



# Open Educational Resources Instructional Materials Review

## Core Knowledge Language Arts: Grade 2

**Developer/Publisher:** Core Knowledge Foundation

[View Resource](#)

**Review Year:** 2017

*This resource was reviewed by Washington educators with subject matter expertise and deep familiarity with the state learning standards. Note that this resource may have been updated since the review. Check the developer website to see if there is a more recent version available.*

**Format:**

- online
- PDF
- editable document

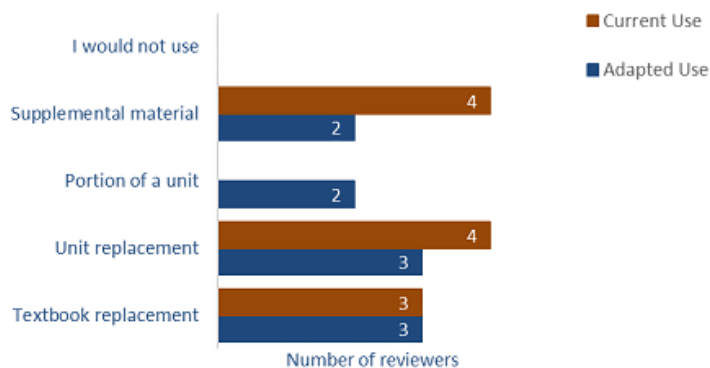
**Professional Development:**

See the [CKLA P–5 Implementation Resources Guide](#) and [FAQ on Core Knowledge Professional Development](#). More info in the Background from OER Project Team section on the next page.

**Standards Correlation:**

[Read FAQ section on Alignment to CCSS: CKLA Kindergarten Unit-by-Unit CCSS Alignment](#)

**Reviewer Usability Feedback on Current and Adapted Use**



**Amount of work required to bring into CCSS alignment:**

Minor – Moderate

**Subject:**

English Language Arts

**Grade:**

2

**Scope:**

Full Course Curriculum

**Duration:**

School Year

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**OER Project**

Learning and Teaching Department  
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

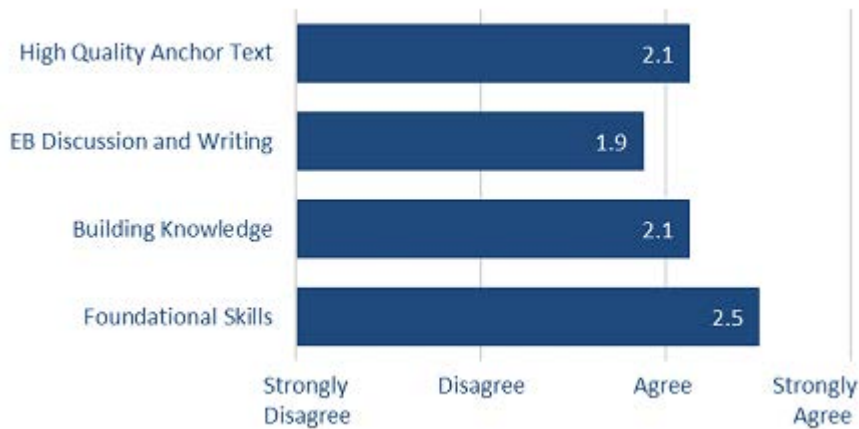


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*If any adaptations are made, remove the OSPI logo and link back to the original review. Data is only accurate in the unedited version.*

## