

Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool

Core Knowledge Language Arts®
Grades K–2

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Non-Negotiables

Non-Negotiable 1

Anchor texts are worthy of students' time and attention: texts are of quality and are rigorous, containing rich academic language, meeting appropriate complexity criteria for each grade.

NN Metric 1A: Texts intended for reading aloud are rich and above students' current reading abilities. Anchor texts in Grade 2 materials have the appropriate level of complexity for the grade as defined by the standards, according to quantitative and qualitative analysis. (Texts that are part of a series or chosen to build knowledge or for independent student reading should vary in complexity levels.)

All CKLA anchor texts are selected for both qualitative and quantitative complexity and have been analyzed for meaning, purpose, text structure, language clarity, and knowledge demands. These texts are divided into two groups: Read-Aloud texts in the Knowledge Strand and decodable texts in the Skills Strand's Student Readers.

The CKLA Knowledge Strand is centered around complex narrative and informational Read-Aloud texts. These high quality, content-rich Read-Alouds are written substantially above grade-level and include complex ideas, concepts, and vocabulary that build background knowledge and deeper understanding of topics. Knowledge Strand domains increase in the complexity of language, content, and the demands on student responses within and across grades. Read-Alouds range in text complexity from Lexile 760–990L in Kindergarten, 770–1020L in Grade 1, and 780–1060L in Grade 2.

The Skills Strand's Student Reader texts are designed to follow the scope and sequence of phonics instruction. Therefore, as sound/spelling patterns are explicitly introduced in instruction, students immediately practice and apply those patterns in Student Reader selections. This means that CKLA students never encounter a sound/spelling pattern without explicit instruction on that pattern. Because these Readers align to the scope and sequence, text complexity builds by design. Within each Student Reader, complexity increases as more sound/spelling patterns are explicitly introduced. Complexity also builds across Readers and grades, as students continue practicing previously introduced sound/spelling patterns (fluency practice), even as they encounter new sound/spellings.

Anchor texts are worthy of students' time and attention: texts are of quality and are rigorous, containing rich academic language, meeting appropriate complexity criteria for each grade.

NN Metric 1B: Anchor texts* (including those selected for reading aloud) in the materials are of publishable quality and worthy of especially careful reading; they include a mix of informational texts and literature.

* Anchor texts are texts used as the centerpiece of instructional time, distinct from varied texts students might read on their own for a variety of purposes.

CKLA provides high-quality original, authentic, and engaging texts selected to increase students' knowledge, comprehension, and range of reading and listening experiences. Read-Aloud texts feature specially commissioned, knowledge-rich texts by children's authors on topics such as the human body, early world civilizations, early exploration, and U.S. history.

Informational texts build within and across grades, developing a solid foundation of knowledge that can be applied in later grades. These texts also increase in complexity, both in terms of academic and domain-specific language, as topics range from astronomy, animals and habitats, and ecology to early American and ancient Greek civilizations, early Asian civilizations, and Native Americans. In these informational texts, students are increasingly required to analyze and integrate information to understand scientific concepts or historical events.

Students also explore the world of literature at every grade, beginning with classic nursery rhymes and fables in Kindergarten and moving on to fables and stories in Grade 1. In Grade 2, students explore more fairy tales and tall tales before moving on to classic Greek myths. Several Knowledge domains that present informational texts include literary selections that relate to the content. For example, GKD5, *Farms*, includes the story "Chicken Little."

The K–2 Student Readers, used to practice and build fluency, are uniquely designed as chapter books, engaging students with interesting characters and story lines. Readers incorporate literary and informational texts that build in complexity across the course of the school year.

Non-Negotiable 2

Materials provide opportunities for rich and rigorous evidence-based discussions and writing about texts to build strong literacy skills.

NN Metric 2A: At least 80% of all questions, tasks, and assignments in the materials are text-dependent, requiring students to draw on textual evidence to support both what is explicit as well as valid inferences from the text. The overwhelming majority of these questions and tasks are text-specific.

The overwhelming majority of questions, tasks, and assignments in CKLA materials are text-dependent. Students are asked in daily reading and Read-Aloud instruction, both in discussion and through short and, later, longer-answer written responses, to answer text-dependent questions about literary and informational texts. These questions are identified as literal, inferential, and evaluative.

