

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	OUR EL G8 LANG ART SDNT COURSE	Publisher	Open Up Resources
SE ISBN	9781643119434	TE ISBN	9781643119403
SW ISBN		Grade Level/Content	Grade 8 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

91%

**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

95%

Materials take into account cultural perspectives.

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

Materials convey multiple cultural perspectives from the literary and informational text selection showcasing ethnicity. The content in the reading selections expose students to real-world, authentic issues and events to reveal patterns of society (i.e. the Holocaust, social injustices and prejudices, importance of agriculture industry/GMOs, etc.). However, it is limited to Latin American folklore, Japanese-American texts, the Holocaust, and Spanish-American texts. There is no evidence of African-American and Native American anchor and supporting texts. Each anchor text has multiple paired-texts in different modalities (i.e. obituaries, infographics, short and full-length films, video clips, photographs etc.) that are related to cultural perspectives of the anchor texts.

Materials include a culturally responsive lens.

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

Materials often encourage students to make connections to the text and discuss how they can relate to the text. Students also connect content to their personal lives, and they are able to make connections between past and current events while being called to advocate for the social and environmental injustices. Materials encourage students to be intentional about the language they use to prevent these injustices. Each unit focuses on specific "habits of character" (i.e. empathy) and "social-emotional learning" traits. Through these focuses, students are encouraged to reflect on how the targeted habits and traits are reflected in their own lives and societies.

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

Average Score

89%

Materials align with grade level ELA standards overall.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

The materials reflect the strands of the ELA grade-level standards. The standards are stated in each lesson of the unit and the alignment between the standards and the lessons is evident. The materials outline which standards will be addressed in which module, and there is representation of the CCSS strands throughout each module. Additionally, the learning targets (which align to the standards) are written in a student-friendly manner. The teacher is provided with guiding questions to support instruction of the standards and is also provided with multiple materials to grasp the holistic flow of the lesson. Materials allow students to read, think, discuss, and write about topics in an integrated manner that shows the interconnectivity of the standards. In general, the materials show an attempt to cover the full scope of both Common Core and NM standards (as evidenced by the authentic Latin American folklore and Spanish-based texts). However, there is not any explicit analysis of Native American texts.

Materials align to reading standards.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

The reading standards are reflected in the materials and focus on the prevalent plot elements such as theme, POV, character and setting and how the author conveys these elements through particular details in the text (tone, dramatic irony, verbal irony, pun, word choice, dialogue, sensory details, and pacing). Throughout the school year, students are exposed to a variety of text structures and genres that are specifically addressed in the grade-level standards. Through the use of formative and summative assessments (i.e. entrance tickets, exit tickets, quickwrites, note-catchers, and performance tasks), students attain reading comprehension through higher-level, analytical thinking. Though the materials cover most of the reading standards, they do not provide opportunities for students to interact with and comprehend dramas and plays, which are essential text structures and genres. Additionally, the materials also lack Native American texts, which highly reflect New Mexico state standards.

Materials align to writing standards.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

The materials provide opportunities for students to write in a variety of text structures. This is evident in their Entrance Tickets, QuickWrites, Constructed Responses, Exit Tickets and Culminating Writing Tasks. Extended writing tasks focus on narrative writing, compare and contrast writing, problem-solution writing, argumentative writing and informative writing. Students are able to go through the writing process by participating in planning, drafting, revising, publishing, and reflection exercises. Each writing task integrates other subject areas such as agriculture, health, and history. Students conduct short research projects with instruction on finding and using credible sources, academic honesty, plagiarism, and in-text citations. Though the materials align to most of the writing standards, they do not provide opportunities for students to define, identify, and distinguish between primary and secondary sources. Additionally, the materials have multiple recommendations on how to use technology to publish and assess writing, but they only have one built-in lesson that utilizes technology in the publication of students' writing for assessment and collaboration.

Materials align to speaking and listening standards.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

The materials elicit multiple opportunities to participate in pair, small group and whole group text-based discussions to help students further acquire new knowledge regarding each module's targeted topic. Students are given various opportunities to delineate a speaker's argument and analyze a speaker's claim, counterclaim and soundness of evidence and reasoning. The materials allow students to critique their peers within a discussion while also being able to reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses as they progress toward a specific goal. Though the instructional materials adequately cover most of the speaking and listening standards, they do not provide detailed scaffolding (i.e., graphic organizers to prepare for a discussion, student-handouts outlining norms of collegial discussions). Additionally, the materials do not connect heritage language to English speech patterns and do not facilitate students in orally comparing and contrasting accounts of the same events, which are essential to NM State Standards.

Materials align to language standards.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

Students learn the language standards through consistent use of Language Dives in every unit in every module. Students are supported in acquiring language skills through sentence frames and sentence strips, which provide the structure necessary for students in writing and speaking tasks. Students acquire academic and domain-specific vocabulary words through the use of context clues, unlocking connotative meaning, use of grade level affixes and roots and predetermination of words using the dictionary. Although the materials do promote student revision for spelling, there are few practice activities and direct instruction opportunities to help students understand appropriate spelling patterns for their grade-level. Additionally, there are few practice activities to help students use an ellipsis to indicate a pause or omit part of a direct quote, and limited activities that focus on allusion.

