

ThinkCERCA Grade 6

English Language Arts and Reading Program Summary

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

Grade	TEKS Student %	TEKS Teacher %	ELPS Student %	ELPS Teacher %
Grade 6	93.65%	93.65%	100.00%	100.00%
Grade 7	93.65%	93.65%	100.00%	100.00%
Grade 8	93.75%	93.75%	100.00%	100.00%

Section 2. Texts

- The sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade materials include high-quality texts across a variety of text types and genres; however, the materials do not meet all grade-level TEKS requirements, specifically in mysteries and myths (sixth- and seventh-grade materials) and humor and science fiction (eighth-grade materials).
- The materials describe their approach to text complexity as a blend of quantitative and qualitative analyses resulting in a grade-band categorization of texts. The sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade materials include a variety of text types and genres across content as required by the TEKS. Texts are appropriately challenging and are at an appropriate level of complexity to support students at their grade level.

Section 3. Literacy Practices and Text Interactions

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

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- The materials support students' listening and speaking about texts and engage students in productive teamwork and student-led discussions in a variety of settings.
- The materials provide opportunities for students to engage in both short-term and sustained inquiry processes throughout the year.
- The materials contain interconnected tasks that build student knowledge and provide opportunities for increased independence. These tasks are supported by spiraling and scaffolded practice.

Section 4. Developing and Sustaining Foundational Literacy Skills

- N/A for ELAR 6-8

Section 5. Supports for All Learners

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

Section 6. Implementation

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

Section 7. Additional Information

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

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Indicator 2.1

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

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

Meets 4/4

The materials include high-quality texts for ELAR instruction and cover a range of student interests. Texts are well crafted, representing the quality of content, language, and writing that is produced by experts. The materials include complex traditional, contemporary, classical and multicultural diverse texts at various Lexile levels, such as very easy, moderate, to very challenging, throughout the units for the whole school year.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Unit 1 introduces the writing process. The text “A Process for Writing” created by ThinkCerca editors provides adequate context. The text’s language provides content-specific vocabulary such as brainstorming, planning, audience, purpose revise, editing, and transitions students use to craft a coherent piece of writing.

In Unit 2, students read the article “Big Drinks: In or Out” by Janine Doughty. This balanced article includes arguments from both sides of the issue of government regulation of super-sized soft drinks. The Lexile level is 1220 and noted as a very challenging text. The article is appealing to students since it deals with a contemporary soda consumption issue, which many students have direct experience with. Later in the unit, students read contemporary informational texts that have been published in The Los Angeles Times. “Appeals Court Finds Nevada School’s Uniform Policy Unconstitutional” discusses a popular student debate on schools’ uniform policy.

In Unit 3, students unravel the themes of identity and family dynamics. They read an argumentative text, “Are Sports Really for Everybody.” The author argues, “all kids should be in a sport.” The text is simple yet of high interest and relevant as students at this grade level identify with it as they seek to fit in. While this article presents only one opinion, the materials pair it with an informational text from Newsbound, “Does This Look ‘Amateur’ to You?” in which the author, Ozy, examines the high cost of playing sports at the collegiate level. The text is relevant and engaging and has rich, colorful graphs and graphics. Later in the unit, the Teacher Edition pairs contemporary readings with similar themes, such as the fiction novel *Unfriended* by Rachel Vail and the 1962 classic *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L’Engle, which won the American Literary Association’s John Newbury Medal.

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In Unit 4, students read the short story “Priscilla and the Wimps” by Richard Peck, a Newbery Award-winning author. The character descriptions are highly detailed, both in the physical sense “tailored Levis” and behavior “Priscilla was sort of above everything...and very calm, as only the very big can be.” The Lexile level is 850 and noted as very easy. The text is of high interest as it takes place in school, involves the topic of bullying, and has characters that are exclusively students. Later in the unit, students read literary texts with quality in content but are not produced by experts of varying disciplines. For example, “Miss Brill” is a traditional fiction story written by Katherine Mansfield with complex vocabulary and plot elements. “The Base Stealer” is a poem written by Robert Francis that caters to the student’s interest in sports with appropriate vocabulary and poetry components for ELAR instruction.

In Unit 8, students read *Rikki-Tikki-Tavi* by Rudyard Kipling. The Lexile level is 990. This Moderate Classic literature also lends itself to diversity as it is set in 1800’s India. The text conveys complex plot elements through animal perspectives of a foreign culture. This piece is of high interest to students since the main characters are animals, and it has tense drama. Later in the unit, students read high-quality informational texts that are published with incredible resources. “The New Middle-Class Family” is a contemporary article by Derrick Muhammad published in the Huffington Post and consists of complex vocabulary. “The Human Hive” is a traditional research article published in the *Odyssey*, a scholarly journal, that has a well-written structure appropriate for ELAR instruction.

In Unit 9, students are introduced to the famous poet Walt Whitman and the poem “When I Heard the Learn’d Astronomer.” Students shift from the traditional articles and essays to poetry ripe with imagery.

In Unit 10, students read “The Inca Chasqui” by Wendi Silvano from *Cricket* magazine, published in May 2005. The Lexile level is 880 and listed as very easy reading. This diverse, traditional story features a boy going through a near-death experience to become a messenger during the Incan Empire.

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Indicator 2.2

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

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

Partially Meets 2/4

The materials include a variety of text types and genres across the academic year; however, the materials do not meet all TEKS requirements at this grade level, specifically in the genres of mysteries, humor, and myths. Additionally, some print and graphic features are evident throughout the texts.

Examples of literary texts include but are not limited to:

“Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” by Robert Frost (poem)

“The Charge of the Light Brigade” by Alfred Lord Tennyson (poem)

“Sorry, Wrong Number” by Lucille Fletcher (drama)

Meet the survivors of a ‘paper genocide’ by Chief Jorge Baracutei Estevez (myth)

Ice by Graham Salisbury (memoir)

Hatchet by Gary Paulsen (adventure)

The Inca Chasqui by Wendi Silvano (adventure)

Goldilocks and the Three Bears by Flora Annie Steel (fantasy)

Rikki-Tikki-Tavi by Rudyard Kipling (fiction)

A Boy Called Twister by Anne Schraff (realistic fiction)

Fast Talk on a Slow Track by Rita Williams-Garcia (realistic fiction)

Kira-Kira by Cynthia Kadohata (historical fiction)

The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald (classic, historical fiction)

Okay for Now by Gary D. Schmidt (humor)

A Wrinkle in Time by Madeline L'Engle (science fiction)

The Giver by Lois Lowry (science fiction)

“The Richer, the Poorer” by Dorothy West (short story fiction)

Game Changers: The Story of Venus and Serena Williams (biography)

Geeks: How Two Lost Boys Rode the Internet Out of Idaho by Jon Katz (biography)

Soul Surfer: A True Story of Faith, Family, and Fighting to Get Back on the Board by Bethany Hamilton (autobiography)

Examples of informational texts include but are not limited to:

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“The Violent Side of Games” by Emily Sohn (newspaper article)
“The New Middle-Class Family” by Dedrick Muhammad (magazine article)
“Don’t go to Memphis” by Brenda Wilkinson (article)
“Appeals Court Finds Nevada School’s Uniform Policy Unconstitutional” by Maura Dolan (article)
“Robots in Disguise: The Psychology of Addiction” by Aaron Millar (article)
“The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind” by Melissa Shin (article)
“Yes to Uniforms: A Student’s View” by Shannon Ford (argumentative text)
“Big Drinks: In or Out” by Janine Doughty (argumentative text)
“2 Million Hairs and How to Make an Animated Movie” by Carolyn Hutter (procedures)
“Are Sports Really for Everybody?” by Michael Buckley (essay)
Drowned City: Hurricane Katrina and New Orleans by Don Brown (historical nonfiction)

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

In Unit 3, “Does This Look ‘Amateur’ to you?” by Ozy provides students with rich graphics and charts as they examine the high cost of playing at the collegiate level. The unit also features animated graphics, statistics, basketball game video clips, maps, and images of athletes.

In Unit 4, the baseball-themed poem, “The Base Stealer,” there is a full-color photo of a player attempting to steal second base.

In Unit 5, the informational article “All Aboard the Underground Railroad” by Spencer Crew contains a dated graphic of African Americans during the slavery era. There are also images of Martin Luther King giving a speech to sanitation workers in Tennessee and a scene of slaves helped at a safe house on the Underground Railroad.

In Unit 6, students read “From the Land of Fairy Tales” by Kathiann M. Kowalski and are provided a photo of Copenhagen’s setting to support making mental images. Later in the unit, there are two photos with the text *Ice* depicting parasailing and shoreline fishing, which are loosely tied to the story.

In Unit 7, students read the informational article “69 Years Ago, A Relatively Unknown Photographer Captured The Most Iconic Photo of WWII” by Jeremy Bender boasts iconic images of soldiers during the time and the most famous photo, the raising of the flag at Iwo Jima taken by Joe Rosenthal.

In Unit 10, students read “Mattias’s Crossing” by Eva Apelquist and are provided a picture of the setting that is insinuated by vocabulary to contain snow. This photo supports the reader by making mental images while reading.

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Indicator 2.3

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

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

Meets 4/4

The materials contain various challenging texts at the appropriate level of complexity. The texts are accompanied by a text-complexity analysis that provides the quantitative Lexile level and qualitative features that provide insight into the rigor level that students will encounter when reading the text. Texts are at the appropriate quantitative levels and qualitative features for the grade level.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In every unit, the Teacher Edition provides a “Text-Complexity Analysis” for each text used within the modules. The analysis consists of the text’s Lexile level and an explanation detailing how the rating was achieved. Each module features a sidebar that lists levels as very easy, easy, moderate, challenging, very challenging for the readability of text, corresponding task, and overall rating of the text and task. A very challenging text will be combined with an easy or moderate task to provide balance, or a very easy text will be combined with a challenging activity.

In Unit 2, “Big Drinks: In or Out?” by Janine Doughty, Lexile 1220L, grade 9 is very challenging because of its “challenging vocabulary terms used to capture the nuances or layers of meaning in the debate.” Students choose one side of the debate and provide reasons, evidence, and reasoning to support their claims. The overall rating for the paired reading and analysis task is moderate.

In Unit 3, students read “The Violent Side of Video Games” by Emily Sohn. The text has a text complexity rating of challenging and a Lexile level of 1030L. The text is appropriate for students in the 6th grade, but it contains challenging sentence structures.

In Unit 4, “The Richer, The Poorer,” a short story by Dorothy West, has a Lexile of 990L moderate and appropriate for mid-year grade 6. The text addresses how their actions define people. The materials provide for qualitative considerations such as parallel plot structure and sophisticated vocabulary, which is challenging. Later in the unit, students read the poem “The Base Stealer” by Robert Francis. The Lexile level is not given; however, the publisher assigns the poem a moderate rating because it conveys a concrete experience with an ambiguous ending.

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In Unit 7, students read “69 Years Ago, A Relatively Unknown Photography Captured The Most Iconic Photo of WWII” by Jeremy Bender. The text has a text complexity rating of challenging and a Lexile level of 1130L. The text contains sophisticated vocabulary, complex sentence structures, and a connection between abstract concepts and concrete historical details. Later in the unit, students read “John F. Kennedy and the Space Race” by The White House Historical Association and “50 Years Ago Today, JFK Explained Why We Choose to Go to the Moon” by Karen Kaplan. The text is listed as very challenging, with a Lexile level of 1190L. The paired texts have complex ideas, and students will have to understand the texts’ historical context for deeper comprehension. The text contains complex sentence structures, and vocabulary words are defined at the point of use.

Unit 8, “The New Middle Class” by Dedrick Muhammad, has a Lexile of 1240L, grade 9, and addresses the new norm of multigenerational families living together in response to a post-recession economy. The text complexity is rated very challenging due to sentence structure and vocabulary designed to increase students’ understanding of a complex topic. Although the text is challenging, the task is easy and familiar as students draw upon skills learned throughout the year in determining whether the author provided compelling evidence to support his assertions. The overall rating for the paired reading and analysis task is challenging. Later in the unit, students read *Rikki-Tikki-Tavi* by Rudyard Kipling. The reading selection has a Lexile level of 990L, which is moderate for the end of year grade 6. The analysis task has a challenging rating. Students determine the point of view and the impact of the author’s choice of viewpoint. The overall rating for the paired reading and analysis task is challenging.

In Unit 9, students read *When I Heard the Learn’d Astronomer* by Walt Whitman. The text is listed as challenging with a Lexile level of 1290L. This short poem describes a concrete experience, which may be unfamiliar to student readers, to convey an ambiguous theme that is revealed subtly over the text’s entirety.

In Unit 10, students read *Ice*, a memoir by Graham Salisbury that has a Lexile of 750L, grade 4. The text complexity is rated as very easy. The text is highly readable and addresses family relationships; however, the task consideration is challenging. The author addresses complex themes with multi-levels of meaning, which makes this challenging.

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Indicator 3.A.1

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

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

Meets 4/4

The materials contain questions and tasks that support students in analyzing and integrating knowledge, ideas, topics, themes, and connections within and across texts. The materials contain questions and tasks that build conceptual knowledge, are text-dependent, target complex elements, and integrate multiple TEKS. The questions and tasks have students connect to personal experiences and the world around them while interacting with major themes in each module.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In every unit, the writing tasks are supported by activities that build background knowledge, reinforce vocabulary, and provide comprehension practice and writing practice that build conceptual knowledge while focusing on complex elements and integrating multiple TEKS. Most questions in these activities are text-dependent and build upon students' knowledge through reading and writing.

In Unit 2, students explore the government's role in regulating sugary drinks. They read the article "Big Drinks: In or Out?" by Janine Doughty. Students make a connection with the theme of the article by answering the prompt: "A 'ban' is when an item or action is not allowed by the government, a school, or another powerful authority. Has anything ever been banned or not allowed at your school? Describe the situation and whether or not you appreciated it." They analyze the article for a counter-argument and audience. Students choose one of the debate's sides and present the reasons, evidence, and reasoning to support their claim. The lesson culminates in the "Rules of Discussion," when students answer the class discussion question: "What role should the government play in regulating health?" Multiple TEKS are integrated into this lesson.

In Unit 4, students read the selection "The Richer, the Poorer" by Dorothy West and write to the prompt "Which outlook on life was most beneficial to the sisters: planning for the future or enjoying moments in the present?" which requires textual evidence to support reasoning. The

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module's discussion question addresses the big theme, "How can acts of kindness change the world?" A "Background Building" activity asks students several questions and provides tasks to make connections to their personal experiences and the world around them.

In Unit 6, students read "Red Velvet Dress" by Naomi Shihab Nye, a story about a significant event in a girl's life. Students make connections to the story by writing how a stranger might perceive their neighborhood. Students analyze the story for literary elements and then apply these literary elements to their narratives about how their perspectives changed. The lesson culminates in a "Gallery Walk" to answer the class discussion question, "How do authors use point of view and perspective to affect a reader's experience of a story?" Multiple TEKS are integrated into this lesson.

In Unit 9, Module 1, students analyze a text for connotation, denotation, description, and details and apply summarization skills to their informative essays. In discussing the module theme, *Nature*, students describe what they picture when they think of nature. Students further engage in a discussion on humanity. Example questions include: "How do we connect with other humans?" and "What are some ways that we find similarities between ourselves and others?" Students participate in making two lists about a tree using scientific language and figurative language in building conceptual knowledge. Students talk with a partner about the type of language that appeals to them. In the poem "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer" by Walt Whitman, students determine the implied meanings or feelings implied by the text. Students analyze the poem's mood with a partner by locating and discussing examples of sensory details. Finally, students write a summary of the poem that includes the central idea and significant details of the story (i.e., setting, character, main conflict, important events).

In Unit 10, students read "Ice" by Graham Salisbury and respond to the question "What is the most effective way to learn important life lessons?" The Background Building activity has students answer two questions that build upon the big idea, "What is an important lesson you learned from someone else?" and "What is an important lesson that you taught yourself?" Students provide a rationale about the importance of these personal lessons. The module's comprehension practice has students create a web organizer of supporting details that develop the theme, and students provide textual evidence to support their derived theme.

In Unit 10, students explore what leads people to take risks by reading the paired texts: *Mattias's Crossing* by Eva Apelqvist and *The Inca Chasqui* by Wendi Silvano. Students connect to the texts before reading by describing a situation from their own life or in the news about when somebody risked his or her personal safety to help somebody else. Students analyze both texts for shared ideas, genre characteristics, and character development. They apply the skill of organizing their arguments to synthesize information from both texts to craft an argument in response to the texts' shared theme. The lesson culminates in the Debate Game to answer the

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class discussion question, "When are tempting rewards worth the risk?" Multiple TEKS are integrated into this lesson.

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Indicator 3.A.2

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

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

Meets 4/4

The materials contain questions and tasks that require students to analyze the language, key ideas, details, craft, and structure of individual texts. The materials contain questions and tasks that provide students opportunities to analyze literary elements of texts by inferring the author's purpose with textual evidence, analyzing the author's choices, communicating meaning, and asking students to study the author's language to support their understanding.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In Unit 2, students read the article "Yes to Uniforms, a Student's View" by Shannon Ford about the requirement of uniforms in school. Students are asked to highlight evidence of the advantages and disadvantages of wearing a school uniform using the online highlight feature with different colors. Students are asked to identify the central idea of the text and analyze the text to find evidence that supports the author's claims that uniforms can keep schools safer.

In Unit 5, students read the essay "The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind" by Melissa Shin. The materials encourage students to determine the author's purpose and analyze sections of the text for multiple purposes. Students also make inferences about William, a teenager who builds a windmill to change his own life and life for his village, based on the details the author provides. Moreover, students write context clues that help them understand and determine the meaning of the author's precise language to describe William's life. Finally, the "Direct Instruction Practice" provides students additional practice in identifying the author's purpose, analyzing the author's language to set the tone and the connotation of words. Students have additional opportunities for making inferences and providing supporting evidence.

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In Unit 6, students read the selection “Ice” by Graham Salisbury and respond to a discussion question that requires students to analyze the author’s craft of the text: “How do authors convey themes about important moments of change in their lives to their readers?” Students complete a discussion and complete a gallery walk with peers while writing a summary of the comments. Students read the next selection, “Red Velvet Dress” by Naomi Shihab Nye, and respond to the discussion question that requires inferences about the author’s purpose: “How do authors use point of view and perspective to affect a reader’s experience of a story?” Then students complete a comprehension practice activity over the topic “Perspective and Theme.”

In Unit 7, Module 1, students read the magazine article, “69 Years Ago, A Relatively Unknown Photographer Captured the Most Iconic Photo of WWII,” by Jeremy Bender. The materials support comparative analysis of the author’s perspectives and the photographer. Tasks require students to discuss with a partner how the author reveals the significance of Rosenthal’s photograph and respond to the question, “How does the iconic image of the flag-raising at Iwo Jima add to the reader’s understanding of a powerful moment of World War II?” Students also respond to the questions and discuss with a partner: “Do you think the article does enough to help the reader understand the impact of the photograph?” and “If you couldn’t see the photo, would you still have the same understanding of its impact?” Additionally, in the Direct Instruction Practice, students read short passages to identify an analogy and explain how they support the argument.

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Indicator 3.A.3

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

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

Meets 4/4

The materials provide a cohesive, year-long plan for students to build key academic vocabulary in and across texts. There are lessons for direct vocabulary instruction to build academic vocabulary and prompts and requirements woven into other activities for students to apply new vocabulary terms. The vocabulary lessons offer scaffolding and differentiation for students of various literacy levels and support teachers in assisting vocabulary development for all students.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials provide teacher guidance in the “Vocabulary Connection” note to prompt students to use academic vocabulary throughout the year and model this throughout future lessons. Teachers receive guidance on differentiation for instruction to support students using vocabulary during the comprehension activities. For bilingual students, teachers provide dictionaries to serve as models for their vocabulary notebooks that they complete throughout the year. Students in need of extra support write vocabulary terms on the front of flashcards and on the back note the part of speech, pronunciation, unit, and definition. Students in need of support receive instruction to create quick visualizations or picture cues for vocabulary terms. Students then compare their illustrations with a partner or small group and discuss how it helps indicate the definition.

