

SECTION I: 2020 English Language Arts & Literacy Non-negotiable Criteria (NN)

Non-negotiable Criteria 1-4	Non-negotiable Metrics 1-4	EXAMPLES IN TEXT (PROVIDED BY PUBLISHER)
<p>NN1 High-quality text: 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.</p>	<p>1A. Anchor texts are high-quality and rigorous, containing rich academic language, meeting appropriate complexity criteria for each grade . (Texts that are part of a series or chosen to build knowledge or for independent student reading should vary in complexity levels.)</p> <p>1B. Anchor texts in the materials are of publishable quality and worthy of especially careful reading; they include a mix of informational texts and literature.</p>	<p>EXAMPLES IN TEXT (PROVIDED BY PUBLISHER)</p> <p>Examples for NN Metric 1A: StudySync texts are selected using qualitative and quantitative measures per the requirements outlined in the state standards. Lexile® bands are used to inform quantitative analysis, alongside multiple readability scales and teacher input to verify grade-level appropriateness and ensure increasing access to more complex texts throughout the course of the year. A three-part model for measuring text complexity is used in selecting and placing all texts in the program: quantitative measures, qualitative measures, and reader and task considerations. Additionally, each unit includes at least two groupings of texts in which students read two to three texts with a close thematic or content connection. This allows students to build knowledge, explore different perspectives on a topic, and compare texts within and across genres. Texts within groupings ensure students are exposed to different levels of and manifestations of challenge, particularly through pairings of prose, poetry, and informational text. What’s more, each student subscription provides access to all texts in the StudySync library as well as all instructional content for grades 6–12, ensuring opportunities for differentiation and appropriate rigor in independent reading.</p> <p>Follow the sample clickpaths below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.</p> <p>Examples: Grade 7 ELA Overview > Text Complexity Staircase, Page 5</p> <p>Grade 7 ELA Overview > Speech to the Young: Speech to the Progress-Toward, pages 90–91</p> <p>Grade 7 > Unit 3 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Mother Jones: Fierce Fighter for Workers’ Rights > Independent Read: Mother Jones: Fierce Fighter for Workers’ Rights > Read</p> <p>Grade 7 > Unit 3 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Speech to the Young: Speech to the Progress-Toward > Independent Read: Speech to the Young:Speech to the Progress-Toward > Read</p> <p>Grade 7 > Unit 3 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Letter to President Theodore Roosevelt > First Read: Letter to President Theodore Roosevelt > Read</p> <p>Examples for NN Metric 1B: The StudySync ELA table of contents (TOC) for each grade includes a balance of grade-level-appropriate literature and informational texts across multiple genres. These high-quality, diverse texts have been selected from a variety of respected sources within both the established canon and contemporary and emerging writers and publishers. Literature texts include short stories, poems, dramas, and novels. Informational texts include essays, speeches, historical documents, biographies, memoirs, and argumentative texts. Every text in the StudySync TOC is thoroughly vetted to ensure it is worthy of student attention in its content, both in subject matter and through appropriately rigorous syntax and diction.</p> <p>Follow the sample clickpaths below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.</p>

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Examples:

Grade 6 ELA OverviewGrade 6 > Unit 5 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Helen Keller > Independent Read: Helen Keller > Read

Grade 6 > Unit 5 > Integrated Reading and Writing >The Story of My Life > Independent Read: The Story of My Life > Read

Grade 6 > Unit 5 > Integrated Reading and Writing > The Miracle Worker > First Read: The Miracle Worker > Read

Grade 6 > Unit 5 > Integrated Reading and Writing > The All-American Slurp > First Read: The All-American Slurp > Read

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NN 2 Evidence-Based Discussion and Writing:
Materials provide opportunities for rich and rigorous evidence-based discussions and writing about texts to build strong literacy skills.

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.

Examples for NN Metric 2A:
Within the StudySync program, students complete text-specific tasks for every selection they read. Reading routines are designed to ensure that students answer text-dependent and text-specific questions in all First Read, Skill, Close Read, and Independent Read lessons. Activities such as Text Talk questions, Think questions, text-dependent comprehension quiz questions, Skills Focus prompts, Collaborative Conversations, and Writing and Discussion prompts all provide students with opportunities to support their thinking and analysis with evidence from the text, both in writing and in discussion. Questions are developed specifically for each text in the program, drawing on the application of skills lessons that accompany texts where applicable, to ensure that students are drawing on instruction, close reading, and the text at hand to develop written and oral responses. Additionally, reading routines within StudySync are designed to scaffold rigor so that students move from answering questions that are “right there” in the text to tasks that require increasingly sophisticated analysis. Outside of the core program, all Library items available for teachers to assign include text-dependent reading comprehension questions, Think questions, and prompts.

Follow the sample clickpaths below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.

Examples:

Grade 7 > Unit 1 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Thank You, M'am > First Read: Thank You, M'am > Read > Teacher Edition: Text Talk

Grade 7 > Unit 1 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Thank You, M'am > First Read: Thank You, M'am > Quiz 1–10

Grade 7 > Unit 1 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Thank You, M'am > First Read: Thank You, M'am > Think 1–5

Grade 7 > Unit 1 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Thank You, M'am > Close Read: Thank You, M'am > Read > Skills Focus

Grade 7 > Unit 1 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Thank You, M'am > Close Read: Thank You, M'am > Write

2B. 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.

Examples for NN Metric 2B:
Every text students read is accompanied by an academic writing or discussion prompt. Prompts require students to demonstrate a combination of analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and/or creation and ask students to apply skills that they have previously learned and practiced. In their analyses, students are required to present clear and logical claims with strong supporting evidence from the text. Every writing prompt is preceded by a Collaborative Conversation activity where students work together to discuss the prompt, providing evidence from the text to support their claims and analyses. Additional text-based conversations are included throughout the program in the form of Discussion prompts and Beyond activities.

Follow the sample clickpaths below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria.

Examples:

Grade 6 > Unit 5 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Listen, Slowly > Close Read: Listen, Slowly > Read > Skills Focus

Grade 6 > Unit 5 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Listen, Slowly > Close Read: Listen, Slowly > Write > Teacher Edition: Collaborative Conversation

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Grade 7 > Unit 6 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Reality TV and Society > Close Read: Reality TV and Society > Read > Skills Focus

Grade 7 > Unit 6 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Reality TV and Society > Close Read: Reality TV and Society > Write

Grade 8 > Unit 3 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Address to the Nation on the Explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger > Close Read: Address to the Nation on the Explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger > Write

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NN 3 Building Knowledge:
Materials build knowledge systematically through reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language study.

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.

Examples for NN Metric 3A:
Each unit in StudySync’s Core ELA program is built around a specific theme and essential question that is introduced at the beginning of the unit through the Big Idea Blast. Through the course of the unit, students interact with texts that align to the unit theme and explore the essential question through a series of related topics and skills. Within each unit, paired reading clusters require students to read two to three texts with a close thematic or topic connection. These text clusters provide opportunities to delve deeper into a specific topic, develop content vocabulary, and compare texts within and across genres. For every text in the unit, text-based activities such as Activate Prior Knowledge and Experiences and Writer’s Notebook allow opportunities for students to build content knowledge and explore connections between texts and the unit theme and essential question through writing, speaking, and listening. Additionally, each unit features a genre focus that supports students in recognizing and analyzing the specific features of a particular genre, while comparing and contrasting texts across as well as within genres.

In grades 6–8, each unit also includes two vocabulary lessons at the start of the unit, Academic Vocabulary and Content Vocabulary. After being introduced to terms at the start of the unit, students have numerous opportunities to use and interact with these words throughout subsequent lessons. The Revisit Academic and Content Vocabulary activity in First Read and Independent Read lessons asks students to use these words in a cultural awareness discussion. Selected writing prompts throughout the unit will include Academic Vocabulary words and encourage students to include these words in their responses. Finally, a culminating Vocabulary Review lesson at the close of each unit provides students with a final opportunity to review new vocabulary in a variety of contexts and demonstrate understanding by participating in a group discussion and written reflection.

Follow the sample clickpaths below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.

Examples:

Grade 8 > Unit 5 > Integrated Reading and Writing > The Big Idea > Blast: Trying Times

Grade 8 > Unit 5 > Integrated Reading and Writing > The Big Idea > Content Vocabulary - Terms About Trials

Grade 8 > Unit 5 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Long Walk to Freedom > First Read: Long Walk to Freedom > Teacher Edition > Activate Prior Knowledge and Develop Cultural Awareness, Revisit Academic and Content Vocabulary, and Analyze Vocabulary Using Context Clues

Grade 8 > Unit 5 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Long Walk to Freedom > Close Read: Long Walk to Freedom > Write

Grade 8 > Unit 5 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Skill: Vocabulary Review

3B. 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.

Examples for NN Metric 3B:
All texts in each unit include a series of activities and tasks to support students in meaningful reading and analysis, while also providing accountability. Each text in the Core ELA units includes 5–10 multiple-choice and drag-and-drop Reading Comprehension questions that teachers can use to quickly gauge their students’ comprehension of a text. Lessons also include a variety of short answer questions, close reading tasks, and extended opportunities for analytical writing and group discussion to support students in engaging with complex texts in multiple ways. Lesson components can easily be assigned for completion both in and outside of class.

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Each unit provides students opportunities to self-select appropriately complex texts, through a Self-Selected reading and writing lesson. These lessons support students in choosing appropriate texts for them using guided questions aligned to thematic, genre, and knowledge-building considerations. These activities foster independence and choice as students develop and hone their tastes and interests throughout the year.

