

**2021 Instructional Material Summer Review Institute**

**Review Team Appraisal of Title  
6-8 English Language Arts**

This appraisal form is provided for use by educators responsible for the selection of instructional materials for implementation with districts and charter schools across New Mexico to meet the need of their student populations.

This appraisal form should be used in conjunction with the publisher provided Form D: Research Based Effectiveness Determination that supports this reviewed material which can be found on the Instructional Material Bureau website.

<https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/instructional-materials/the-adoption-cycle/>

Text Title	LearnZillion EL Education Student Digital License Grade 6 (cost per student)- 1 year	Publisher	LearnZillion Inc.
SE ISBN	9781648857522	TE ISBN	9781648857553
SW ISBN	9781648857546	Grade Level/Content	Grade 6 ELA

**Core Instructional Material Designation** *(Core Instructional Material is the comprehensive print or digital educational material, including basal material, which constitutes the necessary instructional components of a full academic course of study in those subjects for which the department has adopted content standards and benchmarks.)*

**Recommended**  
(90% and above)

**Recommended with  
Reservations** (80-89%)

**Not Recommended and  
Not Adopted**  
(below 80%)

**Total Score** - The final score for the materials is averaged between the team of reviewers.

**Average Score**

88%

**Cultural and Linguistic Relevance Recognition** - Materials are reviewed for relevant criteria pertaining to the support for teachers and students in the material regarding cultural relevance and the inclusion of a culturally responsive lens. Those materials receiving a score of 90% or above on the CLR portion of the review are recognized as culturally and linguistically relevant.

**CLR Recognized**

**Average Score**

79%

Materials take into account cultural perspectives.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence (autofilled from All Content Appraisal tab):*

Materials take into account cultural perspectives and the positive effect various cultures have had on society. The lessons give students an awareness towards cultural perspectives as well. Students are encouraged to make connections to the various cultures and societies. Cultures were depicted in a realistic, non stereotypical way.

Materials include a culturally responsive lens.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence (autofilled from All Content Appraisal tab):*

Students are asked to consider the perspectives of multiple parties engaged in cultural conflict. Each module focuses on a different culture and time period. The texts and activities give students a chance to identify and relate with people from many different cultures and perspectives; however, opportunities for students to reflect on their own lives within a cultural lens are limited.

**Standards Review** - Materials are reviewed for alignment with the state adopted content standards, benchmarks and performance standards.

Average Score

86%

Materials align with grade level ELA standards overall.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

Materials provide several opportunities for students to engage with the core standards and show mastery. Each module in the grade level focuses on a specific set of standards which are scaffolded for difficulty as the student progresses. Modules allow multiple opportunities for students to interact with the content through speaking, reading, writing, and listening. Module one lays out the pattern which the other modules follow, giving predictability for students and teachers as they work through the modules.

Materials align to reading standards.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

Modules lay expectations for reading while also providing scaffolds to work towards independence. Units begin with students reading texts with the teacher, then as the unit progresses, students read more and more independently. Reading lessons often include activities to help students cite evidence, learn vocabulary, focus on structure, and other elements of literature.

Materials align to writing standards.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

Students are given multiple opportunities to engage in writing, both collaboratively and independently, as well as both formatively and summatively. Students are taught to cite evidence from a main text, as well as from supporting texts. Students are given opportunities to critique, revise, and edit their own and other student's writing. Students are given plenty of model essays and texts to review before completing their own writing assignments. Rubrics and checklists are supplied, helping students to determine necessary criteria for each assignment.

Materials align to speaking and listening standards.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

Students are asked to engage in at least one or more formal speaking activities, such as a Socratic Seminar, per module where they must support their opinions with evidence from the text. The modules also have many informal opportunities to speak and listen, such as think, pair, share or shoulder to shoulder to practice speaking in low stakes activities. Students are encouraged to engage in multimedia speaking activities, such as the Audio Museum, where students are asked to practice and record an audio recording for their presentation.

Materials align to language standards.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

Each module has different a language focus. The lessons include many opportunities for students to practice pronouns, as that is a main language standard for 6th grade. However, other language conventions and practices seem to not get as much focus, with the expectation being on the instructor and the student's peers to identify and correct errors in concepts such as punctuation, sentence structure, and spelling rules.

**ELA Content Review** - Materials are reviewed for relevant criteria pertaining to the support for teachers and students in the specific content area reviewed.

Average Score

97%

Materials provide a selection and range of high-quality texts worthy of students' time and attention, exhibiting exceptional craft and thought and/or providing useful information.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

A large range of anchor and supplemental texts were provided to students that were worthy of their time and attention. The range included high interest fiction and nonfiction texts from a variety of cultures and time periods.

Questions in the materials are high-quality text-dependent and text-specific questions. The overwhelming majority of these questions are text-specific and draw student attention to the particulars in the text.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

Modules had a variety of text dependent activities, ranging from written response, to oral discussion, to artistic interpretations. Students were asked to engage in text dependent discussions, such as round robin, where they had to defend a position using textual evidence. Students needed to be able to not only understand the surface level reading of the text, but also be able to engage with inferencing the text to show deeper understanding of the text and content.

Materials provide scaffolding and supports to enable students' learning of English language arts.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

Modules provide scaffolding and support for students, where lessons begin with easier activities and standards, moving to more complex activities and expectations. However, most of the scaffolding support provided for teachers were located in the "Teacher's Guide for ELLs" in each lesson. The scaffolding that exists there is labeled "ELL", but provides supports for all struggling students. Where the material is lacking is in the scaffolds for advanced students and students ready to take their learning to the next level.