In Unit 2, the Teacher Edition prompts the teacher to project the vocabulary and review the definitions. Students complete a Frayer Model defining the word, using the word in a sentence, and giving a synonym and antonym for the word. Students complete the vocabulary practice: word drawings activity in the Student Edition. Students choose two words from the vocabulary list given and illustrate each word. Students then use the word in a caption about the drawing. The unit overview provides a vocabulary connection sidebar directing teachers to have students list any prefixes they know and words that use the named prefixes. As students read texts, they find words with prefixes and add them to the class list.

In Unit 4, students review the definitions for the words in small groups, and the teacher circulates to help students make connections between words. In the student workbook, in small

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groups, students sort the vocabulary words into categories of their choosing. The Teacher Edition provides vocabulary support for struggling learners. For example, the resource contains a column titled Introduce Vocabulary, in which students create a pictorial representation and write a caption of keywords. Afterward, students compare drawings with a partner who illustrated the same words.

In Unit 5, a lesson features several domain-specific words, such as *dopamine*, *myelin*, *neural matter*, and *psychotherapist*. Students use these words in a special cross-curricular vocabulary activity to accompany the vocabulary activity that they complete for this module. Additionally, with the “Context Clues Direct Instruction” lesson, students use this list of words as an opportunity to practice using context clues to determine meanings.

In Unit 6, students examine the vocabulary words in context. The teacher asks, “Can you find other clues in the text that help you understand word meanings?” In the Teacher Edition’s vocabulary connection sidebar, the materials suggest using the word *mimicking*. The teacher reads the sentences around the word. Then students create a word web. For extra support, the teacher reviews each word web element so students understand each word’s meaning and how to complete the web. The teacher then models how to complete the web using one of the list’s words. Students use sentence frames as they offer answers. For example, “A synonym for ... is ... because they both mean....” The web strategy is differentiated to challenge students by choosing words from the text that aren’t on the vocabulary list to use as they complete the word web using context clues.

In Unit 7, the module’s vocabulary words are used to create a dictionary scavenger hunt activity. Students are divided into teams of three or four. Students use dictionaries to find vocabulary terms based on hints, such as their parts of speech, root words, synonyms, or antonyms. Students work together to guess the word and then search for it in the dictionary. When students find the word in the dictionary, they read the entry aloud and discuss what each part of the dictionary entry means. Students then think and share how they will use a dictionary and other reference materials.

In Unit 8, students work with a partner using the vocabulary words to predict what the text will be about. Students complete the Word Web organizer by providing a definition, picture, synonym, antonym, feelings associated with the word, and writing a sentence using it. Additionally, students use context clues to determine the meanings of unfamiliar words.

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Indicator 3.A.4

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

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

Meets 1/1

The materials contain a clearly defined plan to support and hold students accountable as they engage in independent reading. Students are given the option to self-select texts and are given time to read independently, both in class and elsewhere. Students are held accountable for independent reading through reading practice logs and writing or discussing what they have read.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Each unit contains a list of novels and longer informational texts connected to the unit theme and are suggested for independent reading. Teachers assign students a particular novel, or students choose based on their interests. In the sidebar of the Student Edition, the “Extend the Reading” shows students a list of theme-related text for independent reading. There is also space for students to generate questions before, during, and after reading.

Students use the Reading Practice logs in the Student Edition to take notes and track their reading progress. Time is provided during Extend the Reading for reading and discussion in class. Teachers are given options to have students write about or discuss the books they are reading. Suggestions for activities include: Students determine why and how the author organized the text’s parts into a structure to achieve a purpose. Students keep track of the elements of the writer’s language and word choice. Students write their pieces in a similar style as the author. Students create annotations using sticky notes by stopping and jotting what they think about the writing. Students create a calendar of the pages and chapters they will read each day. Students create their discussion questions.

In the “Teacher Toolkit,” there is a section titled “Implementing ThinkCERCA Using a Stations Model 3 Days a Week,” which suggests teachers set up three rotations with one of them being an “Island Station” where students can read silently. The times set for the rotation stations are 18–30 min; an explicitly stated sustained reading time is absent.

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Indicator 3.B.1

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

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

Meets 4/4

The materials provide support for students to develop composition skills across multiple text types for a variety of purposes and audiences. Direct instruction is provided to craft literary, informational and argumentative texts. Students are provided examples of each writing type throughout the entire school year through selected text readings. Although writing correspondence is minimal, students are provided with ample and consistent opportunities to write in other genres.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In Unit 2, students read arguments about uniforms in schools. They analyze texts to determine claims, evidence, reasons, and reasoning and then think about whether they agree with the authors' claims. Students write several arguments using text evidence in response to a writing prompt "Do School Uniforms Improve Student Learning?" and create a public service message or write a persuasive letter about a policy they would like to see changed. The materials revolve around the related concepts of Claims, Evidence, Reasoning, Counterarguments, and Audience. Thus, there are numerous opportunities for students to write argumentative texts. Materials for these lessons can be found in the Writing Arguments section of the web page under "Direct Instruction and Skills Lessons." Later in the unit, students write a persuasive letter. First, they choose a school rule that they would like to change. Then they create a persuasive letter to request the rule be changed. Students get feedback from others before sending it to their school's administration.

In Unit 3, after reading the essay, "Are Sports Really for Everybody?" by Michael Buckley, students write two pieces of evidence from the text that the author uses to support the claim. Then, using the prompt "Should children be required to learn and play at least one sport?" students write an argumentative essay based on their personal experiences and evidence collected from reading the text. Students structure their writing to include the introduction,

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claim, reason, evidence, reasoning, and conclusion. Later in the unit, students write a response to the question, “What is the most dangerous side effect of playing violent video games?” As students move through the unit, they explore arguments and counter-arguments. The unit’s culminating assessment requires students to choose one of three prompts and write an argumentative essay. For example, option 1 prompts students to write about whether or not people should eat food that has fallen on the floor.

In Unit 5, students read the essay “The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind” by Melissa Shin and write details from the text that help them understand phrases such as *severe famine*, *an amazing feat*, and *huge contraption*. Afterward, students write an informational essay as a response to the prompt “How was William Kamkwamba, a teenager in a small village, able to build a windmill to change his own life and life for his village?” Students focus on the introduction and supporting details. Later in the unit, students read and analyze the thesis statement of the magazine article “Aliens? Or Just Wired to Be Weird?” by Ruth Tenzer Feldman. Then, students write their thesis statement to the prompt “How does teenage brain development cause physical, behavioral, and emotional changes?” Finally, as a culminating unit activity, students brainstorm a list of challenges facing their community, select one issue, and determine the individual who has the most impact on that issue. They write a persuasive letter to the person proposing a way to address the challenge.

In Unit 6, students write a personal narrative about an event that showed them something important about the kind of person they are and another writing piece about a time their perspective changed. There are also unit projects where students can write about another life event that changed how they saw things or write a story or narrative poem about how time with their family impacts their lives. Teachers also have access to several lessons on writing literary text apart from the units. Materials for these lessons can be found in the “Writing Narratives” section under Direct Instruction and Skills Lessons.

In Unit 7, students complete a unit writing project. Students write a historical narrative. After researching a historical figure who overcame serious obstacles to have a powerful impact, they write a first-person account from the historical figure’s perspective, focusing on the impact that person had.

In Unit 10, students choose a historical event that could be told from two different perspectives. They research credible sources that explain different viewpoints. Students identify the similarities and differences among their sources to create an informative presentation. Also, in the unit, students interview a family or community member about overcoming a challenge. Then, they write an article that explains how the person overcame the difficulty.

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Indicator 3.B.2

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

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

Meets 4/4

The materials provide several opportunities for students to use clear and concise evidence from texts to support their opinions and claims. These opportunities present themselves with activities related to longer works and short passages. Students are asked consistently to refer back to the text to support their reasoning. The materials also provide ample opportunities for students to demonstrate in writing what they have learned through reading and listening to texts. Questioning and tasks are almost always linked to what the students have read.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials include a “Writing Modules by Theme” section. Within the 17 themes are writing lessons, which require students to read an article and write a response to the corresponding writing prompt. For example, in the themed writing category “Black Lives Matter,” students read the document “The Black Panther Party’s What We Want Now, and Demands of Portland Chapter of Movement for Black Lives.” Students analyze the text and respond to the prompt “Compare and contrast the goals of the Black Panther Party and the Movement for Black Lives. How are the issues the organizations address similar, and how are the issues different?”

In Unit 3, students read the article “The Violent Side of Video Games” by Emily Sohn. As students read the text, they highlight and gather the evidence they will use to respond to the question, “what is the most dangerous side effect of playing violent video games?” Later in the unit, students make three inferences from the essay and provide text evidence supporting their inferences after reading the essay “Are Sports Really for Everybody?” by Michael Buckley. Additionally, students write two pieces of evidence from the text the author uses to support the claim “all kids should participate in a sport to see if it’s for them.” Later in the unit, students read and record three clues about the intended audience using the news article “The Violent Side of Video Games” by Emily Sohn.

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In Unit 4, students use text evidence to recall the different outlooks on life that the characters had in “The Richer, The Poorer” by Dorothy West. Students list evidence from the text that supports two outlooks: planning for the future and enjoying moments in the present. Students choose one piece of evidence they listed and integrate it into writing about which outlook was the most beneficial to the characters. Students must explain why they think the evidence is important or what it shows.

In Unit 5, students read the essay “The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind” by Melissa Shin and write details from the text that help them understand phrases such as *severe famine*, *an amazing feat*, and *huge contraption*. Later in the unit, students read and analyze the magazine article’s thesis statement, “Aliens? Or Just Wired to Be Weird?” by Ruth Tenzer Feldman. Then, students write their thesis statement to the prompt “How does teenage brain development cause physical, behavioral, and emotional changes?”

In Unit 6, students engage in a reading comprehension activity on perspective and theme. Students analyze the text “Red Velvet Dress” and write one piece of evidence from the text showing that the main character identifies her neighbors by their personality traits rather than cultural traits. Students further examine the story to determine the main character’s attitude toward her cultural identity at the beginning of the story and then again at the end of the story.