Literal questions assess students' recall of key details from the text. These are text-dependent questions that require students to paraphrase and/or refer back to the portion of the text where the specific answer is provided. Inferential questions ask students to infer information from the text and to think critically. These text-dependent questions require students to summarize and/or reference the portions of the text that lead to and support the inference they are making. Evaluative questions ask students to build on what they have learned from the text using analytical and application skills, often to form an opinion or make a judgment. These questions require students to paraphrase and/or cite the textual evidence that substantiates their argument or opinion.

Student writing frequently incorporates textual evidence. For example, students may be asked to summarize texts they have read or to incorporate information from the text (such as the reasons an author gives for a statement) into their written responses.

NN Metric 2B: Materials include frequent opportunities and guidance for grade appropriate evidence-based discussions and writing to support analyses, claims, and clear information about texts to address the analytical thinking required by the Standards at each grade level.

Every CKLA unit and domain is based around key texts, followed by class discussions in which students are expected to refer to these texts when answering literal, inferential, and evaluative questions. Students are often asked to generate additional questions based on the texts. Students further demonstrate understanding in writing by applying what they have learned and providing evidence from the text to back up their answers and opinions.

In Kindergarten, students focus on written communication through drawing detailed pictures and writing short phrases or sentences. For example, in Domain 9, *Columbus and the Pilgrims*, students create travel journals documenting the voyages of Columbus and the voyages of the Pilgrims. They also demonstrate an understanding of the information they learned from the Read-Aloud text by drawing pictures and discussing them with the class.

In Grade 1, one example of using evidence-based discussion and writing occurs in Domain 5, *Early American Civilizations*. Students gather information about ancient cultures and their peoples and then work collaboratively to create a paragraph with an introductory sentence, body sentence(s), and a concluding sentence that describes one aspect of the ancient Aztec civilization.

In Grade 2, students write longer and more detailed compositions in a range of text types. One example is an informational narrative students plan, draft, revise, and edit in Domain 5, *Insects*. Using information recorded in their Insect Journals during the course of the unit, students write a story from an insect's perspective, using accurate information and details about the insect in their writing.

Non-Negotiable 3

Materials build knowledge systematically through reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language study.

NN Metric 3A: Materials provide a sequence or series of texts that build knowledge and vocabulary systematically through reading, writing, listening, and speaking. These texts are organized around a variety of topics at each grade level.

CKLA is built upon a coherent Knowledge Sequence that is the result of years of research and consultation with content experts, educators, cognitive scientists, and others. The sequence is designed to build upon earlier content so that students become generally knowledgeable in the early grades and are able to rely on a robust web of prior knowledge when encountering new complex texts and material later in elementary school.

Students spend several weeks at a time learning about topics as varied as farms, weather, early civilizations, American history, the human body, and cycles in nature. Knowledge about the topic is built up over the weeks, with a diverse range of speaking and listening, writing, and reading activities, providing repeated exposure to new vocabulary and ideas.

Units and domains progressively increase in the complexity of language, content, and the demands on student responses through and across grade levels. Students build upon knowledge in prior domains both within and across grades. For example, in Kindergarten, students study plants and how they grow, building understanding about the natural world and the basic needs of living things. In Grade 1, students learn about the diversity of both plants and animals in Domain 8, *Animals and Habitats*. Students in Grade 2 can use this background knowledge when learning about more natural world topics presented in Domain 6, *Cycles in Nature*, and Domain 8, *Insects*. In this way, CKLA systematically structures knowledge domains so that students gain an increasingly deep understanding of topics.

NN Metric 3B: Materials provide instructions, clear design, and lightweight student accountability that guide instructors regarding how students will regularly engage in a volume of independent reading both assigned (related to the anchor texts) or texts of their own choosing, in or outside of class.

Students regularly engage in a volume of reading both assigned texts (related to the anchor texts) or texts of their own choosing, in or outside of class. Discussion questions and activity pages provide a source of accountability for independent reading, both in and outside of class.