For each of the six thematic units in the Core ELA curriculum, teachers may also choose from two or more Novel Studies to assign. Each Novel Study includes a Reading Guide which previews key vocabulary words and includes close reading questions tied to standards-aligned skills for each section of the text. The Comparative Reading and Writing section of the Novel Study is designed to support both the close reading of the novel and comparative analyses of specific sections of the novel to passages of other texts drawn from across disciplines.

Follow the sample clickpaths below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.

Examples:

Grade 8 > Unit 1 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story About Brain Science > First Read: Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story About Brain Science > Quiz

Grade 8 > Unit 1 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story About Brain Science > Close Read: Phineas Gage: A Gruesome but True Story About Brain Science > Read > Skills Focus

Grade 8 > Unit 1 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Self-Selected Reading > Blast: Self-Selected

Grade 8 > Unit 1 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Self-Selected Reading > Write: Self-Selected Response

Grade 8 > Unit 1 > Novel Study > Monster by Walter Dean Myers > Novel Study Unit with Comparative Texts

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EXAMPLES IN TEXT (PROVIDED BY PUBLISHER)

AC 1: Range and Quality of Texts

AC Metric 1A: In grades 3-5, materials shift the balance of texts and instructional time to 50% literature / 50% informational high-quality text. In grades 6–12, ELA materials include substantial attention to high-quality nonfiction.

The StudySync ELA table of contents (TOC) for each middle school grade includes a balance of grade-level-appropriate literature and informational texts across multiple genres and at different levels of complexity. Nonfiction texts include essays, speeches, historical documents, biographies, memoirs, and argumentative texts. Each grade level includes one unit with a genre focus of Informational Texts and one unit with a genre focus of Argumentative Texts. These units include texts that serve as examples of the genre focus as well as a Recognizing Genre lesson that introduces students to characteristics of the featured genre. After students read and respond to the texts in this unit, they have an opportunity to apply their understanding of the featured genre in an Analyzing Genre lesson. During this lesson, students use their understanding of the featured genre to analyze one of the anchor texts of that genre. Novel Studies further ensure teachers have the option of more sustained readings with a literary or nonfiction text.

Follow the sample clickpath below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.

Example:
Grade 6 > Unit 4 > Integrated Reading and Writing (see variety of texts in unit)

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.

The variety of diverse texts available in the StudySync ELA table of contents for each grade provides students with authentic opportunities to develop mastery of the skills and knowledge required by the grade-level ELA Standards. Anchor texts in the curriculum are chosen to capture a range of approaches to language and construction, while providing quality models across different genres. Additionally, the diversity of texts in each grade provides opportunities to make connections across disciplines while appealing to the interest of a wide range of learners.

Texts and genres in each grade’s table of contents allows for purposeful instruction through standards-based skill lessons such as Theme, Dramatic Elements and Structure, Arguments and Claims, and Author’s Purpose and Point of View. The rich collection of literary and informational texts also provides meaningful opportunities to practice speaking, listening, and writing skills required by the standards.

Follow the sample clickpath below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.

Example:
Grade 7 > Grade 7 ELA Scope and Sequence

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AC Metric 1C: 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.

Each middle school grade level includes an Adjusting Fluency skill lesson which introduces students to an Oral Reading Fluency Self-Assessment Checklist and models how students can use the checklist while reading aloud. Throughout the rest of the units, select texts include a Practice Oral Reading Fluency activity. These activities provide the opportunity for students to read a portion of the text aloud with a partner and use the Self-Assessment Checklist to assess their oral reading before reading the passage a second time. Application of the Checklist occurs after students have completed Activate Prior Knowledge activities to engage appropriate schema and hook interest before reading. These activities accompany a dynamic range of texts in the Table of Contents to ensure students are practicing Oral Fluency across genres. For students in grades 6–8 who might need additional support with fluency and foundation skills, the Foundational Skills Handbook includes additional instruction and practice with phonics, word study, and fluency.

Follow the sample clickpath below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.

Example:

Grade 6 > Unit 4 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Celebrities as Heroes > First Read: Celebrities as Heroes > Read > Teacher Edition: Practice Oral Reading Fluency

AC 2: Questions, Tasks, and Assignments

AC Metric 2A: High-quality sequences of text-dependent questions are prevalent in the materials and build to a deep understanding of the knowledge and central ideas of the text.

Within the StudySync program, reading routines are designed to ensure that students answer text-dependent and text-specific questions in all First Read, Skill, Close Read, and Independent Read lessons. Questions are sequenced to support students in deepening their understanding and reaching more sophisticated levels of text-based analysis with each subsequent reading of the text.

Reading Skill lessons apply the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model. Every Skill lesson contains a skill definition and vocabulary activity followed by a student model. The model mirrors the student experience of using StudySync through the use of annotations, and includes metacognition of the purpose of the annotations. In this way, the model helps students understand how the featured skill can be identified and applied to a text using textual evidence to reinforce, explicate, and apply the skill. Finally, students are given the opportunity to apply the skill to another section of text from the selection in order to demonstrate lesson mastery. In addition to the Model section in every Skills lesson, at least two reading skills in each Core ELA Unit contain SkillsTV episodes. In these short videos, student actors model how to apply the skill through close reading while also providing an example of using academic language and reading strategies in a collaborative discussion.