**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

95%

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:*

The reading materials are presented to students in a logical progression that supports them in independently and collaboratively building knowledge. Materials provide a range of unique genres, like graphic novels and real-life obituaries, to reach a wide-range of students. The content in the reading selections expose students to real-world, authentic issues and events to reveal patterns of society. Critical reflection transpires through rigorous discussion and writing tasks that build knowledge surrounding a certain topic. The selections are free from stereotypes and bias, using positive language to describe differing cultures and perspectives. The diversity of topics reaches a wide-range of students' interests, enhancing engagement in the classroom. The materials do not provide drama reading selections.

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:*

Questions in the materials are high-quality text-dependent and text-specific questions, reflecting both explicit and inferential responses, and utilizing both multiple-choice and constructed-response formats. The overwhelming majority of these questions are text-specific, requiring textual evidence, and they draw the student's attention to the particulars in the text that are necessary for analysis. Materials effectively sequence text-based questions to allow for a natural progression of rigor rooted in Bloom's Taxonomy and Costa's Level of Questioning. The questions within an activity are connected to one another, build upon one another, and increase in depth.

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

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

Scaffolding activities occur in an effective pattern throughout the modules in the progression of formative to summative tasks. Repeated scaffolds reinforce student expectations across units, promoting students' academic progress. There are alternative lessons and modified lessons that support English Language Learners. Teachers are provided with suggestions for accommodating the needs of all students through differentiated instruction. Teachers are encouraged to follow IEPs and collaborate with special education staff members to ensure student success on performance tasks for special needs students. To conceptualize student learning, students are presented with an exemplar model of the expected writing task and an outline that guides them to achieve the same outcome. However, materials do not provide as many models and guides for speaking and listening tasks as they do for the writing tasks.

**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

98%

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 cover the full intent of common core grade-specific standards for all students, including ELLs and advanced learners. Materials provide a collective list of the reading, writing, listening and speaking, and language standards that will be covered in each module. Alongside the list of standards, materials provide a collective list of lessons for every unit in each module. Each lesson has an organized flow of the unit that lists the focus standards, supporting standards, ongoing assessments, opportunities to extend learning, collaborative activities, technology and multimedia integration, vocabulary, work time, and homework. Finally, the curriculum map includes lists of lessons and activities across modules and units in various texts.

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

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

The materials provide a detailed overview for each unit of study that helps the teacher pace instruction appropriately. In this overview, teachers can see the progression of skills as expressed in the daily learning targets and ongoing assessments. The outline provides a well-crafted sequence of instruction in the daily lessons (opening, work time, closing and assessment, and homework) and in the unit as a whole. Each lesson starts with a collective list of the standards, supporting standards, daily objectives, and assessments. Then, each lesson outlines a flow of instruction, opportunities to extend learning for higher-achieving students, and suggestions for how the teacher can support all students including ELLs and struggling readers. Most lessons contain daily language objectives for students with differentiated instruction opportunities within the "Opportunities to Extend Learning" section or "Support All Students" section of the lesson plan. The structure of the lessons, language dives, quickwrites, and checklists, maintain the same visual layout throughout each unit and lesson, creating consistent routine in instruction.

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

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

At the end of each lesson, materials give educators guidance on how to adequately prepare for the following day's lesson. Within each lesson, educators are guided on how to implement appropriate strategies to help students' academic development through guided questions, strategic grouping, and collaborative work. For every lesson, there are explicitly stated standards that communicate the learning targets. The materials show examples of how the standards unfold in the lesson.

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

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

At the end of every unit, there is a standard-based reflection that provides an opportunity for teachers to give intentional feedback to students. Students explain the progress they have made toward particular learning goals. Throughout the modules, consistent formative and summative assessments allow teachers to keep track of the progress of the students. Although the materials do provide scoring guides, they do not inform teachers on how to interpret students' scores, nor reteach skills based on those scores.

Materials support effective use of technology to enhance student learning.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

At the beginning of each module, there is a section that outlines opportunities for digital learning. It clearly states the digital tool, the purpose of the tool, the suggested use of the tool, and the website where the teacher can locate the digital resource.

Materials can be easily customized for individual learners.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

Each module contains a performance task. For each performance task, there are two sections titled "Options for Students" and "Options for Teachers". This section outlines various options students and teachers can choose from to customize the materials to meet the diverse needs in the classroom. For all modules, materials present an overview of the unit as well as the expected performance as a culmination of each unit. It presents the summary of task, the format, the CCS standards addressed through the task, student-friendly writing invitation/task description, key criteria for success, options for students, and options for teachers. All of these are rooted in the collection of the texts incorporated in the unit.

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

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

The materials come with booklets that give alternative lessons and activities for ELLs. Additionally, each lesson consists of a section titled "Support All Students", which includes all learners. Within this section, there are differentiated versions of questions that teachers can ask based on the students' progress or learning needs.