Throughout Skills units, students receive take-home copies of the text to read to a family member. In addition, each Student Reader includes additional stories/chapters students may read independently in class (particularly when they have completed their daily assignment). Pausing Points provide students another opportunity to engage in additional reading. Beginning in Grade 2, Skills Unit 4, it is highly recommended that students read independently at home for 20 minutes each night. Students keep a Reader's Log of what they read independently, both at home and in class.

Teachers are encouraged to infuse the Knowledge curriculum with authentic domain-related literature. The CKLA Trade Book list provides a listing of recommended trade books that provide content and vocabulary reinforcement along with fluency practice. A Family Letter offers guidelines and suggestions for additional ways to engage in content and skills at home. Teachers are also prompted to create a classroom lending library, enabling students to select domain-related books to read independently.

Non-Negotiable 4

Materials develop foundational reading skills systematically, using research-based and transparent methods. This means materials provide explicit and systematic instruction and diagnostic support in: concepts of print, letter recognition, phonemic awareness, phonics, word awareness and vocabulary development, syntax, and fluency.

NN Metric 4A: Submissions address grade-level CCSS for foundational skills by providing instruction in concepts of print, letter recognition, phonemic awareness, phonics, word awareness, vocabulary development, syntax, and reading fluency in a research-based and transparent progression in each grade level.

The Skills Strand in K–2 focuses on building a strong set of foundational skills for early literacy students, aligned to standards. The Skills Strand provides comprehensive instruction in foundational skills, including print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics, word recognition, and fluency; language skills, including vocabulary development, conventions of English, syntax, spelling, and grammar; reading comprehension; and writing instruction.

CKLA skills instruction is based on an exhaustive review of reading research, with special emphasis on the findings of the National Reading Panel, Diane McGuinness, Marilyn Jager Adams, and Louisa Moats. In full accord with the findings of the National Reading Panel, the program instruction is based on three guiding principles: phonics is a more effective way to teach decoding than whole word methods; synthetic phonics, in which instruction is oriented from sound to letter, is an especially powerful way to teach phonics; and repeated practice and oral reading is a proven method of improving fluency.

The scope and sequence for CKLA's systematic phonics program organizes instruction to teach the most frequent spelling patterns first in order to maximize the words students can read and move them into engaging, well-written, decodable texts early in the program. Thus, the system is kept simple at first, and complexity is added bit by bit as students gain confidence and automatize their reading and writing skills.

Skills instruction focuses consistently on the phoneme, or single sound, using a synthetic phonics approach. This approach calls attention to phonemes and teaches students to read by blending through the whole word. Students learn to read words that contain onsets, rimes, and consonant clusters, learning to view and process these larger units as combinations of smaller phoneme-level units. Explicit instruction in the spelling patterns of the English language transitions students from spending an excess of mental energy on decoding (learning to read) to fluent automaticity so they can focus on comprehension and analysis (reading to learn). Instructional materials include text for students to read and activity pages that offer students focused, distributed practice working with the letter-sound correspondences they have been taught.

Materials develop foundational reading skills systematically, using research-based and transparent methods. This means materials provide explicit and systematic instruction and diagnostic support in: concepts of print, letter recognition, phonemic awareness, phonics, word awareness and vocabulary development, syntax, and fluency.

NN Metric 4B: Submissions include a variety of student reading material and activities that allows for systematic, regular, and frequent practice of all foundational skills.

CKLA's student materials are especially designed to provide systemic, regular, and frequent practice of foundational skills with engaging, chapter-book-type texts and additional materials.

- Student Readers—Each Skills unit includes a Student Reader. These texts are 100% decodable, meaning they only use words and spellings that have been explicitly taught and practiced. The last page of each Reader summarizes the code knowledge that is assumed at the beginning of the Reader (i.e., the code knowledge that has been taught in previous units) and identifies new code knowledge introduced in the current unit, noting the first text in which these new skills are practiced.
- Student Activity Books—Each Activity Book, organized by lesson, contains activity pages that provide practice exercises for reinforcement of skills, assessment pages, homework, and take-home copies of the stories read in class.
- Individual Code Charts—Students use the Individual Code Chart to record the vowel sound/spelling correspondences and selected consonant sound/spelling correspondences that they learn. Spellings are arranged in order from the most frequent to the least frequent spelling. These charts provide a useful reference as students read and write independently.
- Assessment and Remediation Guide (K–2, online)—This resource provides additional practice in fluency and code knowledge.
- Fluency Packet (Grade 2, online)—This resource provides additional practice in fluency.

