

# Equity, diversity, and inclusion in Amplify CKLA



# Overview

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. Preparing students to become successful twenty-first century citizens requires building both their academic skills and their cultural competency.

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.



# Diverse representation

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

The program 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 appearances, lives, beliefs, and backgrounds 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 NASA astronaut Mae Jemison. 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 was 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'd expected a son.

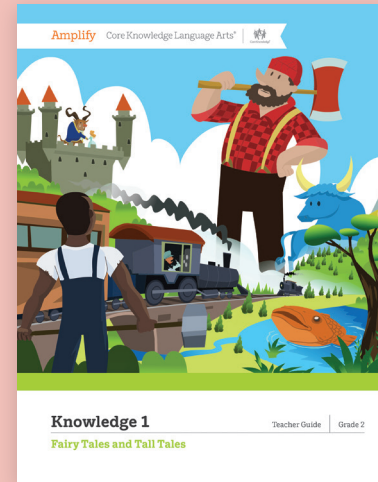
Amplify CKLA's product development process incorporates cultural consultants along with multiple layers of review for bias and representation, starting with general product guidelines the content team follows. We have been working with cultural consultants on a holistic effort to review our entire curriculum and identify places that need revision, correction, or other intervention. We know that there are many of them, and strive to tell a more complete truth about the diverse history and historical figures in our curriculum.

# Equitable pedagogy

Amplify CKLA's instruction is focused on what all students need: foundational skills and background knowledge. We have identified the four pillars of equity required to make sure all students get what they need. These key starting points offer concrete actions teachers can take to create a classroom where every student succeeds at reading—and to open numerous opportunities for every student.

## 1. Teach all kids how to crack the written code.

Reading science indicates that all children require one thing in order to read: the power to decode—the ability to match letters to sounds and see the patterns that form syllables and words. Reading science also shows that explicit instruction in phonics and letter-sound relationships is the most effective key to that code. Training young students in decoding actually builds a new area in their brains where letter and word recognition happens—and that area functions better with practice.



## EQUITY

### **2. Expose all students to knowledge and vocabulary beyond their lived experience.**

Not all students arrive at school with the same background knowledge. Effective literacy instruction must celebrate the experiences students have but not assume each student has specific pieces of prior knowledge—rather, it must build knowledge in the classroom. We need curricula that expose students to a diverse array of new topics—spanning history, science, literature, culture, and the arts—all in an intentional sequence that builds a rich and common knowledge base from which all students can draw.

### **3. Make sure all students are reading complex text.**

Instead of being grouped into different levels based on text complexity, students should all encounter the same text—with appropriate differentiation, such as varying the amount and type of scaffolding to best support students with different needs. With the proper supports and scaffolds, all students can handle grade-level decodable text. Providing students equitable exposure to complex texts produces more skilled readers across the board. Text complexity gives all students in the classroom the chance to challenge themselves and grow.



## EQUITY

### 4. Believe all students can achieve.

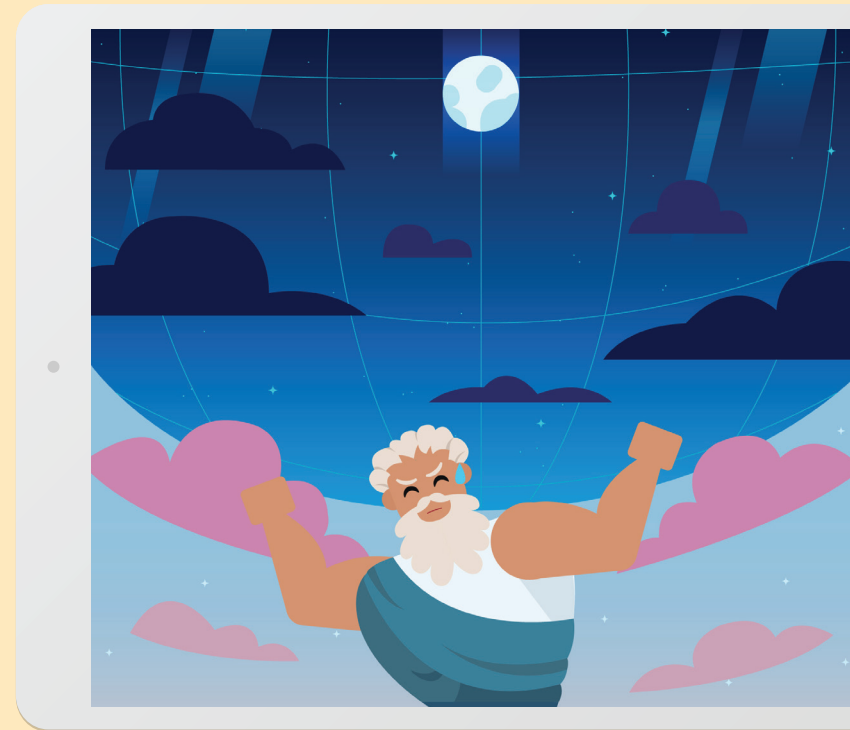
It is essential for educators to enter the classroom with high expectations for all students—and with the belief that every student is capable of meeting, even exceeding, those expectations. This equity pillar provides the foundation and motivation for the other three. When we believe in every student’s capacity to succeed, we make sure every student has rich content, complex texts, and powerful tools for learning. In other words, we provide high-quality instructional material based on reading science.

