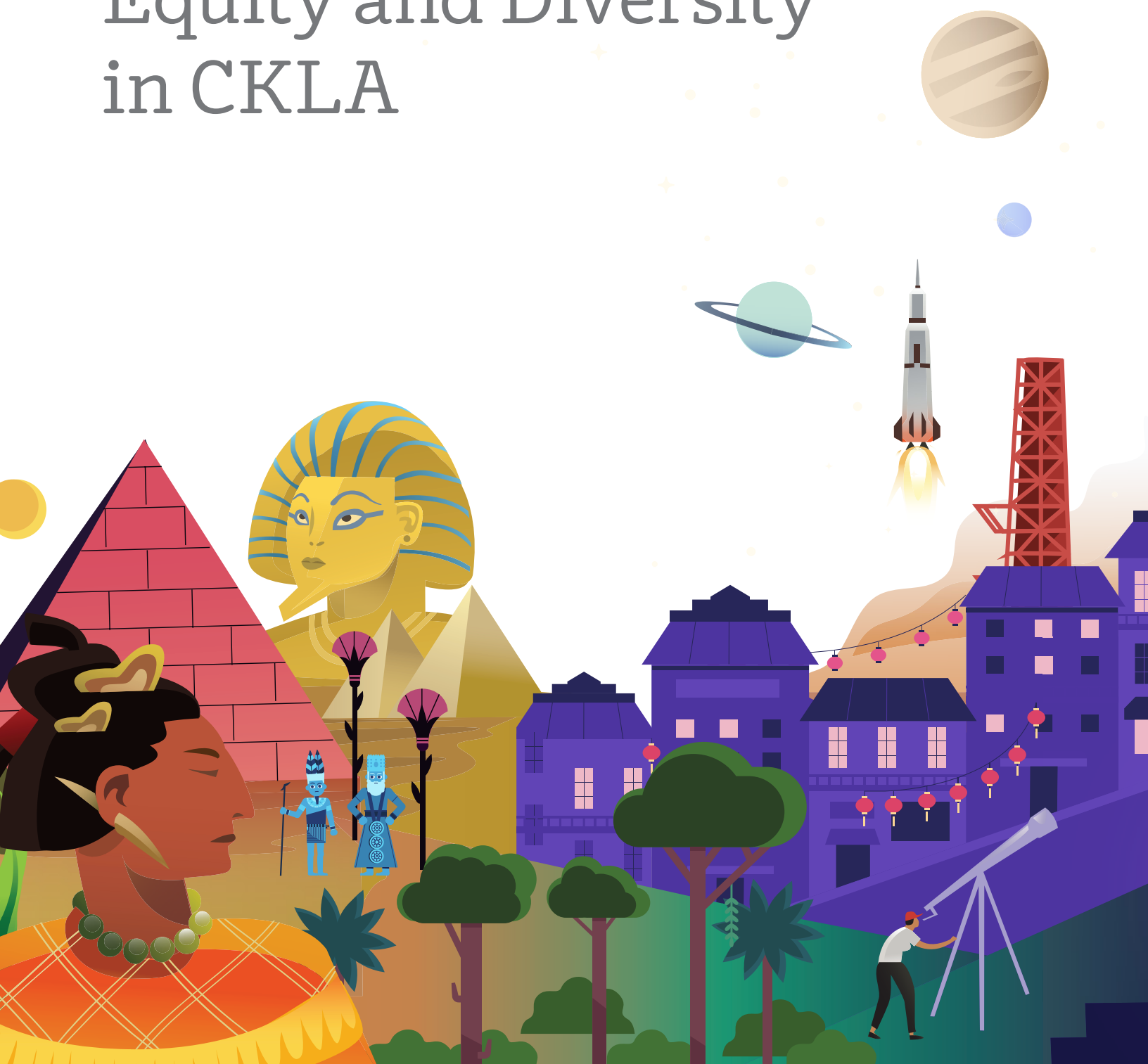


Amplify CKLA

Equity and Diversity in CKLA



Introduction

Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) was designed to help fulfill the Core Knowledge Foundation's mission of providing educational excellence and equity for all children.

Increasing bodies of research identify that students must not only learn to decode in the earliest grades but must also build up the background knowledge, vocabulary, and analytical skills that allow them to access and understand complex texts in late elementary school and beyond. CKLA addresses this by exposing students to a rich, complex range of knowledge and information about the world, its peoples, and their histories.