Each lesson provides additional supports so that teachers can meet the needs of individual students.

Materials develop foundational reading skills systematically, using research-based and transparent methods. This means materials provide explicit and systematic instruction and diagnostic support in: concepts of print, letter recognition, phonemic awareness, phonics, word awareness and vocabulary development, syntax, and fluency.

NN Metric 4C: Submissions provide clear, well-structured diagnostic assessment protocols and materials for all foundational skills to guide instruction and remediation.

CKLA's assessments, including Unit 1 diagnostic and placement assessments in Grades 1 and 2, provide specific information about each student's knowledge in phonemic awareness, phonics knowledge, word recognition, and fluency with connected text. Teacher materials contain detailed information about these assessments, including how to administer them and how to score, analyze, and interpret student performance for grouping and placement purposes. Each grade also contains an end-of-year assessment, and teachers are encouraged to share the results of these assessments with students' teachers at the next grade level.

The final lesson(s) of each unit include end-of-unit student performance assessment(s), along with detailed instructions for administering each assessment, analyzing the results, and offering remediation if needed.

Formative assessments are clearly marked throughout each unit for monitoring individual student performance and progress in key skills. Teachers collect and analyze student performance on specific activity pages and/or observe and record individual student performance using the provided formal observation records.

Lessons also include quick "Checks for Understanding" to evaluate overall classroom performance. Careful attention to this information, collected on a daily basis, enables teachers to quickly determine which students may benefit from reteaching and/or more practice in particular skills.

Additional Support activities are provided at the end of each Skills Strand lesson for further practice and reinforcement of skills.

A separate digital resource, the Assessment and Remediation Guide, provides further guidance in assessing, analyzing, and remediating specific skills. This guide assists teachers in assessing and providing targeted remedial instruction to students who may demonstrate occasional gaps in letter-sound knowledge.

Additional progress monitoring assessments are available in Additional Support activities as well as the online Assessment and Remediation Guide. These activities can be used with any students needing additional help, including students with special needs and English Language Learners.

Materials develop foundational reading skills systematically, using research-based and transparent methods. This means materials provide explicit and systematic instruction and diagnostic support in: concepts of print, letter recognition, phonemic awareness, phonics, word awareness and vocabulary development, syntax, and fluency.

NN Metric 4D: Materials guide students to read with purpose and understanding and to make frequent connections between acquisition of foundational skills and making meaning from reading.

CKLA combines building strong foundational skills and reading comprehension development through skills-focused instruction and practice with connected Student Readers. These Readers were created in the service of the two essential instructional elements of decoding and comprehension. The Student Readers support the program's explicit spelling-sound instruction by allowing students to immediately apply the code that has been explicitly taught, to practice that code, and to gain confidence in their increasing reading ability. This helps students acquire fluency so that they may then shift their cognitive energy to text comprehension and vocabulary, the building blocks of meaning-making.

The Readers were developed to also capture the interest of students and instill motivation for reading independently. Each Student Reader is a chapter book which contains quality writing, engaging characters or topics, and dynamic settings. A combination of literary and informational text, these Readers develop comprehension skills and relevant vocabulary, preparing students to encounter more complex text in subsequent grades. After reading each text selection, students engage in comprehension discussions and application activities. These engaging texts provide important fluency practice, but they also inspire students to learn and read more.

NN Metric 4E: Grade 2 materials provide opportunities for students to engage in a range and volume of reading to achieve reading fluency of grade level text as required by the Foundational Skills Standards.

Skills instruction organizes students' reading experiences to maximize their practice in newly taught sound/spelling patterns. This is achieved through the instructional organization (systematic) and uniquely designed instructional material. Student Readers that accompany the instruction provide intensive practice with the code in an authentic reading experience. They reinforce students' sense of success as readers by eliminating the distraction of encountering untaught spelling patterns or exceptions. Written in the style of chapter books, these grade-level appropriate, decodable texts engage students with a variety of stories and informational text topics that inspire them to want to read more.

Students practice fluency both formally and informally through daily lesson activities. Students routinely read in different configurations, including independently and in small- and whole-group settings. CKLA instruction includes regular fluency practice, assessment, and suggestions for remediation. An online Fluency Packet in Grade 2 consists of short poetry, fiction, and informational text selections, as well as Reader's Theater. The selections are grouped by unit; selection topics relate to the content of the respective unit's Student Reader. These additional text selections provide opportunities for students to practice reading with fluency and expression (prosody).

By the end of Grade 2, students transition to becoming fully independent readers. Because they have learned both the basic and advanced codes by the end of Grade 2, students are equipped with all the code knowledge needed to read any challenging, unfamiliar words and confidently tackle text in any grade level-appropriate book.

Alignment Criterion

Alignment Criterion 1

Materials reflect the distribution of text types and genres required by the Standards and are at the right text complexity for grade level, student, and task.

AC Metric 1A: In Grades K–5, materials include a balance of texts and instructional time of 50% literature and 50% informational text.

CKLA includes a balance of texts and instructional time across Grades K–5. While the emphasis in Kindergarten is on familiar, literary text, the amount of informational text gradually increases, reaching at least 50% by Grade 2. Students in all grades read rich, robust works of literature, but they increasingly encounter substantial informational text, including primary sources and information about historical figures, U.S. history, world civilizations, and scientific concepts.

AC Metric 1B: A large majority of texts included in the instructional materials reflect the text characteristics and genres that are specifically required by the Standards at each grade level.

CKLA units, designed around the Knowledge Sequence, expose students to a series of carefully sequenced, increasingly complex texts organized around rich domains of knowledge related to history, geography, science, world cultures and societies, and the arts. The knowledge sequence's breadth of content ensures that students encounter authentic, relevant texts that reflect the text characteristics and genres specifically required by the Standards at each grade level. Throughout CKLA, students encounter both literary text, including nursery rhymes, fables, tall tales, fairy tales, and stories; and informational text, including text features such as maps, diagrams, and graphs; historical artifacts such as letters and diary entries; scientific writing that explains concepts in life science, astronomy, weather and climate, and other scientific fields; and literary nonfiction.

Although every grade includes units with an extensive literary focus (such as GKD1, *Nursery Rhymes and Fables*; G1D3, *Different Lands, Similar Stories*; and G2D4, *Greek Myths*), many units combine informational text and literature to offer a multi-genre approach to the unit's domain content. For example, in Grade 2 Domain 2, *Early Asian Civilizations*, the Read-Alouds include informational text about the geography and people of different regions in Asian countries as well as legends and stories from Asian cultures.

Alignment Criterion 2

Materials support students in building reading comprehension, in finding and producing the textual evidence to support their responses, and in developing grade-level academic language.

AC Metric 2A: High-quality sequences of text-dependent questions designed for comprehension are prevalent in the materials, whether designed to be read aloud or accessed by students directly, and build to a deep understanding of the knowledge and central ideas of the text (including those selected for reading aloud).

In daily reading and Read-Aloud text experiences, students are asked, both in discussion and through short and longer-answer written responses, to answer text-dependent literal, evaluative, and inferential questions about literary and informational texts. Students frequently return to the same passages multiple times for deeper analysis.

CKLA includes explicit instructions for facilitating an interactive, guided discussion of text read in the Student Readers or listened to during Read-Aloud instruction. These lessons are carefully crafted to focus students' reading/listening and help them derive deeper meaning through close examination of the text. Throughout CKLA, but particularly in close reading lessons, students consider the precise choices that have been made in texts and the effect these have. This varies from precise analysis with clear correct answers (such as the use of particular technical terms) to more subtle interpretations (such as explaining why the author chose a word or phrase). Students often return to the same text multiple times to further their understanding, including in specific close reading lessons.

AC Metric 2B: Questions and tasks in the materials designed for comprehension, whether designed to be read aloud or accessed by students directly, support students in understanding the academic language (vocabulary and syntax) prevalent in texts (including those selected for reading aloud).

