

K-8 Language Arts Adoption Committee

Rationale and Background

Rationale: Beginning in October of 2021, Scott Sullivan (Director of Teaching and Learning), Jennifer Behrman (Principal of River Mill Elementary), Leah Riedel (HS Vice Principal/District EL Program Coordinator), and Lindsey Fullenwider (K-5 Instructional Coach) brought together a committee of administrators, K-12 teachers, specialists, and classified staff to begin the work of curriculum adoption for Language Arts. The adoption committee has worked diligently since then to review current research, elicit staff, parent, and community feedback, review a wide selection of language arts materials, and pilot instructional materials in the classroom.

Before looking at materials, members of the committee began by aligning their work to our district's mission, vision, and values as expressed in our strategic plan. Members also engaged in conversations about rigor, relevance, and engagement to ensure materials met the 21st century and common core state standards in getting our students graduate ready for college and careers. Finally, to prepare to evaluate materials, members discussed an instructional vision for our district, with the background of a Literacy Framework and current literacy instruction research. This work led to the development of a rigorous screening document that was used by members to thoroughly evaluate and score instructional materials.

Before evaluating print and digital materials as a committee, in December and January, the members first reviewed the publisher scorecards from the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and EdReports. In addition to the scorecards, members spent additional time at home viewing publisher virtual caravan presentation videos, Q&As by ODE's adoption team, and responses from publishers to the scorecards themselves. Through this review, the teams determined seven published curriculums to review in person and more in-depth.

In February, members of the committee then used the district screening document, that outlined criteria needed in language arts instructional materials for the success of our students, to meticulously review and score each of the seven print and digital samples from publishers. After reviewing all of the materials, a top-two was determined.

Teachers on the committee then piloted samples from these top two selections in their classrooms. Feedback was generated from these teachers and their students, to further elicit conversations among the team and, in March, reach a final consensus and recommendation.

During our extensive examination, we addressed both the need for rigor, relevance and rigor, using complex text, incorporating foundational skills, the need for a substantial writing component, as well as a program that aligned with essential standards. Teachers wanted well-organized materials, support for differentiation, and engaging text in both fiction and nonfiction. Both K-5 and 6-8 teams came to a unanimous decision about their selection.

The elementary school Language Arts Curriculum Adoption Committee recommends **Benchmark Advance** for grades K-5 adoption.

The middle school Language Arts Curriculum Adoption Committee recommends **Amplify ELA** for grades 6-8 adoption.

Below is a list of how the resources addressed the assessed criterion:

K-8 Instructional Materials

Alignment to Language Arts and Literacy Content:

High-Quality Text

- Anchor texts are worthy of student's time and attention: texts are of quality and rigorous, containing rich academic language, meeting appropriate complexity criteria for each grade.
- Anchor texts are high quality and rigorous, containing rich academic language, meeting appropriate complexity criteria for each grade level. (Texts that are part of a series or chosen to build knowledge or for independent student reading should vary in complexity levels.)
- Anchor texts in the materials are of publishable quality and worthy of especially careful reading; they include a mix of informational texts and literature.

Evidence-Based Discussion and Writing

- Materials provide opportunities for rich and rigorous evidence-based discussions and writing about texts to build strong literacy skills.
- 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.
- Materials include frequent opportunities for evidence-based discussions and writing to support careful analyses, well-defended claims, and clear information about texts to address the analytical thinking required by the Standards at each grade level.

Building Knowledge

- Materials build knowledge systematically through reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language study.
- 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.
- Materials provide instructions, clear design, and lightweight student accountability that guide instructors regarding how students will regularly engage in a volume of reading both assigned (related to the anchor texts) or texts of their own choosing, in or outside of class.

Instructional Support and Assessment Alignment

Range and Quality of Texts

- 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.
- In grades 6-8, ELA materials include substantial attention to high-quality nonfiction.

- 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.
- Support materials for the anchor text(s) provide opportunities for students to engage in a range and volume of reading to achieve reading fluency of grade-level complex text as required by the Foundational Skills standards, as well as the Standards regarding range and complexity for reading.

Questions, Tasks, and Assessments

- Materials support students in building reading comprehension, in finding and producing textual evidence to support their responses, and in developing grade-level academic language.
- High-quality sequences of text-dependent questions are prevalent in the materials and build a deep understanding of the knowledge and central ideas of the text.
- Questions and tasks in the materials support students in understanding the academic language (vocabulary and syntax) prevalent in complex texts.
- Materials focus on argument and informative writing in the specified proportions. Alternatively, they may reflect blended forms in similar proportions (e.g., exposition and persuasion).
- Materials support students' developing writing skills over the course of the school year. This includes writing opportunities that are prominent and varied.
- Materials integrate speaking and listening into lessons, questions, and tasks and build in frequent opportunities for collaborative discussions.
- Materials include explicit instruction of the grammar and conventions standards for grade level as applied in increasingly sophisticated texts, with opportunities for applications both in and out of context.
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Building Knowledge with Texts, Vocabulary, and Tasks

- Materials regularly ask students to complete culminating tasks in which they demonstrate their knowledge of a topic.
- Materials require students to engage in many short, 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.
- Materials include a cohesive, year-long plan for students to interact with and build academic vocabulary and increasingly sophisticated syntax.

Access to Standards for All Students

- Materials are designed to provide thoughtful support/scaffolds to support all students in accessing the standards.
- Teachers and students can reasonably complete the core content within a regular school year to maximize students' learning.
- 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.
- Materials regularly include extensions and/or more advanced opportunities for students who read, write, speak, or listen above grade level.

- 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 the gradual release of supporting scaffolds for students to measure their independent abilities.

Cultural Responsiveness

- Materials are designed to be place-based, culturally and linguistically responsive, and engaging for all students.
- Texts included in the instructional materials are place-based, culturally and linguistically responsive, and relevant.
- Materials promote equitable instruction by providing guidance for teachers to support learning activities that are place-based, culturally and linguistically responsive, and relevant.

Accessibility/Usability

- Materials are feasible to implement, and where technology is used, it is accessible to teachers and students.
- Materials provide technological support.
- Materials maximize teacher usability.

Materials to Purchase for Full Implementation:

- K-5: Benchmark Advance 2.5 Grades K-5 Classroom 6-year, 30 copy package print and digital for each classroom.
- 6-8: Amplify ELA Grades 6-8 Teacher Blended Package (6yr license)
- 6-8: Amplify ELA Grades 6-8 Student Blended Package ((6yr license)

[Link to Benchmark Advance Initial Quote for K-5](#)

[Link to Amplify ELA Initial Quote for 6-8](#)

Proposed Training and Professional Development Plan

- K-5, Benchmark Advance: Three full days, onsite with Publishers for professional development/training
- 6-8, Amplify ELA: Half day Remote Training on Data-Informed Instruction provided by publisher
- 6-8, Amplify ELA: Full day Onsite Initial Training for Teachers provided by publisher
- 6-8, Amplify ELA: Full day Onsite Coaching Session provided by publisher

Needs for Ongoing Professional Development

- Inservice time to allow for professional development.
- Instructional Coaches at each building will provide ongoing training and professional development to teachers throughout the year as needed.