Building global citizens

Preparing students to become successful twenty-first century citizens necessitates that they have both academic skills and cultural competency.

Amplify CKLA targets both of these needs by offering unparalleled instruction in foundational skills and other English Language Arts content while also delivering substantial information about the world. Throughout Amplify CKLA, students consider the common factors that unite them to others, but they also explore and celebrate what makes each individual unique. This exposure to different histories, backgrounds, and cultures helps prepare students to be full participants in our increasingly global economy and society. It also instills in students the ability to understand and critique social inequality, further equipping them to work in a diverse, complex world.



Highlighting a breadth of experiences

Amplify CKLA introduces students to a broad range of identity factors, including socio-economic status, age, ability, race, ethnicity, country of origin, religion, citizenship status, and more.

The program also builds students' knowledge about people through different historical eras, helping them understand what connects us to our predecessors and how we remain distinct from them. Students see people who resemble them and familiar situations or experiences, but they also encounter people whose appearance, lives, beliefs, and background differ from what students have encountered or experienced. Throughout, Amplify CKLA equips students to see the strengths and experiences that all people share—those things that define humanity—as they celebrate our unique identities and the breadth of our experiences.

That breadth shows up throughout the program materials. Amplify CKLA students read about people who are seeking jobs and people working in various kinds of jobs, from a family running a small farm to Mae Jemison, a NASA astronaut. They explore ancient and medieval civilizations across Europe, the Americas, Asia, and the Middle East, learning what features defined those communities and shape human society. They reflect on the various ways different groups of people experienced parts of our nation's history, considering who was empowered and who disenfranchised and how people with common experiences or traits often still hold different perspectives or beliefs. They read about people who worked to fight injustice, from Susan B. Anthony to Rosa Parks, Jackie Robinson to Cesar Chavez. They meet several elderly characters whose stories span the range of experiences people have later in life, including traveling the world and facing physical challenges such as hearing loss and diminishing vision. They encounter many informational and literary texts about people grappling with or exploring their own identities, including firsthand accounts of a Cuban boy trying to convince his immigrant family to celebrate American holidays, a girl who wonders how her Chinese parents selected her American-sounding name, a poet recalling her first memory of a library, and a woman whose birth startled her father, who expected a son.





Building knowledge

This broad range of people and subjects stems from the program design, which incorporates a coherent Knowledge Sequence resulting from 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 in later grades. For example, students learn about Native Americans on several occasions, exploring different aspects of their history, arts, and culture. This spiraling of content ensures that students gain additional complexity in content areas in developmentally and age-appropriate ways.

Amplify CKLA's product development process incorporates multiple layers of review for bias and representation, starting with general product guidelines the content team follows. In many cases, materials also meet additional external guidelines; for example, Amplify CKLA 2nd Edition was prepared in accordance with the California Department of Education Social Content Standards. Materials receive repeated internal review by Amplify CKLA team members and other Amplify staff. External cultural consultants advise and guide our planning and content development processes. Once content is developed, we perform extensive external review of materials, which may include expert review by scholars in the target domain, educator review, playtesting with students, and piloting in classrooms. We conduct extensive revision throughout this process to incorporate feedback and ensure the best possible product—one that teaches critical reading, writing, and language skills through rich content domains that instill deep knowledge of and appreciation for the world and its peoples

Promoting lifelong learning

As part of our commitment to achieving educational equity for all children, we also continually develop our own understanding of issues related to bias, diversity, and justice.

Amplify promotes this work on a company level in various ways, including dedicating an in-house Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion task force to guide company culture and practices, including product development; hosting visiting writers and speakers on topics related to equity, justice, and bias; and taking employee field trips to places such as the Equal Justice Initiative's National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Alabama. In addition to company-wide events, the Amplify CKLA content team participates in regular professional development around equity, diversity, and justice. Recent offerings have included training from the UnboundEd Bias Toolkit and workshops with Dr. David Kirkland (Executive Director of the NYU Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools) and Leah Henderson (author of *One Shadow on the Wall* and committee member for We Need Diverse Books). These offerings underscore our commitment to continued attention to these areas.

Amplify CKLA's unique knowledge-centered approach allows students to explore great civilizations, meet remarkable people, and examine world-changing events and ideas—all while developing as proficient readers, writers, and conversationalists. And in the process, it helps prepare them to engage with many facets of the world and its people, to understand and appreciate their perspectives, values, beliefs, and contributions. Amplify CKLA brings the world to kids—and helps them appreciate the world.