CKLA exposes students to rich domain-specific vocabulary and general academic vocabulary. The texts and associated instructional materials within each unit provide repeated exposure to, and experiences with, selected vocabulary words embedded within domains of knowledge related to history, geography, science, culture, and the arts. Each domain-based unit spans approximately three weeks of instruction, during which students read a minimum of nine unique chapters. This approach allows for the domain immersion needed to acquire new vocabulary as well as breadth and depth of domain knowledge. Through repeated exposure to words in each unit, students implicitly gain a greater understanding of many different words.

Tier 2 academic vocabulary has been targeted for intentional focus in each unit. Academic vocabulary words support reading comprehension and may appear across a variety of materials in language arts and in content areas. Understanding academic vocabulary may contribute to improved performance on assignments and assessments, as these words appear often in directions to students. Where applicable, these words are used throughout the unit or domain, not just as they might refer to reading selections but also with regard to spelling, grammar, morphology, and comprehension. They may also appear in directions, assessments, spelling lists, and discussion questions, among other places. Such appearances reinforce student mastery of these words.

Materials support students in building reading comprehension, in finding and producing the textual evidence to support their responses, and in developing grade-level academic language.

AC Metric 2C: Materials support students' developing writing skills over the course of the school year. This includes writing opportunities that are prominent and varied and reflect the types and purposes for writing.

CKLA students write multiple texts in each text type, and writing instruction is integrated with reading instruction. Writing projects vary between rapid daily writing (e.g., in journals), single-sitting writing prompts, and long projects taught and implemented over multiple sittings. Students in each grade compose work in the three main text types.

The K-2 Skills Strand focuses on the skills and mechanics of writing and contains frequent writing activities. Text-based questions are increasingly answered in writing, with a focus on complete evidence-based sentences. Short opinion and explanatory pieces are woven into these activities. Longer, more formal types of writing begin in Grade 1, where students are introduced to the writing process they will continue to use through Grade 5.

Students also write in the three text types, using information from text, in the Knowledge Strand's Application section.

AC Metric 2D: Materials integrate speaking and listening into lessons, questions, and tasks and build in frequent opportunities for collaborative discussions.

One goal of the CKLA program is fostering "wonderful conversationalists." By discussing engaging, content-rich texts, students develop the ability to present, debate, and build upon each others' responses. Their excitement in mastering content fosters intense curiosity. CKLA integrates speaking and listening into lessons by providing numerous opportunities to engage in rich, structured, text-based conversations in a variety of settings and group sizes. For example, during Read-Alouds, students engage with the text primarily by listening to their teacher read, then integrate and evaluate that information in discussions with their classmates. As another example, during writing lessons, students take turns presenting their writing to partners, small groups, or the whole class, and they follow those presentations with rich and constructive conversations about the writing.

Small-group and partner activities and discussions are used in short and longer sessions. Think-Pair-Shares and their variants are used frequently as a collaborative discussion technique to help students stay on topic, build on the remarks of others, and link their comments to evidence in the text. Over time, students learn to engage in discussions over multiple turns and periods. These range from structured occasions, such as Think-Pair-Share and Turn and Talk, to interactive activities where students work together on complex long-term projects, to more informal collaborative work.

AC Metric 2E: Materials include explicit instruction of the grammar and conventions standards for grade level as applied in increasingly sophisticated contexts, with opportunities for application both in and out of context.

Grammar instruction, including both morphology and syntax, is taught explicitly within the Skills Strand. This includes understanding and correctly using the different parts of speech orally and in writing; analyzing and creating correct sentences (e.g., identifying and correcting run-on sentences); and adding appropriate details, including adjectives and adverbs. Punctuation, capitalization, and spelling are also taught explicitly.

Specific grammar lessons and exercises address the various parts of speech and language usage conventions, such as capitalization and punctuation. Students first learn these concepts and practice them orally; then they are reinforced in written text.

Students also practice grammar in the daily Warm-Ups. Language instruction from the Skills Strand is reinforced in the Knowledge Strand's Syntactic Awareness Activities, based in context, in most domains.

Alignment Criterion 3

Materials build students' knowledge across topics and content areas.

AC Metric 3A: Materials regularly ask students to complete culminating tasks in which they demonstrate their knowledge of a topic.

