes and annotate texts by using online highlighting tools. The materials also utilize multiple-choice and short-answer questions which require highlighting of text evidence. The necessary components are given with drop-down arrows for further clarity and more information. This eliminates wordiness and clutter on the pages.