The reading routine culminates in the Close Read, in which students independently apply their learning to Skills Focus and Writing prompts. Independent Reads throughout the program further allow students to demonstrate internalization of skill instruction and their ability to grapple with rigorous text.

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	<p>Follow the sample clickpath below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.</p> <p>Example: Grade 8 > Unit 1 > Integrated Reading and Writing > The Monkey's Paw > First Read (Quiz, Think) + Skill Lessons (Model, Your Turn) + Close Read (Read: Skills Focus, Write)</p>
<p>AC Metric 2B: Questions and tasks in the materials support students in understanding the academic language (vocabulary and syntax) prevalent in complex texts.</p>	<p>Within the StudySync curriculum, students have multiple and varied opportunities to engage with and analyze academic language as used in diverse texts. Academic Vocabulary and Content Vocabulary lessons are introduced at the beginning of each unit, and students have opportunities throughout the unit to encounter and practice these words in a variety of contexts before completing the Vocabulary Review lesson at the end of the unit.</p> <p>In addition to explicit vocabulary instruction in the form of Academic and Content Vocabulary Lessons, each text includes at least five bolded vocabulary words. The Analyze Vocabulary Using Context Clues activity that accompanies each text encourages students to make predictions about the meaning of these words using context clues and provides guidance for teachers to model a think-aloud process using these same strategies. Think questions for every First Read include two opportunities for students to determine the meaning of vocabulary in context. Before each First and Independent Read, Access Complex Text features identify areas of challenge for students, including vocabulary and rigorous syntax, and provide instructional recommendations for accessing these elements of a text. Additionally, Skill Lessons such as Word Patterns and Relationships; Technical Language; and Language, Style, and Audience, support students in developing skills to understand and analyze academic and domain-specific language as it is used in the context of complex texts.</p> <p>For all vocabulary words in the StudySync program, visual glossaries are available as scaffolds for EL and Approaching grade-level students.</p> <p>Follow the sample clickpath below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.</p> <p>Example: Grade 8 > Unit 4 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Cover Letter to LucasArts > Skill: Technical Language</p>
<p>AC Metric 2C: Materials focus on argument and informative writing in the specified proportions. Alternately, they may reflect blended forms in similar proportions (e.g., exposition and persuasion).</p>	<p>StudySync instructs students on a variety of writing forms that adhere to the Oregon English Language Arts standards. In grades 6–8, the majority of writing prompts that students will encounter are either informative or argumentative. These include literary analysis prompts that require students to analyze an author's decisions regarding text elements, structure, and craft and make a claim regarding the effectiveness or impact of these decisions.</p>

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	<p>In addition to the writing prompts that accompany individual texts, each unit of the program exposes students to a different writing form and its associated skills, which they practice through unit-specific Extended Writing Projects (EWP). In each middle school grade, one EWP covers each of the following writing forms: narrative, informative, argumentative, research, and literary analysis. Additionally, one unit contains an Extended Oral Project, where students write and design an oral presentation.</p> <p>Follow the sample clickpath below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.</p> <p>Example: Grade 6 > Unit 2 > Extended Writing Project and Grammar > Plan > Argumentative Writing Process: Plan > Intro</p>
<p>AC Metric 2D: Materials support students’ developing writing skills over the course of the school year. This includes writing opportunities that are prominent and varied.</p>	<p>Within the StudySync curriculum, every text that students read is accompanied by an academic writing or discussion prompt. Prompts require students to demonstrate a combination of analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and/or creation, and ask students to apply skills that they have previously learned and practiced. In their analyses, both during collaborative conversations and independent writing, students are required to present clear and logical claims with strong supporting evidence from the text. For texts that students read in a pair or group of three, students are often asked to complete a comparative prompt where they synthesize ideas across multiple texts.</p> <p>During each unit, students complete a culminating writing project that asks students to further synthesize textual knowledge and/or understanding of the writing form. Each Extended Writing Project (EWP), guides students through the writing process with steps divided into four areas: Plan, Draft, Revise, and Edit and Publish. Within each of these process steps, Skill Lessons such as Narrative Techniques, Reasons and Relevant Evidence, or Sources and Citations provide students with writing instruction on skills pertinent to the writing form.</p> <p>As students develop constructed responses and sustained writing projects, frequent opportunities for discussion and consistent peer review opportunities deepen students’ critical approach to their work and appeal to multiple learning modalities.</p> <p>Follow the sample clickpath below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.</p> <p>Example: Grade 6 > Grade 6 ELA Overview > Writing, pages 85–95</p>
<p>AC Metric 2E: Materials integrate speaking and listening into lessons, questions, and tasks and build in frequent opportunities for collaborative discussions.</p>	<p>The StudySync reading routine guides students through the process of building and applying knowledge and skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Activities such as Activate Prior Knowledge, Revisit Academic and Content Vocabulary, Text Talk, and Discuss the Skill Model all integrate regular opportunities for text-based, academic discussion into instructional materials.</p>

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	<p>Additionally, Beyond the Book activities at the end of every text incorporate opportunities to practice speaking and listening in other formats such as presentations, gallery walks, podcasts, debates, and performances.</p> <p>Each Close Read and Independent Read ends with a writing or discussion prompt. All writing prompts are preceded by a Collaborative Conversation activity. Prior to writing independently, students share and refine their ideas about the prompt through group discussion. At least once per unit, students engage in a more formal collaborative discussion in response to a discussion prompt and then write a reflection on their group’s conversation. In every unit, one or more StudySyncTV episodes includes a model of collaborative conversation and supports students as they learn academic conversation and argumentation, while also honing their active listening skills.</p> <p>Follow the sample clickpath below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.</p> <p>Example: Grade 7 > Unit 4 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Casey at the Bat: A Ballad of the Republic Sung in the Year 1888 > Close Read: Casey at the Bat: A Ballad of the Republic Sung in the Year 1888 > StudySyncTV > Teacher Edition: Watch and Discuss StudySyncTV, Collaborative Conversation</p>
<p>AC Metric 2F: 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.</p>	<p>Within the StudySync curriculum, Grammar Skills are taught explicitly in writing instruction. Each grammar lesson uses authentic, grade-appropriate texts to show the ways in which grammar and language rules function to improve writing. In these lessons, students learn about a particular skill or concept, and see how writers use those concepts to communicate effectively to their audience. Grammar Skill lessons finish with three Your Turn items, which allow students to practice the skill in different formats and with increasing levels of difficulty.</p> <p>Throughout the course of each unit, students will have multiple opportunities to apply the grammar skills they’ve learned while writing and reading. Students edit both a model of student writing and their own academic writing in each Extended Writing Project by applying the grammar skills from the unit, as well as previously learned skills. Additionally, every writing prompt includes a Language and Conventions rubric which students will use to guide their own writing and evaluate their peers’ use of grammar and conventions when completing Peer Reviews. Finally, Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics activities included with select texts asks students to analyze and evaluate how previously learned grammar concepts are used within the context of authentic texts for effective communication.</p> <p>Follow the sample clickpath below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.</p> <p>Example:</p>

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Grade 6 > Unit 1 > Extended Writing Project and Grammar > Edit and Publish > Grammar Skill: Pronouns and Antecedents

AC 3: Building Knowledge with Texts, Vocabulary, and Tasks

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

At the conclusion of each Close Read or Independent Read lesson, students respond to a writing prompt that challenges them to integrate their reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language skills. These short constructed responses are intended to deepen student understanding of the texts they have read, develop their academic writing and conversation skills, and demonstrate mastery of the analytic reading skills they have practiced with the text. In addition to the writing prompt, each text also culminates with a Beyond the Book activity in which students are asked to further explore and demonstrate understanding of some aspect of the text through a creative or research project.

At the end of each unit, students complete an Extended Writing Project in which they compose a longer piece of writing that is directly tied to the unit theme and essential question. EWP prompts ask students to draw on their reading over the course of the unit, and occasionally on outside research, to craft a composition that demonstrates mastery of both analytical reading and writing skills and demonstrates knowledge of the topic at hand.

Follow the sample clickpath below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.

Example:
Grade 8 > Unit 4 > Extended Writing Project and Grammar > Plan > Argumentative Writing Process: Plan > Intro

AC Metric 3B: 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.

Students have many opportunities throughout the curriculum to engage in shorter, focused research projects. Beyond and Beyond the Book activities will often ask students to engage in additional research related to a text or texts they've read in order to develop their knowledge and delve deeper into aspects of texts and topics that most interest them. Conducted both individually and collaboratively, these projects help students develop research skills, while also providing opportunities for self-directed exploration of a topic.

Additionally, every unit includes four StudySync Blasts, that provide students and their peers with a chance to weigh in on a variety of topical issues, from breaking news to complex historical and global events to compelling research in the scientific community. In addition to engaging with a driving question and Background section, students research the topic at hand through a series of informational links. These links give students the opportunity for further exploration and permit them to interact with the topic on a multimodal level while also developing important research skills.

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In addition to shorter research tasks, within the Research Extended Writing Project, students engage in a recursive inquiry process in response to a prompt. This sustained research project includes instruction on various skills that are essential for conducting independent research including Research and Notetaking, Evaluating Sources, and Paraphrasing and allows students to take a deeper dive into a topic, event, or individual that most interests them.

Follow the sample clickpath below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.