Because CKLA instruction focuses on knowledge domains, students gain deep, sophisticated awareness of many diverse topics, spanning literature, culture, history, and science. Students demonstrate and extend the knowledge they have gained through culminating tasks for each domain.

During the Application segment of the Knowledge Strand lessons, students regularly complete culminating tasks in which they demonstrate their knowledge of a topic. For example, after learning about weather and keeping weather diaries, Kindergarten students complete a writing activity to predict the weather and orally present their predictions in a weather report.

In addition to such application activities, every CKLA Knowledge domain includes one day dedicated to Culminating Activities in which students may further demonstrate their knowledge of a topic.

AC Metric 3B: Materials require students to engage in many shared, short, and focused research projects annually to develop students' knowledge in a range of areas and to enable students to develop the expertise needed to conduct research independently.

K–2 CKLA students engage in a variety of shared and independent research projects. With assistance, students gather information to complete graphic organizers, create posters or other visuals, or add to their writing. Students begin to understand where information comes from and to use print and digital media as sources for their writing.

The Application segment in Knowledge Strand lessons provides the practice and scaffolding students need to collectively research and integrate content from what they have learned through the Read-Alouds. Specific multi-day writing tasks help students learn to use the information they have gathered to produce informational or opinion writing. Pausing Points provide additional activities for group or independent research projects that focus on domain content.

Materials build students' knowledge across topics and content areas.

AC Metric 3C: Materials include a cohesive, year-long plan for students to interact with and build academic vocabulary and increasingly sophisticated syntax.

The Core Knowledge Sequence has been intentionally developed to further deepen students' vocabulary. CKLA students receive explicit vocabulary instruction, but because they are immersed in rich content domains, they also encounter a wide range of vocabulary related to those domains. As CKLA students acquire knowledge of diverse topics in science, social studies, and the arts, they also inevitably acquire the vocabulary necessary to speak about those topics with clarity, depth, and nuance.

CKLA takes a multifaceted approach to vocabulary development. Vocabulary is carefully chosen according to domain content (Tier 3 vocabulary), appropriate and transferable academic vocabulary for textual analysis and writing (Tier 2 vocabulary), and links to decoding and encoding instruction (Tier 1 vocabulary).

Students are exposed to above-grade-level Read-Alouds daily. These allow students to encounter, use, and practice domain-specific vocabulary on a topic over several weeks. Academic vocabulary is also learned implicitly, with opportunities and instructions to use Tier 2 vocabulary throughout the lessons. Through the Knowledge Strand's Read-Alouds, students develop a broad, deep, and flexible vocabulary that prepares them to read increasingly complex texts and write with precision and detail. In addition to using their expanding vocabulary, students use academic English in complete sentences to further solidify syntactic connections.

A brief Word Work activity (based on research of Beck, McKeown, and Kucan, 2002) follows most Read-Aloud lessons. This activity provides in-depth focus on a specific vocabulary word from the text. Students review the word, its meaning, and an additional context for using the word. Finally, students complete a follow-up activity to extend their understanding of the targeted word.

Alignment Criterion 4

Materials are designed to provide thoughtful supports/scaffolds to support all students in accessing the CCSS.

AC Metric 4A: Teachers and students can reasonably complete the core content within a regular school year to maximize students' learning.

CKLA is appropriately paced for school schedules, with a reasonable number of lessons and some flexible instructional components. For example, through additional Pausing Point days included in every unit and domain, CKLA builds in time teachers may use at their discretion to review, reinforce, extend, and/or assess content and skills.

The introduction of each Teacher Guide provides lesson-by-lesson pacing guidance for instruction. Full-year pacing guidance is provided in the Pacing Guide on the Teacher Resource site, showing the entire school year at a glance for both the Skills and Knowledge Strands.

AC Metric 4B: Materials regularly provide all students, including those who read, write, speak, or listen below grade-level, or whose first language is other than English, with extensive opportunities to work with and meet grade level standards.

Access supports are integrated into each lesson segment and offer in-the-moment strategies teachers may use to support English Learners at five different levels. These supports align to the lesson objectives and are therefore specific to the mastery of standards for the lesson. Lesson segments also include frequent Support sidebars for providing additional support for the lesson content. The Universal Access section of each lesson's Advance Preparation component includes additional strategies that go beyond the instructional materials to support the needs of all students.