In Unit 7, students read the text “69 Years Ago, A Relatively Unknown Photographer Captured The Most Iconic Photo of WWII” by Jeremy Bender. Students highlight facts about the battle that the photo in the text commemorates. Students identify keywords and phrases in the text that describe the photograph. The analysis helps students respond to the prompt “How does the iconic image of the flag-raising at Iwo Jima add to the reader’s understanding of a powerful moment of World War II?” Later in the unit, students analyze two similar texts, “John F. Kennedy and the Space Race” by The White House Historical Association and Karen Kaplan and “50 Years Ago Today, JFK Explained Why ‘We Choose to Go to the Moon’” by Karen Kaplan. Students analyze the text and gather evidence to develop a response to the question “How do the details in the first text about how Kennedy made his decision to send U.S. astronauts to the moon affect a reader’s understanding of his speech quoted in the second article?” Students must support their analysis with evidence from the text.

In Unit 10, students complete a reading comprehension activity about the theme of a story. The task focuses on how details develop into a theme. Students gather evidence from the text to list details that support a central theme on a graphic organizer web. As a closing activity for the unit, students use evidence from the various texts they have read to construct a debate around the prompt “What is the most effective way to learn important life lessons?”

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Indicator 3.B.3

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

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

Meets 4/4

Composition convention skills are applied in increasingly complex contexts with opportunities for publishing over the course of the year. The materials for each unit facilitate students' coherent use of the elements of the writing process, such as planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing to compose text. Students learn and practice these skills in relation to the selected texts they are reading in class. The materials also provide opportunities in each unit for practice and application of the conventions of academic language when speaking and writing, including punctuation and grammar, both in and out of context with reading selections. There is a separate module in each unit where grammar, punctuation, and usage are taught systematically. Materials also provide editing practice in students' own writing as the year continues.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In the ThinkCERCA (claim, evidence, reason, counterargument, audience) resources within the "Teacher Toolkit" section, an article, "Implementing a Writing Lesson with Engagement Strategies," provides a writing plan for teachers to use as they direct students through the writing process in each unit of study along with suggested interactive strategies. Before planning their essays, students engage in scaffolding activities that position them to think critically about each unit's writing prompt. Then students engage in the writing process by using the information they have accumulated in their work with the topic. The steps include the topic overview, vocabulary building, *Step 1: Connect*, *Step 2: Read*, *Step 3: Engage with the Text*, *Step 4: Summarize*, *Step 5: Build an Argument*, and *Step 6: Create your CERCA*. The topic overview activates students' background knowledge and builds buy-in for the topic. Vocabulary is embedded in the writing lesson to ensure a greater understanding of the text and focused concepts. *Step 1: Connect* allows students to respond to a personal connection question to build relevance for the topic. *Step 2: Read* and *Step 3: Engage with Text* allow students to read the text and find evidence in the text that responds to the writing prompts in each unit. *Step 4: Summarize* requires students to summarize the text using academic language. Then, in *Step 5: Build an Argument*, students begin to construct their response to the writing prompt. Finally, in

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Step 6: Create your CERCA, students create their CERCA and collaborate with classmates for peer editing. In the “Review and Revise” section built into every module in each unit, students use the writing rubrics and checklist to review and revise their essays before submission to their teachers. Additionally, the materials provide direct instruction and skills lessons that build sequentially in writing arguments, narratives, and informative text.

In Unit 1, the materials focus on a process for writing. Students choose their topic, purpose, and audience and then have a choice to write an opinion or argument, an informative or explanatory essay, a narrative or story, or a poem or song. Direct writing instruction for this unit involves planning the first draft, organizing with structure, developing ideas with details, and revising clarity.

In Unit 3, in the “Grammar, Usage, and Mechanical Skills” section, grammar skills are isolated from the text. The grammar skills that students practice are plural nouns, abstract and concrete nouns, collective nouns, identifying singular possessive nouns, using singular and plural pronouns, and compound personal pronouns. Students practice these elements by completing sentences, identifying correct terms, and utilizing a word bank to show comprehension.

In Unit 5, students write informative essays in conjunction with the selected reading materials. Writing skills taught directly include using adjectives and articles, forming comparative adjectives, forming superlative adjectives, using adverbs, forming comparative and superlative adverbs, conjunctive adverbs, editing skills such as correcting adjectives and adverbs, compound adjectives, types of adjectives, revising drafts for clarity, development, organization, style, word choice, and sentence variety.

In Unit 6, students write a personal narrative about “an event that showed them something important about the kind of person they are.” Students analyze the narrative “Ice” by Graham Salisbury for literary elements and apply them to their own narratives. Students brainstorm events, draft, and engage in peer reviews in preparation for revising and editing. Students make revisions and publish the final version and share it with family.

In Unit 7, students participate in two writing projects supported by direct instruction on writing a research paper. Skill practice includes elements such as how to generate questions about a text before reading, synthesize information from multiple sources, demonstrate understanding in writing, paraphrase and summarize texts, interact with sources in meaningful ways, generate research questions, develop and revise a research plan, refine a major research question, identify and gather information from sources, differentiate between paraphrasing and plagiarism, examine and evaluate sources, display academic citations, and present research in an appropriate mode.

In Unit 9, the Teacher Edition guides students through the writing process of the prompt “What is the greatest difference between what you could ‘see’ and ‘hear’ while listening to the

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recording of the poem versus reading it?” Students begin by reading the selection “The Charge of the Light Brigade” by Alfred, Lord Tennyson. In the Comprehension practice of Analyzing the Prompt, students prepare to plan their writing by paraphrasing the prompt and completing the Before Writing activity. Students plan for their writing by summarizing the text then develop their essays using the graphic organizer. Students discuss their responses and then draft their essays. Students finalize their essays by individually reviewing and revising their essays and conducting a peer review. The reviews consist of students following the Argumentative Writing Rubric that provides expectations on the claim, organization, audience-appropriate language, evidence, reasons, reasoning, and English conventions.

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Indicator 3.C.1

Materials support students' listening and speaking about texts.

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

Meets 4/4

The materials provide opportunities that support students' listening and speaking about texts. Each unit requires students to analyze the text, form discussions and arguments based on text evidence, and share the information with classmates. Students use information from the text to state their claims or synthesize information to present new arguments. Speaking and listening skills are interwoven with text studies and targeted, stand-alone lessons to practice those skills.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

There are stand-alone, targeted lessons on enhancing speaking and listening skills in the materials. The lessons focus on specific elements such as positive discussion rules, how to deliver oral presentations, and understanding your audience. The lessons are found on the grade-level page under the heading "Direct Instruction & Skills Lessons" on the tab titled "Speaking and Listening."

In Unit 2, students read the essay "Yes to Uniforms: A Student's View" by Shannon Ford and complete a web organizer by writing one piece of evidence in each square to support the author's claim in the text. After completing the web, students analyze the piece of evidence they think most strongly supports the claim. Then, taking turns with a partner, they share the evidence they selected and explain why. Later in the unit, students read "Big Drinks: In or Out?" by Janine Doughty. Students engage in a collaborative discussion about the role the government should play in regulating health. Students state their position and provide three pieces of evidence from the text to support their claim. Students find a partner with the same claim, discuss the evidence, and explain how each connects to the claim. In a whole-class discussion, students share their ideas from the smaller discussions. Students listen actively to the discussion to respond respectfully to what other classmates are saying.

In Unit 4, students read the short story "The Richer, the Poorer" by Dorothy West and analyze its characters and setting. Students respond to questions such as: "How do the characters feel about each other?" "How are the characters alike?" and "How are the characters different?" Students also list details the author uses to describe when and where the story takes place.

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Afterward, students discuss Bess and Lottie’s main characters’ differences and similarities with their partners.

In Unit 5, students read the selection “The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind” by Melissa Shin. Students read the instructions, complete the activity, then pair with a partner to discuss their responses. After completion, the entire class discusses the details from the selection that provided context clues for the meaning of the terms.

In Unit 6, students read the short story “Red Velvet Dress” by Naomi Shihab Nye. With a partner, students discuss their response to whether they feel positive or negative experiences are more likely to change a person’s perspective on a subject. Students are instructed to use evidence from the text to support their thinking.

In Unit 7, students read the selection, “69 Years Ago, A Relatively Unknown Photographer Captured The Most Iconic Photo of WWII” by Jeremy Bender. Students review the author's purpose while relating the term to rhetorical devices and the author’s use of rhetorical devices to guide the audience to a particular point of view with the teacher. Students read the instructions, complete the activity, and pair with a partner to discuss responses. After completion, the class discusses the reasons the authors listed and their effectiveness.

In Unit 8, students read the essay “The New Middle Family” by Derrick Muhammad and examine the text for the author’s bias. Students determine the author’s claim and list evidence the author uses to support his claim. Additional questions students respond to include “What generalizations does the author use as support for his claim?” and “How does the author address anyone who might not agree with him?” Using their analysis, students rate the author’s bias in the essay. Finally, students share their ratings and supporting evidence with a partner.

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Indicator 3.C.2

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

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

Meets 4/4

The materials engage students in productive teamwork and student-led discussions. The materials provide guidance and practice with grade-level protocols for discussion to express their own thinking in numerous ways. Each module features several opportunities built within lessons and activities that require students to discuss their thinking with peers in partnerships, small groups, and the whole class. Many culminating projects in the materials feature student-organized presentations that require students to speak clearly and concisely using language conventions.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In Unit 1, students think about strategies that will make them stronger readers and writers. Students discuss the strategies they have learned in the past for reading and writing. Then, students answer questions such as “What would you most like to read about this year? Think about your favorite topic. Is it sports? Video games? Art? Music? Something else?” Students use the answers to these questions to convince a partner to learn more about their favorite topic by using interesting examples.

In Unit 2, students participate in the “Give One, Get One” class activity using the Rules of Discussion protocol to answer the question “How can we improve student learning?” Rules for having a good discussion consist of: be prepared, define goals and roles, participate respectfully, ask and respond to questions, and reflect on ideas. The materials encourage students to use their personal experience and evidence from the essay “Yes to Uniforms: A Student’s View” by Shannon Ford.

In Unit 3, the Teacher Edition guides the Debate Game with the discussion question, “Do video games have more benefits and drawbacks?” One student reads the question aloud, and the teacher provides examples to help students think of their own. Students list options and post them in the classroom, then decide which answer they agree with the most. Students complete each step in the activity workbook that requires students to give a reason, evidence, and reasoning for their claim and a counterargument. After students complete their work, they play

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the Debate Game as a whole class activity, which allows each small group to share their arguments.

In Unit 4, students work with a partner to answer the question, “How can acts of kindness change the world?” Students use the Collaborating to Find Evidence protocol and provide supporting evidence from the short story “The Richer, the Poorer” by Dorothy West.

In Unit 5, the Teacher’s Edition guides the Socratic Discussion with the discussion question, “How do you know when a risk is worth taking?” One student reads the question aloud, and the teacher prepares the students by sharing the Direct Instruction Lesson, “Presenting Arguments Orally,” to support students. Students take 5–7 minutes to answer steps 1 and 2 independently, where they write two questions that relate to the discussion question and three assumptions about young inventors. Students then form a small group and take 15–20 minutes to complete Step 3, where students note the assumptions they agree with, disagree with, and any questions they have after listening. The teacher circulates and encourages students to use evidence from the texts and their personal experiences. Then students take 7–9 minutes to complete steps 4 and 5 within their small groups, where they make connections between ideas and collectively craft an answer to the discussion question. Then they share their group responses with the class.

In Unit 7, students use the World Cafe strategy to think about and answer the discussion question, “How can a powerful image create change?” after reading about and viewing the image of the American flag raised at Iwo Jima during World War II. Students are instructed to select a leader for their small group. The leader takes notes and summarizes the discussion. The small group discusses the question, allowing each member of the group to respond. Students use evidence from the text or their own life to support their thinking. Students in the group assist the leader in crafting a clear, concise, and accurate summary. Students then rotate to a new group and start the process over again, with the group leader remaining in place.

In Unit 9, the Teacher’s Edition guides the Essential Question Class Discussion activity, “Collaborating to Find Evidence,” with the question, “How does our experience of literature change when it is delivered through different mediums?” One student reads the question, and the teacher guides students through Step 1, which they complete independently. Students use evidence from the texts and their own experiences to complete this step. Students then form groups and share their thinking and make connections between ideas. Then, students form another group and summarize important ideas from their prior discussion. Students share their small group ideas aloud with the class and create a class answer to the Essential Question.

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Indicator 3.D.1

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

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

Meets 4/4

The materials engage students in short-term and sustained recursive inquiry. The materials support the identification and summary of high-quality primary and secondary sources using articles directly from newspapers or magazines in most units focusing on informative texts. The materials also support student practice in organizing and presenting their ideas and information in accordance with the purpose of the research and the appropriate grade level audience in a unit specifically dedicated to the research process.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials support the identification and summary of high-quality primary and secondary sources. In the “Direct Instruction and Skills Lessons” section under “Writing Informative Text,” lessons provide students guidance on research skills, selecting and evaluating evidence, sources in informative writing, and citing and documenting resources. Additionally, the materials provide opportunities for students to practice organizing and presenting their ideas.

In Unit 2, students create a public service message as a culminating activity. Students research a policy they would like to see changed. Next, they find people to interview about their understanding of the policy. Then, students select parts of the interviews they will include in their presentation to support their claims. Finally, students create a video to convince others to change the policy.

In Unit 7, students complete two research projects relating to the selected texts. In the first project, called Ordinary Heroes, students create a research paper to share information about a historical figure. Students complete the “Writing the Research Paper” Module online and use the Writing a Research Paper pages in the student workbook to support their preparation, planning, creation, and delivery of their final research paper. In the second project, called History, a Single Perspective, students write a first-person account from a historical figure’s perspective. As students use primary and secondary sources to support their research, they complete parts of the Writing the Research Paper Module both online and in their student workbooks to support the planning of their historical narratives. The Student Workbook provides guided practice on Writing a Research Paper. Students begin by making a list of

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periods of history and selecting one that had the most turbulence. Students move to create a research plan to identify the topic and question and research goals with deadlines for completion and sources. Next, students evaluate their sources to establish if they are credible, unbiased, and relevant. Students then organize their notes, draft an outline, and edit and revise peer and individual drafts.

In Unit 8, students create an oral presentation for the unit project. First, they choose an issue that is important to them and research it. Students take notes and adjust their questions to obtain more information to clarify their thinking. Next, students outline their presentations. Finally, students give their presentations and receive feedback from the audiences to improve their presentations. In the Unit 8 Resources, Step-by-Step Instructions for Creating a Powerful Oral Presentation, a slide identifies sources that instruct students to include various source types in their research. Students determine whether the sources used are specifically primary or secondary. The Unit Overview in the Teacher Edition provides differentiating strategies, such as students writing a longer research paper for a greater number of points. Within the unit, students choose a topic for an oral presentation. The “Teacher Tip” in the Teacher Edition suggests teaching a mini-lesson on how to use search terms effectively by narrowing the students’ search domains.

In Unit 10, students create a presentation about the same event’s different perspectives. First, they choose a historical event that can be told from two different perspectives. Next, students research credible sources that explain different viewpoints. Then, students identify the similarities and differences among their sources to create a presentation to present to their peers.

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Indicator 3.E.1

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

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

Meets 4/4

The materials contain interconnected tasks that build student knowledge and provide opportunities for increased independence. The materials include questioning and tasks designed to help students build and apply knowledge and skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, thinking, and language. The materials also 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. Students are also given tasks to integrate reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking; include components of vocabulary, syntax, and fluency, as needed; and provide opportunities for increased independence.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In Unit 1, the materials focus on foundational skills. Students learn about the reading processes through activities that explore: pre-reading, active reading, and connections. Students also learn about the writing process and how to revise for clarity, develop and organize their writing, and the art of maintaining style through word choice. Students continue to build and apply knowledge of the foundational skills throughout the curriculum. Moreover, students integrate ideas and learned concepts to analyze various texts and share their thinking with peers throughout the materials.

In Unit 3, students read the essay “Are Sports Really for Everybody?” by Michael Buckley and make inferences based on evidence from the text. Students explore the question, “Are Sports Really for Everybody?” and the essential question, “How do the decisions people make about what they do reflect their values?” Students analyze the text about sports, complete activities designed to build inferencing skills, and analyze an argument’s structure. Students discuss their inferences with a partner and participate in a Debate Game to explore the question, “Is the relationship between culture and sports more positive or more negative?” Additional support is

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given through Skills Lessons that provide interactive practice in identifying a compelling argument's components. The Student Edition provides mini-lessons on inferencing, claims, and organizing arguments. Students read short passages and respond to text-dependent questions. Students engage in a Socratic Discussion about the closing activity's essential question. The unit project requires students to create a comic strip that details the process of making a choice. Students may also choose to create a public service message based on a belief they may have gained from reading the articles.

In Unit 4, students read stories and a poem that show people responding to conflict, expressing kindness, and taking risks. Students write several arguments using text evidence in response to a writing prompt "How can acts of kindness change the world?" Students analyze literary elements, word choice, and figurative language. Students use a method called "Collaborating to Find Evidence" to challenge, confirm, and expand ways of thinking about how people's actions affect their identity. As a culminating activity for the unit, students create a self-portrait that defines their values and traits or a story that shows a character making a different choice than in the original text.

In Unit 5, students analyze text for text features, connections, and a thesis statement and participate in a Socratic Discussion. In addressing the theme, students share "what they think of first when they read the word 'risk-taking.'" Then, students make predictions about the title of the magazine article, "Aliens? Or Just Wired to Be Weird?" by Tenzer Feldman and discuss with a partner what they expect to read in the text. During a class discussion, students ponder questions like "Does something need to be challenging in order for a risk to be taken?" "Do people need safe spaces in order to take risks?" or "How does respect factor into risk-taking?" In building conceptual knowledge, students engage in a discussion comparing and contrasting things that feel the same or different in middle school/sixth grade with previous grades. Later, students independently analyze the text features such as images and subheadings by locating text-specific examples and determining how the text features support the reader's understanding. Students also analyze why they chose specific text features in the article using specific details to support their responses. Afterward, students collaborate about the activity to build knowledge with a partner. Finally, students create an informative writing piece comprising a clear purpose and central idea with explanations based on evidence from two text selections.

In Unit 8, students read informational texts and a short story to build background knowledge about how families and communities help each other grow. Students analyze texts to determine central ideas, author's bias, and point of view. Students use the Socratic Discussion method to reflect, discuss, and respond to questions to build understanding individually and in groups. Students write several arguments using text evidence in response to writing prompts, such as "Is the author convincing in his argument that living in a multigenerational family is a good response to the post-recession economy?" As a final project for the unit, students create an oral presentation to show the importance of helping others or a story or narrative poem highlighting a character's motivations for helping others.

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In Unit 9, students listen to the poem “The Charge of the Light Brigade” by Alfred, Lord Tennyson, and explain how listening to the poem connects with what they thought of when reading the poem. Students discuss their responses with a partner to examine whether they felt a difference in tone between reading and listening to the poem. Students collaborate as they create a claim in response to the essential question. The unit project requires students to create a sonnet with a partner. The unit’s end provides practice in grammar, usage, and mechanics skills such as capitalization, punctuation, and understanding the types of sentences.

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Indicator 3.E.2

Materials provide spiraling and scaffolded practice.

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

Meets 4/4

The materials provide spiraling and scaffolded practice. The materials support distributed practice over the course of the year. Students get repeated and consistent practice with a large variety of grade-level standards. The materials also include scaffolds for teachers to implement with students of various literacy levels to demonstrate the integration of literacy skills that spiral over the school year.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials provide integrated literacy skills that spiral over the academic year. In each writing lesson, students are guided through a six-step process that begins with a topic overview and a personal connection prompt to gauge students' thinking about a question that is linked to the text. Students read an authentic text and answer five text-dependent questions. They analyze the text as it relates to the essential question as they build an argument. Students highlight evidence to support the text's claims and counterarguments, as well as evidence they use to build their own arguments. Students use the information from the text to craft an argumentative essay.

In Unit 1, the Teacher's Edition contains instructions for the Module 1 Lesson: A Process for Writing. Students begin with an opening activity that builds on their background knowledge before the vocabulary activity where they match terms with definitions for vital terms to argumentative writing, such as *argument*, *counterargument*, *claim*, *reason*, *evidence*, *reasoning*, and *audience*. Students complete two comprehension activities, "What is CERCA?" and "The Reading Process," which establish the foundation for future lessons in the materials. In the "Teacher Toolkit," teachers are provided a Scaffold Scope and Sequence that provides guidance for scaffold lessons in different writing modules. In the writing module, "Role of Machines," students get scaffold practice of Claims in Arguments and Selecting and Arranging Reasons. In the writing module, "Sports and Society," students get scaffold practice of Integrating Evidence and Supporting Claims with Evidence. In the writing module, "Government Role in Healthy Eating," students get scaffold practice of Reasoning. In the writing module, "School Policy," students get scaffold practice of Organizing Arguments and Counterarguments. In the writing module, "Video Games," students get scaffold practice of Introductions and Conclusions of Arguments. In the writing module, "Social Media," students get scaffold practice of Audience and Transitions in Arguments.

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In Unit 3, students distinguish between implied and explicit information. Students complete a graphic organizer by making three inferences from the essay “Are Sports Really for Everybody?” by Michael Buckley and providing text evidence that supports their inferences. Students further practice inferencing skills in the “Direct Instruction Practice.” Students read a short passage, select an inference about the passage, and provide evidence supporting their inferences. Later in Unit 5, Module 1, students make inferences about people and places. Using details from the text, they make an inference about the qualities of William Kamkwamba and the Republic of Malawi. Additionally, in the Direct Instruction Practice, students infer the character’s feelings and provide supporting evidence. Moreover, in Unit 9, Module 1, students read the poem “When I Heard the Learn’d Astronomer” by Walt Whitman to infer feelings or meanings derived from the figurative language used in the text. In the Direct Instruction Practice, students use context clues to infer the meaning of unknown words and phrases in a story.

In Unit 4, students read “The Richer, the Poorer” by Dorothy West and receive instruction on analyzing the setting. The same TEKS are spiraled in Unit 6, as students read “Ice” by Graham Salisbury and receive instruction on how the setting influences characters and plots. Later in Unit 4, students read “Priscilla and The Wimps” by Richard Peck and receive instruction on analyzing the plot. These TEKS are spiraled in Unit 6 and Unit 10, as students read “Ice” by Graham Salisbury and receive instruction on analyzing plot elements.

In Unit 5, students read “The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind” by Melissa Shin. They connect with the text by responding to a prompt that requires them to describe a problem that impacts their neighborhood or school (TEK 6G). After students complete the connection assignment, they read the text and answer five comprehension questions. Students move to a more in-depth analysis of the text as they highlight key elements of the text. Students summarize the selection and prepare to write an argument on the given prompt. Throughout the unit, students make inferences, draw conclusions and use the text to support their understanding. Later in the unit, students read the magazine article “Aliens? Or Just Wired to be Weird?” by Ruth Tenzer Feldman. Students follow the same scaffolded process. The Student Workbook provides scaffolds to address components of an argument, inference, structure, and organization. Students engage with the vocabulary through Frayer’s Model (TEK 6F). Students collaborate, debate, and discuss given prompts associated with the unit’s essential question.

In Unit 7, students read the informational articles. Students analyze the characteristics of informational and argumentative text in preparation for writing their own essay (TEK 8Diii and 9B). Students use the “World Cafe Discussion” activity to analyze the text and respond to questions. The unit project draws upon skills learned throughout the unit as students write a first-person historical narrative from the perspective of a historical figure focusing on the impact that person had in history, or students select a turbulent period in history and draft a research paper.

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Indicator 5.1

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

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

Meets 2/2

The materials include a variety of supports for students that demonstrate proficiency above grade level. The materials provide planning and learning opportunities, including extensions and differentiation for these students.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The materials include activities at the beginning of each unit on the “Extend the Reading” page, where students read associated works, both long and short pieces, and connect the reading to written and verbal discussions. Additionally, extension activities involving various English Language Arts Skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking) are tied to lessons under the “Challenge” title and are readily available for the teacher.

In Unit 1, the Teacher Edition provides differentiation activities for students to demonstrate their understanding of argumentative writing vocabulary. As the lesson “What is CERCA?” is introduced, students utilize the online platform and review the vocabulary that is projected by the teacher. Students complete the workbook activity where they match terms with the correct definition. Extension or support is provided with four differentiated groups. Among the differentiated assignments, the Challenge assignment provides activities above grade level. Students extend their learning by creating a physical action to associate with vocabulary terms, act them out with peers, and discuss why those actions demonstrate the definition. Later in the unit, the class constructs a K-W-L chart on the writing process. Students that demonstrate proficiency above grade level summarize the larger themes and then add their summaries to the class-created chart.

The Teacher Edition provides multiple challenge activities. In Unit 2, students are introduced to counterarguments. Students read the article “Big Drinks: In or Out?” and respond to a set of questions in which they identify the author’s claim and the evidence to support the claim. In the Teacher Edition, the Challenge Activity provides an opportunity for students to identify what strategy is used by the author to introduce the counterargument and connect it to the original claim. This activity is extended when students reassert the writer’s claim in their own words.

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In Unit 3, the Teacher Edition provides differentiation activities for students to make personal connections. As the unit is introduced, teachers ask their students if they have ever done or said something that they were embarrassed by. The Challenge assignment for students above grade level provides activities for students to extend their learning by reflecting on why they no longer want to make a bad decision again.

In Unit 4 of the Teacher Edition, students move from identifying and analyzing arguments from articles and essays to writing arguments based on analysis of literature. The unit provides multiple opportunities for students to engage in more challenging work through differentiated activities, such as creating their own graphic organizer reflecting how ideas in the text connect. Then students delve into characters' feelings throughout the story and create a line graph of those feelings. They annotate the x-axis with the story events and plot a point high on the y-axis if emotions are positive and low if the emotions are negative.

In Unit 5, students rewrite the lesson text, “The Boy Who Harnessed The Wind,” using a different author’s purpose, along with a prompting question to consider what is the appropriate language to use for entertaining an audience. The unit culminates with a project where students above grade level create a list of popular books, stories, or videos that demonstrate people making big changes on a small and large scale. Students communicate the commonalities among characters on the list as well as how each story is unique. Students then write how the characters can inspire someone to want to make a big change.

In Unit 7, the Teacher Edition provides differentiation activities for students to demonstrate their understanding of the research process. An extension is provided with differentiated assignments; the Challenge assignment provides activities above grade level. Students extend their learning by building complexity in their writing by analyzing details from their research that contradict their claim and organize them cohesively within their writing.

In Unit 10, students analyze ideas and write across genres. The unit begins with a comic strip activity where the students draw the first frame depicting a character making a decision. The differentiation sidebar provides a Challenge activity where students turn the comic strip into a “Choose our Own Adventure” text showing two contrasting plots based on the same decision. Later in the unit, the materials pair two short stories that are grade level but stretch student thinking with complex themes and culturally specific knowledge demands, which shows growth over the year. Students are challenged to compare the two stories’ settings and imagine the protagonist's response if their settings and circumstances were reversed.

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English Language Arts and Reading Program Summary

Indicator 5.2

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

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

Meets 2/2

The materials provide a variety of supports for students that perform below grade level. The materials provide planning and learning opportunities, including extensions and differentiation for these students.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In Unit 2, all students read “Yes to Uniforms: A Student’s View” by Shannon Ford and create a summary of the article. Teachers provide “Extra Support” to students who demonstrate below-level literacy skills by creating a summary with individual students or small groups by modeling how to find key ideas and details from the text and deciding whether they should be included in the summary. Later in the unit, teachers provide differentiated instruction for supporting students with writing development in the Teacher Edition. Later in the unit, students interact with the text “Big Drinks: In or Out?” by Janine Doughtry and prepare for their Module writing prompt. Among the differentiated instruction, the Extra Support instruction provides supported teacher activities for literacy skills below grade level. Teachers work with individual students or in small groups to identify a piece of evidence. Teachers model adding reasoning to explain the evidence and how it clears up the reader’s confusion.

In Unit 3, students performing below grade level create a pros and cons list while the teacher scaffolds questions to assist students with decision-making about an upcoming event. Students explain their thinking to one another for reinforcement. In a “making inferences” activity, the teacher helps students make inferences using textual evidence by asking probing questions: “What does the author write about sports in paragraph...? What does the author not tell you about sports? What inference can you make about...?” For a class debate, students performing below grade level participate in a collaborative debate with a small group. The teacher assigns each team member a part of the debate: claim, reason, evidence, reasoning. Students work together to build an argument and counterargument to share with the class.

In Unit 4, students complete the “Opening Activity for Building Background Knowledge” to engage in a pre-reading strategy. Students complete the “Vocabulary Practice Activity”: Word Wall. All students sort vocabulary words into self-selected categories, such as part of speech or affixes. Extra Support is offered for students who are not yet at grade level in literacy skills. Rather than having students create their own categories, the teacher provides titles for the first

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few categories that spark multiple ways of thinking about words, such as those ending in -ed or describing words. Teachers then provide direct instruction for characters and settings while students complete the Student Workbook's corresponding assignment. The support instruction provides supported teacher activities for literacy skills below grade level. Students complete a Venn diagram as they read it the second time. In the Venn diagram, students list characteristics of the characters Bess and Lottie.

In Unit 5, one essential activity focuses on independent research. Student expectations consist of following the provided steps and using a rubric to evaluate their research projects. Individually or in small group settings, teachers guide students performing below grade level by describing the selected research issue and explaining relevant details for their classmates to comprehend. A vocabulary activity requires students to use the Frayer Model using synonyms and antonyms as two of the categories. The differentiated support for students performing below grade level has the teacher modeling: examples and non-examples in place of synonyms and antonyms.

In Unit 7, students participate in the overarching unit discussion using the "World Cafe" strategy. The differentiated support for students performing below grade level provides students with a consistent peer buddy to circulate throughout the groups, extra time to share information gained across group discussions, and join group leaders to record and present the summary together. Students engage in a "Whip Around" activity; they are given two minutes to develop an ending to the sentence, "Societies change when...." For struggling learners, the Teacher Edition suggests providing the prompt in advance and allowing students to write their sentences before class begins. As students engage in research, extra support is given to the struggling student by providing, in advance, printed versions of vetted articles with the information already chunked into meaningful parts.

In Unit 9, students explore figurative language in the poem "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer" by Walt Whitman. The Teacher Edition provides extra support in the form of targeted questioning, such as "Why might a writer use words with different connotations?" and modeling. Students analyze the text's meaning from the poem not mentioned in their workbook—the teacher models by choosing a line and modeling the response.

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Indicator 5.3

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

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

Partially Meets 1/2

The materials include limited support for English Learners (EL) to meet grade-level learning expectations. The materials include some accommodations for linguistics with various levels of English language proficiency. Materials include scaffolded activities, translations, cognates, glossaries, and bilingual dictionaries for support. Vocabulary development is not isolated but evident in whole-class lessons and activities. The materials did not include the strategic use of a student's native language to develop proficiency in academic English.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In each unit, the materials include a "Differentiation" section. Although the English language proficiency as defined by the ELPS (beginning, intermediate, advanced, and advanced high) are not specifically listed, the Differentiation section includes: "Developing Bilinguals," "Extra Support," "Support," and "Challenge." These supports benefit all students as needed; however, the various support levels are not provided consistently throughout the units' progression.

The materials also include "Unit Resources," consisting of a Student Packet, Teacher Guide, Student Vocabulary, and Spanish Student Resource. The materials contain an "Introduce the Summary" written in both English and Spanish. The Spanish Student Resource consists of academic vocabulary and definitions that are translated into Spanish. The list is a bilingual glossary that includes translations from English to Spanish and cognates between the two languages. The CERCA question and summary of the text are provided in English and translated to Spanish.

The Teacher Guide for each core text includes sentence stems in the "Expanding" and "Bridging" sections. Additionally, the "Student Engagement" section provides more avenues for student verbal discourse to enhance learning and to build vocabulary, including and not limited

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to background knowledge, checking for understanding, gallery walk, think-pair-share, and last student standing. At the beginning of each vocabulary section, the materials provide the teacher instruction on developing the vocabulary, checking for understanding, and encouraging students to share their work in partner/small group/whole group settings. Additionally, the “Vocabulary Connection” section provides prompts to help the teacher build their vocabulary and encourage the use of those words in students’ writings.

In Unit 1, ELs are supported with listening and speaking skills during an introductory lesson on writing. The teacher reviews the questions aloud and asks students to repeat the question before they provide their response. The vocabulary needed for the year is introduced to the class; however, strategies are provided for EL to develop English Language Learners’ academic vocabulary. For example, EL students create vocabulary notebooks. The vocabulary notebooks are modeled after an actual dictionary provided by the teacher. The teacher also ensures that students place new vocabulary in alphabetical order throughout the year.

In Unit 2, students use a graphic organizer that includes symbols representing CERCA (Claims, Evidence, Reasoning, Counter Arguments, and Audience). A sidebar labeled Differentiation has a category labeled Developing Bilinguals, which gives suggestions such as providing questions before class discussions and using sentence stems. The teacher provides students a question sheet before a class conversation. Students read the questions and think about potential answers before participating in class discussions. Later in the unit, for Developing Bilinguals, the teacher recreates word drawings into a game where pairs or small groups of students try to guess the vocabulary word being drawn. After the game, students view all the drawings to see multiple representations of each vocabulary word. For extra support, the teacher completes one-word drawing with individuals or a small group.

In Unit 3, students engage in a whole-group activity to develop a plan to write an argumentative essay; support is given for English Learners by giving students transition words to help them organize their argument. The terms “What if, Children should, First, Second, Last, In Conclusion” are written on sentence strips, cut out, and then mixed up. EL students decide the best order of the terms, with support from the teacher. Student pairs complete the sentences with an introduction, claim, evidence, and conclusion. Students receive feedback to add reasoning to their argument. Students are shown how to move their argument into an online graphic organizer. Later in the unit, a whole-class activity involves creating a word web with pictures, definition, antonym, synonym, sentence use, and feelings associated with the word. EL students complete only the picture and definition parts of the web, depending on their familiarity with English. Teacher assistance is offered to EL students.

In Unit 4, the Developing Bilinguals activity has students make categories based on how word parts sound, determine the number of syllables in each word and find instances in which the same letter makes different sounds (conviction/scowl). For Extra Support, students receive

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Support in developing categories that offer multiple ways of thinking about words. For Challenge, students select a category and write a sentence or paragraph using all the words from that list. Later in the unit, the teacher gives Developing Bilinguals two categories they can use to sort words. For Extra Support, the teacher gives words to students on index cards. The teacher also provides categories and has students find the words that best fit each category. For Support, the teacher provides words on index cards for students to sort into categories. Students see how many categories they can think of that fit two or more words on the list for a challenge. Additionally, the Developing Bilinguals sidebar encourages using students' first language to enhance understanding of the unit vocabulary. Students decide the most accurate definition and generate a sentence in their first language using the word. Students further discuss how the English word and its translation compare in meaning.

In Unit 7, the Unit Resources provide a Teacher's Guide for instruction with the text "John F. Kennedy and The Space Race" by The White House Historical Association. The teacher introduces vocabulary using the "Elaboration Technique #2" while supporting students with additional words not listed. In the Level 3–4 Expanding section of vocabulary, students work with a partner student to write definitions of the vocabulary words in their language with support from the teacher. Students focus on understanding the core idea of each definition. Later in the unit, the teacher provides scaffolded vocabulary development instruction of the text "The Human Hive" by Dan Risch. The teacher projects the vocabulary with definitions and reviews the words with students. Students complete the corresponding Frayer Model vocabulary activity while the teacher circulates and supports students in need. Students discuss their definitions during the assessment section of the vocabulary development lesson and ensure they have the correct definition.

In Unit 10, Developing Bilinguals connects vocabulary words to the theme. Students use word drawings to represent vocabulary words. The teacher helps students make personal connections to the vocabulary words by including themselves in their word drawings.

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Indicator 6.1

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

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

Meets 2/2

The materials include assessment and guidance for teachers and administrators to monitor student progress. The materials contain both formative and summative assessments aligned in purpose, intended use, and TEKS emphasis. The assessments and scoring information in the materials provide sufficient guidance for teachers and administrators to interpret and respond to student performance. Unit assessments are connected to the regular content taught and practiced within each unit to support student learning.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Formative assessments include a baseline writing assessment, found at the start of the curriculum, before any units. Students answer ten reading comprehension questions about the article and then write an essay supporting evidence from the text. Each assessment under the sessions is given a 45–60 minute time limit. Students take two more writing assessments, one mid-year and another at the end of the year, on different topics. As students draft their essays, teachers assess via conference, offering comments based on preset student growth focus areas. Teachers score writing through individual components based on a five-point rubric, including descriptors representing beginning, developing, and mastery of each rubric category. Scores on the rubrics add up to an overall score on a 100-point scale.

Another formative assessment included in the materials is leveling assessments, which indicate a student's literacy level. Students receive three texts from reading and answering multiple-choice questions. Students are automatically assigned one text at their grade level, one text at one grade level above, and one text at one grade level below. Teachers can manually adjust these levels if necessary. Teachers use the data from these assessments in lessons to make adjustments or accommodations for students who are below, at, or above grade-level literacy.

Summative assessments are found at the end of each unit and consist of gauging the mastery of skills taught within the unit. These unit assessments typically contain two reading passages similar in genre and content to the unit's reading passages. The questioning structure is set up

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to assess the texts individually, as well as how they connect. Additional questioning focuses away from the passages and more towards specific skills.

Teachers also assess by having students complete exit tickets for understanding core skills and using writing and oral presentation rubrics. Guidance is given throughout each unit to leverage activities to respond to student needs. Differentiated strategies provide extra support for students who are above, on, and below grade level.

Teachers and administrators have access to the data provided by these assessments in the “Data Analysis Portal.” This portal allows the viewer access to lesson usage, grading progress, and reading and writing growth. Access to this information allows teachers to do a deep dive of the data and create actionable next steps and supports to guide student mastery of literacy skills. Reports provide scoring information and performance by strands. Students’ assessment data falls within consistent mastery greater than 85%, proficient between 70%–85%, not yet proficient, less than 70%, or inactive, which is zero engagement. The “Resources” section provides a Data Analysis Protocol graphic organizer that provides information about the data, interprets the data, the implications for practice, possible strategies to implement based on the data analysis, and the next steps for teaching, re-teaching, and/or assessing. Located in the Admin Toolkit is the Implementation Checklist for District Administrators, Principals, and Instructional Coaches. This information contains a screenshot of the Data platform where Administrators can monitor student performance. There is a PowerPoint that provides administrators with the five steps of the ThinkCERCA Data Analysis protocol. The checklist provides the administration with a timeline for implementation and action items to prepare for a successful launch of ThinkCERCA. The timeline consists of planning, implementation, and reflection, which includes data analysis protocol. Resources also include an administrator dashboard that provides bi-weekly administrator progress reports to help guide instructional practice.

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Indicator 6.2

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

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

Partially Meets 1/2

The materials lack support in providing year-long plans to promote student learning and provide differentiated instruction. The materials do not provide an overarching year-long plan for teachers. However, they provide some suggestions for engaging students in multiple grouping structures such as small groups and partners. The materials include suggestions with most lessons to differentiate activities to support students, but no separate lesson or learning structure is provided. The materials include annotations and support for teachers to follow on how to engage students in the materials. However, limited evidence was found for supporting the implementation of ancillary and resource materials and student progress components.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

Plans for student engagement are included in the front-end materials of the Teacher Edition for each unit. Icons delineate a plan for teachers to engage students in multiple grouping structures. A key is included at the bottom of the plan, which identifies the icons and explains each reference's type of student participation. The plans align with the materials' layout; however, they are not comprehensive or content-specific. Each plan is a simple overview of the unit without detailed instructions or activities. The materials offer some teacher support on meeting students' needs: discussing content, building background knowledge, questions and prompts for extending students' thinking, and developing bilingual scaffolds. Additionally, teachers are provided with several models of rotation stations for working with students in small groups. The materials also provide a Scope and Sequence with a guide to focus on skills and writing. However, there is no Scope and Sequence for the reading components. Lesson plans are included for six weeks of argumentative writing lessons and four weeks of narrative writing lessons for teachers' usage. However, there are no lesson plans provided for the other components.