Example:
 Grade 7 > Unit 5 > Integrated Reading and Writing> The Classical Roots of The Hunger Games > Independent Read: The Classical Roots of The Hunger Games > Teacher Edition: Beyond the Book

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

Each Core ELA Unit begins with The Big Idea, a section that includes an Academic Vocabulary lesson. Academic Vocabulary lessons contain ten words that are connected by a common theme or topic, and are either suggested by the Coxhead High-Incidence Academic Word List (AWL), drawn from SAT or ACT vocabulary lists, or related to common Greek and Latin roots.

After initial exposure to and practice with these words within the Academic Vocabulary lesson, students will have additional opportunities to encounter and use these words throughout the unit. The Revisit Academic and Content Vocabulary activity in First Read and Independent Read lessons challenges students to use these words in a group discussion about a cultural awareness topic related to the text. Students will also see these words and practice using them in Close Read and/or Independent Read writing prompts at least three times during the unit. Finally, a Vocabulary Review lesson at the end of the unit asks students to refine and demonstrate their understanding of these words through reading, writing, and speaking and listening.

Extended Writing and Oral Projects similarly provide embedded opportunities for syntax development through skills lessons and authentic application in student writing. Lessons are designed to ensure increasing rigor over the course of the year, and include such skills as Transitions, Style, and Sentence Variety.

Follow the sample clickpath below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.

Example:
 Grade 6 > Unit 2 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Skill: Vocabulary Review

AC 4: Access to Standards for All Students

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

StudySync includes full pacing guides for each unit in the Core ELA curriculum. Pacing guides provide a suggested schedule for completing a unit in 30 instructional days. StudySync

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	<p>understands that teachers know their students best and one of the key benefits of StudySync is the ease with which teachers can adapt, alter, eliminate, scaffold, or re-organize lessons to best meet the needs of their students. Within every Unit Overview, there are recommendations for shortcuts as well as additional activities to help teachers adapt each unit for their specific students and class schedule.</p> <p>In addition to the full pacing guides, Priority Content Pacing Guides are included for every unit. The Priority Content Pacing Guide ensures standards coverage by highlighting key texts and activities within a unit while providing an alternative option for shorter class periods or for students who may need to spend more time with each text and its accompanying lessons. Using either pacing guide provided, the StudySync curriculum ensures instruction of all standards within a school year.</p> <p>Follow the sample clickpath below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.</p> <p>Example: Grade 7 > Unit 4 > Unit Overview > Unit Pacing Guide > Unit 4, pages 17–20 Priority Content Pacing Guide</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>At every grade level, each reading and writing lesson in StudySync’s Core ELA units includes scaffolded support for four levels of English Language Learners and students who are approaching grade level. These targeted scaffolds automatically appear with every digital assignment and feature supports that are specifically tailored to each activity or desired outcome in the lesson. For example, texts are accompanied by visual glossaries and synopses so that English Language Learners are able to access the same diverse and authentic texts as their English language proficient peers. Native language summaries with accompanying audio are also available for every text in a number of languages, including Spanish, Vietnamese, and Cantonese. All selections are enhanced by audio and an Audio Text Highlight feature so that students can listen to a professional recording of a text while they follow along at the discretion of the teacher.</p> <p>Beyond supports for accessing complex texts, targeted scaffolds also ensure that students have access to all parts of the core instructional routine. Activities like class and group discussions include speaking frames or sentence starters, and writing prompts are accompanied by word banks, paragraph frames, or sentence starters, depending on students’ levels of proficiency. Students who are English Language Learners can seamlessly receive scaffolds for every lesson, whether in the Integrated Reading and Writing, Extended Writing Project and Grammar, or ELL Resources section of the unit. Teacher lesson plans clearly identify suggested scaffolds for each component of a given lesson in the Differentiation tab.</p>

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	<p>Follow the sample clickpath below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.</p> <p>Example: Grade 8 > Unit 4 > Integrated Reading and Writing> To America > Independent Read: To America > Proficiency: Beginning > Scaffolds > Intro, Read, Write</p>
<p>AC Metric 4C: Materials regularly include extensions and/or more advanced opportunities for students who read, write, speak, or listen above grade level.</p>	<p>Beyond activities are included in the Differentiation section of teacher edition lesson plans and provide chances for students to stretch their thinking and add more opportunities for collaborative, creative engagement. Just as StudySync's Core ELA lesson plans break Core instruction down into discrete tasks for English Language Learners and/or approaching grade-level learners, extension activities follow the same "different, not more" approach to push advanced students to greater levels of rigor without simply assigning a heavier workload to them. Some of the Beyond activities include structured debate, creating short digital presentations, researching a topic, and responding to unique prompts that push advanced students to higher levels of thinking. Additionally, while Beyond the Book activities are not specifically designed for beyond grade-level learners and can certainly be completed by all students, they can be used for enrichment and extension for Beyond grade-level students providing opportunities to further explore texts and topics through outside research and creative assignments.</p> <p>Follow the sample clickpath below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.</p> <p>Example: Grade 8 > Unit 6 > Integrated Reading and Writing> There Will Come Soft Rains (short story) > Close Read: There Will Come Soft Rains (short story) > Teacher Edition > Instruction: Beyond the Book, Differentiation: Beyond Activities</p>
<p>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).</p>	<p>Every lesson in the StudySync curriculum includes a teacher lesson plan to help teachers structure and adapt instruction to meet the needs of their students. Lesson plans include suggested groupings for each portion of the lesson, systematically making use of whole group, small group, and independent instruction and activities to maximize student learning and engagement, as well as recommended lesson duration to aid in teacher planning. Teacher lesson plans also include a Differentiation column with explicit information about the scaffolds available for English Language Learners, approaching grade-level, and beyond grade-level students for each portion of the lesson. The variety of optional and extension activities included within each teacher lesson plan, allows educators to select or omit lesson components based on the needs of students in their classrooms.</p> <p>Standards-aligned writing rubrics accompany every writing and discussion prompt in each unit. These rubrics guide student writing and peer reviews, while helping teachers provide clear feedback and identify skills in which students need additional support. For students who require further instruction on a given skill, each Core ELA Skill lesson has a corresponding, standards-aligned, Spotlight Skill</p>