Each CKLA Skills lesson includes thirty minutes of additional instruction in phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, and comprehension. These activities appear at the end of each lesson and may be used for day-to-day practice and/or remediation with small groups or individual students. In addition, the online unit-by-unit Assessment and Remediation Guides may be used to provide targeted remedial instruction to students who are struggling with foundational skills in each grade. Fluency Packets provide Grade 2 students additional practice for fluency and expression.

AC Metric 4C: Materials regularly include extensions and/or more advanced opportunities for students who read, write, speak, or listen above grade level.

CKLA provides multiple opportunities for challenge and enrichment. In-lesson Challenge sidebars offer stretching questions and activities within the lesson. Lessons in the Knowledge Strand provide frequent suggestions for students to delve more deeply into the material. These include suggestions for independent and small group research that can be extended by asking for alternative sources or deeper analysis. Writing tasks provide additional opportunities for extension.

Every Student Reader in the Skills Strand includes additional selections that may be used for enrichment, practice, and/or assessment.

In both strands, the Pausing Point section of the Teacher Guide offers a menu of extension activities, providing a large range of additional independent and collaborative learning opportunities, including research, writing, extended reading, creation of topic-related products, and role-playing. These activities can be used flexibly to meet individual, small group, or whole group needs.

Materials are designed to provide thoughtful supports/scaffolds to support all students in accessing the CCSS.

AC Metric 4D: Materials regularly and systematically build in the time, resources, and suggestions required for adapting instruction to allow teachers to guide all students to meet grade-level standards (e.g., alternative teaching approaches, pacing, instructional delivery options, suggestions for addressing common student difficulties, remediation strategies).

All CKLA lessons provide suggestions for small group and partnering opportunities that can be arranged based on student need. Within daily lessons, supports designed to give all students in-the-minute support to access activities are provided in sidebars. Specific supports designed to support reading comprehension and effective expression in writing accompany Reading and Writing lesson segments.

Tiered Access supports are integrated into each lesson segment. These supports are both specific to the mastery of the CCSS standards for the lesson and aligned to Primary Focus objectives. They provide suggestions for adjusting the pacing of instruction, providing specific guidance and instruction for academic and domain-specific vocabulary, and offering deeper support for syntactic awareness. They also feature instructional tools to adjust required modes of participation, expressive language demands, and timing/immediacy of support.

Lesson segments also include frequent Support and Challenge sidebar suggestions that provide guidance for offering additional support or enrichment for the lesson content. Additional strategies that go beyond the instructional materials to support the needs of all students are included in the Universal Access section of Advance Preparation.

Additional resources are available in the online unit-by-unit Assessment and Remediation Guides, which contain large volumes of additional remediation instruction. Teachers may use flexible Pausing Point days to reteach and differentiate as needed. These Pausing Point days occur with every unit, ensuring that students may receive remediation before the class progresses to another unit of study.

AC Metric 4E: Materials regularly and systematically offer assessment opportunities that genuinely measure progress on reading comprehension and writing proficiency as well as on mastery of grade-level standards. This progress includes gradual release of supporting scaffolds for students to measure their independent abilities.

CKLA has a progression of moment-to-moment assessment opportunities to more comprehensive benchmark assessments. In-lesson checks for understanding are designed to adjust instruction within the context of the lesson. Formative assessments range from in-the-moment adaption to opportunities for individual, small group, and whole class reteach and review. These also provide information to decide whether additional support and practice are appropriate.

Mid-unit, end-of-unit, and benchmark assessments can be used to direct remediation and differentiate instruction. Assessment and feedback give the necessary inputs to differentiate instruction effectively, from informal and minute-by-minute opportunities to lessons designed to remediate, enrich, and offer targeted practice.

CKLA units offer a range of formal assessment opportunities, including but not limited to Spelling, Word Recognition, Reading Comprehension, and Fluency. Some, such as spelling assessments, are done weekly. Others are done at the middle and end of the unit. Students also complete three benchmark assessments in the Skills Strand—beginning-of-year, middle-of-year, and end-of-year. Each unit includes materials for teachers to record, track, and evaluate student progress.

Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts