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For example, in Unit 2 of the Teacher Edition, there is an overview of the 17-day plan and activities for the unit on argumentative writing. This overview provides teachers with a quick, at-a-glance guide on what students are expected to do and how they are to engage with the materials. Grouping structures for engagement listed in the unit overview include whole-class instruction, whole-class discussion, small group discussion, partner activity, and solo activity. However, instructions or guidance on how to group students is not readily evident. There was no evidence to support grouping based on literacy level or instructional need. Suggestions for differentiation are included with most lessons, but there are no ancillary materials other than suggested support activities for ELL students in the unit resources for differentiated learning.

In Unit 3 of the Teacher Edition, the first sidebar guides student engagement in introducing the unit by having students write a letter to themselves describing how they feel about their decisions and the impact on their lives. Subsequent sidebars provide differentiated strategies for engaging struggling learners and challenges for students above grade level. The front matter of the materials contains support for implementing additional resources such as longer readings and novels. Guidance is also given for differentiation and unit projects. The “Extend the Reading” component provides additional reading practice to discuss and write about the texts. The resources tab in each unit provides support for ELLs. Product Support provides teachers access to lessons, assessments, grading, data, and reports to track student progress.

In Unit 5, one essential activity focuses on independent student research. Students’ expectations consist of following the provided steps and using a rubric to evaluate their research projects. Individually or in small group settings, teachers guide students performing below grade level by describing the selected research issue and explaining relevant details for their classmates to comprehend.

In Unit 6, the first module begins with an introductory activity of the module focus with a class discussion led by the teacher on the phrase “growing up.” The Teacher Edition includes steps to the activity that guide the teacher on introducing the text and giving a preview of student expectations for learning throughout the module. Included are discussion prompts for both whole group and partner discussions. Later on in the module, annotations guide the teacher in a vocabulary activity called “Word Drawings.” Differentiation suggestions are included in the annotations for the activity.

In Unit 7, students participate in the overarching unit discussion surrounding the prompt “What is the best way to bring about change in a society?” using the “World Cafe” strategy. The differentiated support for students performing below grade level provides students with a consistent peer buddy to circulate throughout the groups, extra time to share information gained across group discussions, and join group leaders to record and present the summary together.

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Indicator 6.3

Materials include implementation support for teachers and administrators.

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

Meets 2/2

The materials provide implementation support for teachers. The materials contain a TEKS-aligned scope and sequence outlining the essential knowledge and skills taught within each unit and module. The materials also include additional support to help teachers implement the materials as intended and additional support to help administrators support teachers in implementing the materials as intended. The materials provide a school years' worth of literacy instruction, including realistic pacing guidance and routines.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The online platform section "Resources" consists of the following four options: "Training Courses," "Online Support," "Teacher Toolkit," and "Admin Toolkit." The Teacher Toolkit has a link for the Scaffolded Scope and Sequence. This Scope and Sequence is solely based on the Argumentative writing lessons that are throughout the materials. The columns consist of information pertaining to the Skills Lessons, Student Engagement, Feedback on Student Writing, and Student Output samples. The Scope and Sequence is in order by themes of the Module Lessons. The information provided is essential to guiding teachers on how knowledge and skills build in Argumentative Writing over the course of the year. For example, at the beginning of Unit 7, the Instructional Overview includes a list of skills taught and assessed. Next to each skill on this list is a reference to the TEKS addressed. For example, Participate in Student-Led Discussions 1(D), Use Resources to Determine Word Meanings 2(A), Use Context Clues to Determine Word Meanings 2(B). On the introductory page for the first module, there is a sidebar on the right side of the page listing the TEKS addressed in the module, written in the same manner as they were in the unit's opening pages. At the bottom of some of the lesson pages, a box can be found listing additional lesson TEKS. These are written again with the skill, followed by the TEKS code. In the teacher resource section, teachers are prompted to download a Scaffolded Scope and Sequence. This document contains links to skills across

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various grade levels, connected by topic or theme. However, the TEKS are not mentioned in this document.

The Teacher Edition provides annotations and support for engaging students in lessons. Teachers' support on meeting students' needs includes discussing content, building background knowledge, questions and prompts to extend students' thinking, and developing bilingual scaffolds. Additionally, teachers are provided with several models of rotation stations for working with students in small groups. The materials also include assessment and guidance for teachers and administrators to monitor progress, including interpreting and acting on data yielded.

Materials include additional supports to help administrators support teachers in implementing the materials as intended. Under the Resource tab, the For Admin Toolkit provides ways for engaging families, training courses to become familiar with the materials, and an administrator checklist of action items to prepare for a successful launch and implementation of the program. The Planning section consists of links on the following topics to support implementation: Curriculum Alignment and Planning, Administrator and Technology Facilitator Checklists, Understanding Bi-Weekly Administrator Progress Reports, and Reports Available to Administrators. The Implementation section consists of links on the following topics to support implementation: Creating a Positive CERCA Culture, Data Analysis Protocol, and Learning Walk Toolkit. The dashboard provides several reports, such as license activation, lesson usage, grading progress, and reading and writing growth. Further, a data analysis protocol provides administrators a method for taking a deep dive into the data and creating actionable next steps with the professional learning communities to ensure students' academic success.

Although materials do not include a table, calendar, or pacing guide for a 180-day or 220-day schedule, the lessons in the materials support an academic year of instruction. In the Teacher's Edition, each Unit consists of a section titled "Planning the Unit." It provides the suggested amount of days that a teacher should instruct per the unit. The plans range from 5 days to 26 days and entail focus and group structure per day.

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Indicator 6.4

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

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

Meets 2/2

The visual design of the student edition is neither distracting nor chaotic. The materials include visually appropriate use of white space and design that supports student learning without being a distraction. Pictures and graphics within the units support student learning and engagement without being overwhelming or visually distracting.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

The online instructional materials' visual design promotes student learning. The information is presented in manageable chunks in a slide presentation mode throughout the materials rather than one larger document. There is sufficient white space on each page, and across all units, the layout of information is consistent, where students can easily navigate through the materials. Pertinent information is aligned on the left-hand side. This information includes the unit number and title, the unit essential question, and the unit goals. On the right side of the page are suggestions for extended reading materials. The page's background has a calming effect with a yellow heading filled with lighter shades of yellow polka dots. Major headings and subheadings are written with the easy-to-read blue colored font on a white background. The other text on the page is written using a black colored font with the goals bulleted and the titles of extended readings bolded. The articles in each unit are in readable font size. A button is available for students to expand the page if they want to allow for more text on the screen. Additionally, unit projects are identified with a light blue background. At the beginning of each module, the reading genre is contained in a blue box, and the writing type is contained in a green box. Directions for instructions are written on the left side of the page, and icons are used to distinguish different aspects of the online tools. For example, the computer icon is used to provide students instructions to complete steps in the learning process. The workbook icon lets students know their work is to be completed in the workbook. The screen projector lets know that they will engage in online skill instruction, and the pen and paper let students know they will engage in a writing lesson. The building blocks denote a skills lesson, and the person reading a book lets students know they will engage in reading practice.

Each unit in the Student Edition consists of pictures and graphics that support student learning without distracting students visually. Readings are paired with thematically linked visuals, and

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students are provided graphic organizers that support their comprehension throughout the modules. As students read the text selections, tools are available for students to highlight and make annotations. They are also able to have text read to them by an authentic speaker. Each unit is introduced with pictures that correlate to the reading selections' topic with the corresponding theme. The pictures and graphics are appealing and engaging to students because they are relevant to students' interests and the topic being discussed. The graphic organizers help students to organize their thoughts in a structured format. The instructional videos provide an authentic voice, images, and graphics related to the topic under discussion. Students are given information on the Speaking and Listening opportunity and the Unit Writing assignment. Students are then given a synopsis of the Unit project options students will complete at the end of the unit.

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Indicator 6.5

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

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

Not Scored

The technology components are appropriate for grade-level students and provide learning supports. The materials utilize technology that enhances student learning as appropriate, and the materials include appropriate teacher guidance.

Evidence includes but is not limited to:

In each unit, students access the material via the online platform. Direct instruction lessons are presented in a slideshow format, with a combination of pictures or graphics and text in small, manageable chunks. Students have the option of scrolling through the presentation at their own pace and reading the content on each slide, or they can choose to have the slides narrated with additional support or an automatic advance feature. A small assessment to check for comprehension is found at the end of the lesson presentation. Skills lessons are presented differently, as students are asked questions throughout the lesson presentation and receive immediate feedback from their responses. The writing lesson pages contain several interactive features. Students are presented with a menu that allows them to choose a topic overview, selection vocabulary, the featured text, and evaluation criteria rubric and highlights on the far left side of the screen. To the right of this menu, the featured text is presented. Students have the option to widen the text, or they may choose text narration. On the far right of the page, students have access to the assessment questions. Students have the option of keeping the text open on the left side of the page, which can assist with providing text evidence in their responses. Reading practice lessons are set up similarly to the writing lesson pages. The end of unit assessments is also structured in this manner since they are familiar with navigating through the material in the same way.

The materials online platform contains literacy software and curriculum to help educators facilitate instruction to meet diverse learners' needs. Lessons are thematically organized and leveled, and differentiation tools are present to auto-assign lessons to students based on their readiness levels. The online platform also provides tools for teachers to monitor students' growth and to provide feedback. These supports include standards-aligned grading rubrics, analyzing student work protocols, and real-time data to track students' progress.

Additionally, the platform provides reading aids for students. These supports include in-text vocabulary and audio, discipline-specific highlighting and summarizing practice, and automated

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assessments for comprehension. Moreover, students develop their essays through the online platform. There are discipline-specific writing prompts, interactive graphic organizers, and writing scaffolds and sentence stems to assist students through the writing process. The online platform provides direct instruction lessons for language and literacy skills, the writing process, and the writing framework for students to access as needed or assigned by their teachers. Resources for facilitating speaking and listening activities are also available to students through the online platform. Examples of the resources include Feedback Loop, Rules of Discussion, and How to Deliver an Oral Presentation.

The materials also include teacher guidance through embedded professional development. In the Resources tab, teachers are provided 13 training courses divided among four chapters to acclimate the teacher with the writing framework. After each chapter, teachers take a certification quiz and must score 80% or higher to receive certification in the designated area.