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	<p>lesson that teachers can assign for reteaching at any point in the year. Finally, additional resources such as the Strategies Glossary, the Difficult Concepts overview, and Priority Content Pacing Guides provide teachers with further tools for support with planning instruction and adapting the StudySync curriculum to meet the needs of their students. Resources in the Help Center, including Parent and Caregiver Communication supports and unit vocabulary and spelling lists, provide customizable letters and handouts in multiple languages so that teachers may actively engage parents in classroom structures.</p> <p>Follow the sample clickpath below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.</p> <p>Example: Grade 6 > Unit 6 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Brave > Close Read: Brave > Teacher Resources: Lesson Plan</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>Assessment guides instruction in StudySync. Ongoing benchmark, formative, and summative assessments provide teachers with the information they need to help every student progress toward standards mastery. StudySync Assess includes Placement and Diagnostic tests, Readiness Screeners, Benchmark Assessments, End-of-Unit Assessments, as well as State and ACT/SAT Test Preparation for consistent, accurate, and varied measurements of student progress.</p> <p>In addition, text-based questions, quick checks for success, turn-and-talk activities, reading comprehension quizzes, and many other short cycle Formative Assessments can be found in every StudySync lesson plan to provide teachers low-stakes opportunities to monitor student performance. Throughout the reading and writing routines, these formative assessments increase in complexity and level of student independence, as students shift from working in collaborative or group settings, to practicing and demonstrating mastery of skills on their own. Embedded rubrics and opportunities for peer review and reflection empower students to guide their learning and growth. Finally, Extended Writing Projects and End-of-Unit Assessments at the conclusion of each unit provide systematic and standards-aligned summative assessments at regular intervals throughout the academic year.</p> <p>Data tracking and presentation tools help teachers use the results of assessments to identify which standards and skills present particular challenges for students, as well as where students are excelling and are ready for enrichment. StudySync's Gradebook captures high-impact data to help teachers make informed decisions around instructions and student learning. Using the StudySync Gradebook, teachers can effectively decide how to scaffold instruction and provide remediation support for individual students. Tracking tools for these assessments provide teachers with raw scores as well as a breakdown of student performance against standards and a breakdown of student performance against skills. In addition, color-coded reporting allows teachers to quickly and easily monitor student performance and needs.</p>

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Follow the sample clickpath below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.

Example:

Grade 7 > Unit 1 > End-of-Unit Assessment > End-of-Unit - Grade 7 - Unit 1 > Start Test

AC5: Cultural Representation

StudySync's ELA table of contents (TOC) sets a new standard for diversity in English Language Arts Programs. The purpose of our diverse TOC is to make sure students can see themselves in the literature they are reading as well as learn about others. With this objective in mind, every grade level's Table of Contents is composed of at least 50% authors of color, and 50% texts with female authorship. Through these texts and their accompanying instructional materials, StudySync strives to include all groups of people equitably, positively, and in non-stereotypical ways. Following Rudine Sims Bishop's teachings on multicultural literature, an approach most widely known as mirrors, windows, and doors, StudySync is committed to ensuring that our selection of texts:

- Reflects the diversity of our readers' cultures, identities, and experiences
- Shows our readers cultures, identities, and experiences that are different from their own
- Offers access both into and out of our readers' everyday condition and invites interaction

Beyond the titles included in the ELA units of study, StudySync's robust, digital library includes an increasingly diverse selection of over 1,800 texts. High quality, diverse texts have been culled from a variety of respected sources with guidance from our author, Dr. Michelle H. Martin, the Beverly Cleary Endowed Professor in Children and Youth Services at the University of Washington. The rich variety of texts representative of culturally and linguistically diverse populations, celebrate the achievements and identities of individuals and groups both in the U.S. and in their native countries.

Follow the sample clickpath below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.

Example:

Grade 7 > Unit 2 > Integrated Reading and Writing > See diversity of texts and authorship in unit

StudySync is committed to promoting culturally responsive and relevant instruction that honors the unique cultures and life experiences of every student. The Teacher Edition for every First Read and Independent Read lesson includes either Cultural Awareness or Social-Emotional Learning discussion questions related to the text to help teachers guide students through meaningful discussions related to cultural and linguistic diversity and identity, and social-emotional learning. Beyond the Book activities included with every text as well as personal response writing prompts throughout the curriculum provide students with opportunities to draw meaningful connections between the texts they read and their own experiences, backgrounds, and communities.

AC Metric 5A: Texts included in the instructional materials are place-based, culturally and linguistically responsive and relevant.

AC Metric 5B: Materials promote equitable instruction by providing guidance for teachers to support learning activities that are place-based, culturally and linguistically responsive and relevant.

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Because of StudySync’s unique digital platform, our ability to grow our library is endless. Each month StudySync adds ten new texts based on feedback from teachers, administrators, and school librarians who use our program. Additionally, a contemporary issue Blast lesson is added daily, encouraging students to learn about the events and ideas shaping their communities, their country, and their world. Each StudySync Blast provides students critical background information and research opportunities to engage with the issues of their time. Blasts leverage social learning tools to offer students a platform for their ideas, a place where they can develop their voices alongside their peers. StudySync students leave their classrooms with the knowledge and skills to confidently join and lead conversations in their homes and in their communities.

StudySync’s award-winning multimedia, including StudySyncTV, SkillsTV, Concept Definition Videos, and authentic audio recordings are created with an eye towards inclusiveness. Our original multimedia features a diverse cast of actors and voice-over actors so that students will see and hear themselves represented in engaging, academic conversations and peer-to-peer teaching moments just as they do when they’re reading. Additionally, images embedded in instructional materials, such as the visual glossary, reflect a continued commitment to depictions that are appropriate and devoid of stereotypes.

Follow the sample clickpath below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.

Example:

Grade 6 > Unit 3 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Elena > First Read: Elena > Teacher Edition: Activate Prior Knowledge and Develop Cultural Awareness

AC 6: Accessibility/Usability

AC Metric 6A: Materials provide technological supports.

The StudySync program was built to meet the needs of twenty-first century teachers and learners. The program’s instruction in reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language is delivered digitally and includes opportunities for collaboration, writing, research, and assessment using technology, all supplemented with print options. All text selections in the program include accompanying digital tools that students can use to support their reading, including the ability to make annotations, highlight sections of text, and view numbered paragraphs and bolded vocabulary terms. All selections are also enhanced by audio and Audio Text Highlight so that students can listen to a professional recording of a text while they follow along with the Audio Text Highlight feature at the discretion of the teacher. Additional tech-enhanced features such as closed captioning, audio speed, and easy-to-access transcripts of media ensure that materials are accessible for diverse learners.

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	<p>To enhance student engagement, several features of the program were designed to reflect the style of communication on social media. Teachers can assign students to submit anonymous peer reviews of one another’s writing through the digital platform, and Blast lessons leverage social learning tools to offer students a digital platform where they can develop their voices alongside their peers.</p> <p>Follow the sample clickpath below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.</p> <p>Example: Grade 8 > Unit 2 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Theories of Time and Space > Independent Read: Theories of Time and Space > Read > Audio > Highlight</p>
<p>AC Metric 6B: Materials maximize teacher usability.</p>	<p>StudySync’s easy-to-use and navigable core program is structured with clear, purposeful, and consistent design. Through the use of numbered tabs within each lesson, students and teachers are always aware of exactly what is required to complete an assignment. Teachers can access lesson plans through a convenient slide-in bar. This allows teachers to see additional activities, checks for understanding, guiding questions, sample answers, and suggested scaffolds alongside the student-facing materials. Teacher lesson plans are organized to correspond with the numbered tabs in the student materials, making it easy to quickly navigate to different portions of the lesson. Alternatively, teachers can choose to print a PDF version of the teacher edition lesson plan that shows the Instruction and Differentiation columns side by side, along with sample answers for Think Questions, Reading Quizzes, Skills Focus Questions, and writing prompt responses.</p> <p>In classrooms using StudySync print materials, teachers can use the print Teacher’s Edition featuring a traditional structure that wraps teacher materials around the student text. The print Teacher’s Edition organizes the content around what students see in their print materials and provides pertinent point-of-use information for instruction.</p> <p>In addition to in-person training, the StudySync website allows for embedded professional development for educators in the Help Center through the use of videos, relevant articles, and other aids to meet the unique and changing needs of every classroom.</p> <p>Follow the sample clickpath below to view examples that illustrate StudySync's alignment to the criteria across all grades 6-8.</p> <p>Example: Grade 7 > Unit 2 > Integrated Reading and Writing > Museum Indians > First Read: Museum Indians > Teacher Edition</p>