**All Content Review** - Materials are reviewed for relevant criteria pertaining to the support for teachers and students in the material regarding the progression of the standards, lesson structure, pacing, assessment, individual learners and cultural relevance.

Average Score

90%

Materials are coherent and consistent with the standards that all students should study in order to be college and career ready.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

Materials and activities are consistent with standards students need to be prepared for college and careers. Lessons provide students opportunities to express themselves in written and oral forms. Activities are geared towards college bound students, even at this early level.

Materials are well designed and take into account effective lesson structure and pacing.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

Modules are structured well with plenty of opportunities for practice before students are expected to show mastery. Pacing is effective; each unit and module has its own pacing guide.

Materials support teacher planning, learning, and understanding of the standards.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

While the materials do support teacher planning, there are several instances where necessary material is not provided with the main lesson, but provided with the supplemental materials. Searching through the supplementary lesson documentation to find necessary supports or documents is often the best way for teachers to find what they need.

Materials offer teachers resources and tools to collect ongoing data about student progress on the standards.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

Resources and tools are provided for teachers to monitor student progress and provide feedback; however, there is no tool to track data as it relates to the standards. The bulk of assessment is through writing and collaborative projects.

Materials support effective use of technology to enhance student learning.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

The modules assume a level of technology competency in students and teachers that may not be present. There is a strong unit on internet research and source credibility. Under the lesson narratives, there is a section called "Technology and Multimedia" that doesn't provide teacher support for using technology, just suggested tools.

Materials can be easily customized for individual learners.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

Materials can be supported and students can be accommodated throughout the lesson; however, the materials cannot be changed or customized. The materials were not customizable for individual learners. Accommodations are listed in the "Teacher Guide for ELLs".

Materials give all students extensive opportunities and support to explore key concepts.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

Materials do give students extensive opportunities and support to explore and understand the standards, content, and text. There are many opportunities for peer engagement and feedback. Key concepts and skills are scaffolded throughout the lesson, with lessons on how the concepts or skills function.

Materials take into account cultural perspectives.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

Materials take into account cultural perspectives and the positive effect various cultures have had on society. The lessons give students an awareness towards cultural perspectives as well. Students are encouraged to make connections to the various cultures and societies. Cultures were depicted in a realistic, non stereotypical way.

Materials include a culturally responsive lens.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

Students are asked to consider the perspectives of multiple parties engaged in cultural conflict. Each module focuses on a different culture and time period. The texts and activities give students a chance to identify and relate with people from many different cultures and perspectives; however, opportunities for students to reflect on their own lives within a cultural lens are limited.

**Reviewers' Professional Summation** - These materials are reviewed by Level II and Level III educators from across New Mexico. The reviewers have brought their knowledge, experience and expertise into the review of these materials. They offer here their individual summary of the material as a whole.

Reviewer #: 25

*Background and experience:*

Reviewer 25 is a high school ELA teacher with 19 years of experience in education on both the K-12 and collegiate levels. Reviewer 25 serves as the department chair in their district as well as the AP coordinator. Reviewer 25 holds Bachelor's degrees in History/Political Science and Journalism, and a Master's degree in English literature.

*Professional summary of material:*

Overall, I found the materials engaging and of high interest to young readers. The activities were well-planned and appeal to higher order thinking skills. Lessons are scaffolded for progressive difficulty and provide supports for ELL students. However, the materials may be difficult for a first-year or novice teacher to navigate, as many of the resources are found in various hyperlinks or have activities which require a certain level of teacher expertise. That being said, the material does ask students to engage in real-world scenarios and apply learning to day-to-day living.

Reviewer #: 26

*Background and experience:*

Reviewer 26 is a teacher with 15 years of educational experience. She has been an elementary librarian, a middle school teacher, and a secondary English and Language Arts teacher and ELD program coordinator. She has taught in both large and small schools in Arizona and New Mexico from grades PreK-12th. She currently is a Professional Learning support specialist. Reviewer 26 has a bachelor's degree in English Education and a Level 3 New Mexico teaching license in English Language Arts, with endorsements in Reading, Tesol, and Library Media. She is also Nationally Board Certified in English Language Arts.

*Professional summary of material:*

I found the texts to be very engaging and grade appropriate for students and the activities were interesting. Many of the activities, such as the Audio Museum, were unique and a really interesting way to have students showcase their learning. Overall, I found the variety of texts and activities sufficient. I could see teaching this textbook if I were in the 6th grade classroom and I would be satisfied. However, as a veteran teacher, I found certain areas of the textbook lacking, areas that new teachers would not think about. There were plenty of lessons on vocabulary and pronouns, but almost no lessons on punctuation, grammar, or conventions. There was no instruction on how to write dialog, even though students were expected to write several narratives. I would hope for more mini lessons on conventions and grammar, to help students improve their writing, as peer review is not as useful if students don't know the rules. Also, the supplementary materials were excellent, but they were not the easiest to navigate. New teachers would end up missing a lot of the accommodations and support for students, as it would be too much for them to navigate. I would like a streamlined outline with easier to access links that were easier to search and better labeled.

Reviewer #: 27

*Background and experience:*

Reviewer 27: 11 year teacher with a Master's degree in TESOL and National Boards for Certified Teachers.

*Professional summary of material:*

Having a Master's degree in TESOL lends me to appreciate materials that fully consider ELLs. The materials are high quality, engaging, and aligned to language and cultural standards. While students have been granted many opportunities to learn with their peers and practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking, it is lacking in the sense that SPED students were not afforded as many opportunities to have their lessons customized for their learning needs. Each module with supplemental texts are well thought out and purposefully selected to take the students to the content they need in order to learn and master their standards for 6th grade.