Materials take into account cultural perspectives.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

Materials convey multiple cultural perspectives from the literary and informational text selection showcasing ethnicity. The content in the reading selections expose students to real-world, authentic issues and events to reveal patterns of society (i.e. the Holocaust, social injustices and prejudices, importance of agriculture industry/GMOs, etc.). However, it is limited to Latin American folklore, Japanese-American texts, the Holocaust, and Spanish-American texts. There is no evidence of African-American and Native American anchor and supporting texts. Each anchor text has multiple paired-texts in different modalities (i.e. obituaries, infographics, short and full-length films, video clips, photographs etc.) that are related to cultural perspectives of the anchor texts.

Materials include a culturally responsive lens.

*Statements of appraisal and supporting evidence:*

Materials often encourage students to make connections to the text and discuss how they can relate to the text. Students also connect content to their personal lives, and they are able to make connections between past and current events while being called to advocate for the social and environmental injustices. Materials encourage students to be intentional about the language they use to prevent these injustices. Each unit focuses on specific "habits of character" (i.e. empathy) and "social-emotional learning" traits. Through these focuses, students are encouraged to reflect on how the targeted habits and traits are reflected in their own lives and societies.

**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 #: 43

*Background and experience:*

I am a Level-III ELA teacher with 10 years teaching experience. I have a BA in Secondary Education, majoring in English, and a Master's degree in Communications, majoring in Applied Media Studies. Currently, I am teaching English Language Arts to sixth grade through eighth grade middle school students on the reservation.

*Professional summary of material:*

The curriculum in general targets the full scope of common core ELA standards (i.e., teacher guide, ELL support booklet, teacher's resource material, student workbook, etc.), but not quite so much the NM state standards. There is consistency with the organized routine exhibiting the list of the focus standards, supporting standards, ongoing assessments, opportunities to extend learning, collaborative activities, technology and multimedia integration, vocabulary building, work time, and homework support for families across all modules. The scaffolding activities come through an effective pattern throughout the student workbook, which provide data collection of students' understanding and progress. The content in the reading selections expose students to real-world, authentic issues and events. However, materials lack in Native American texts, which is an essential component of the NM state standards. There are great language dives and grade-specific tasks that are not isolated to the students' writing and speaking and listening tasks.

Reviewer #: 44

*Background and experience:*

I have been a high school ELA teacher for 27 years in New Mexico public schools. I have taught all grade levels in high school and team taught inclusion classes for 24 years. I have been an AP English Literature and Composition teacher for the past 12 years. I have been the ELA department chair for the past ten years. I have been on the district textbook adoption committee for several years in the past. I have led many lessons for professional development for not only my department but also for the entire school around literacy. I continue to work closely with several other ELA teachers throughout our district to ensure alignment. I also started alignment meetings between my high school and our feeder middle schools to ensure standard alignment; I continue to lead that forum.

*Professional summary of material:*

This curriculum has four modules that include a teacher guide, a separate guide for ELLs, supporting materials for the teacher and students, and various student texts. It also includes a digital student workbook. Overall, it is a comprehensive program that teachers can follow without having to create or even make their own materials. This grade level aligns with the standards and directly shows the teachers when and how they are connected. Along with these connections, lessons provide alternative assessments and assignments that are also scaffolded for differentiation. Family resources are also included in the homework section of the materials that provide an effective guideline for success. The program includes ample graphic organizers, language dives, and technology throughout each module and does cover a variety of cultural experiences. Reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language are covered within each of the four modules. However, this grade level does not include Native American literature within its modules, which is part of the NM State Standards.

Reviewer #: 45

*Background and experience:*

I graduated from UNM with a bachelor's degree in elementary education and an emphasis in science and language arts and from ENMU with a master's degree in curriculum and instruction with an emphasis in literacy education. I have my Level III NMPED Teaching License and have been teaching middle school ELA for the past 8 years. In addition to my educational and career experience, I have also conducted, presented, and published literacy research regarding the impact of situated literacy on student achievement in the literacy classroom.

*Professional summary of material:*

The curriculum is separated into four modules that span the course of an entire school year. For each module, teachers are provided with four booklets: 1) Teacher's Guide, 2) Teacher Supporting Materials, 3) Supporting English Language Learners, and 4) Student Workbook. The "Teacher's Guide" outlines standards, learning targets, instructional steps, and scaffolding opportunities for each lesson in each module. It refers teachers to the "Teacher Supporting Materials" booklet, which includes alternative assessments, model essays, sample graphic organizers, and/or other related materials for a particular lesson. The "Teacher's Guide" also refers teachers to the "Supporting English Language Learners" booklet that offers differentiated instruction for the diverse linguistic needs represented in each classroom. In this regard, the curriculum expects teachers to modify the instruction so all students have an opportunity to learn the content at high-levels with appropriate supports in place. The "Student Workbook" gives students an opportunity to activate and build upon prior knowledge before the learning begins. As the learning progresses, students are able to continue building content knowledge through reading, writing, and discussion-based tasks where students combine science and history content with literacy skills. In many cases, each module circles back to knowledge attained in previous modules, allowing students ample review, practice, and reflection. Students are provided with multiple opportunities to reflect on their progress and learning goals, and they are able to demonstrate their mastery in diverse ways.