### Supports for all

Amplify CKLA is built on the conviction that equitable instruction is vital to an effective program—that curricula must provide all students with the same opportunities to achieve academic success, and that texts must be relevant to culturally diverse classrooms.

There are a large range of supports, additional scaffolds, and activities throughout the lessons that are suitable for a wide range of learners with different needs. Those scaffolds are included for language, comprehension, writing, speaking and listening, and more. Some of these can be incorporated into core instruction, while others are more suitable for specific students.

For example, Amplify CKLA’s Spanish Readers offer a Spanish translation of the Amplify CKLA Grades 3–5 Readers. These Readers are meant to be used flexibly to support a variety of dual language instructional models and student needs.



# Inclusive classroom community

Amplify CKLA's rich knowledge domains help students develop vast background knowledge in literature, science, social studies, and the arts. Students also gain the ability to comprehend increasingly complex ideas and texts, to make connections and inferences, and to engage in in-depth discussions of the works they hear read aloud. As students acquire this wealth of information, their confidence soars and they like learning more.

Amplify CKLA consistently promotes collaboration, and students work together on shared goals in the majority of CKLA lessons. Small group and partner activities and discussions are used in short and longer sessions. 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. Collaboration in small groups allows for differentiation based on student need. Materials support teachers in implementing a range of grouping strategies—sometimes assigning students of the same comprehension level into the same group, and at other times mixing students who are at different levels. In this way, students learn to work well with a wide range of people.



## INCLUSION

As students grow in these capabilities, the tasks they perform gain increasing complexity and depth. Students often collaborate to explore domain content in authentic activities designed to help them better master and appreciate that content and its context. For example, in the Grade 3 interactive Quest *Far From Home: A Viking's Journey* students take on the roles of Vikings who have set sail with Leif Erikson to create the first Norse settlement in North America. Along the way, students learn about Viking society and culture and meet numerous characters who tell them about other civilizations Vikings have reached or with whom they've traded. Students have to work together at each stage of the journey to make important community decisions, such as whether or not to trade various resources, when to sail and when to settle down, and how to interact with other communities they encounter. Similarly, in Grade 4's *Eureka! Student Inventor*, students develop comprehension and collaboration skills as they establish rules for group work and work together over an extended period in their labs on building inventions, reading and analyzing text, and crafting presentations.

Students become active, curious, and discerning participants, but—crucially—they also learn how to express their own views while remaining rooted in the text. Students learn that liking or disliking a text is not the only possible option; rather, their emotional reaction to a work they read is

just one kind of reaction. Throughout the CKLA program, students learn to grapple with, interpret, and understand different literary works—and this skill teaches them to view their reactions and perspectives within a broader context than just their personal preferences or emotions. Preparing students to become successful twenty-first century citizens requires building both their academic skills and their 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.

CKLA also provides a Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Guide, which outlines the core SEL competencies and how Amplify CKLA supports the acquisition and development of these competencies. Although Amplify CKLA is not intended to replace a comprehensive, standalone SEL program, it includes many elements that enable student development in SEL areas. In addition, the SEL Guide offers flexible activities and resources teachers may use to support students in developing these crucial competencies.





# Amplify's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion

Our goal is to make education, and thereby the world, more equitable.

We create education products that celebrate difference in life and thought as well as ideals we may hold in common.

We help teachers craft rigorous learning experiences that reflect the diverse histories, cultures, and identities their students bring to the classroom.

We also help teachers support their students in constructing, questioning, expanding, and strengthening knowledge of where they come from and who they are becoming.

To do this, we hire and develop people with the broadest range of talents, life stories and experiences, and together we build a diverse and inclusive culture.

## About Amplify

A pioneer in K–12 education since 2000, Amplify is leading the way in next-generation curriculum and assessment. Our captivating core and supplemental programs in ELA, math, and science engage all students in rigorous learning and inspire them to think deeply, creatively, and for themselves. Our formative assessment products turn data into practical instructional support to help all students build a strong foundation in early reading and math. All of our programs provide teachers with powerful tools that help them understand and respond to the needs of every student. Today, Amplify serves more than five million students in all 50 states.

For more information on Amplify CKLA,  
visit [amplify.com/ckla](https://www.amplify.com/ckla).

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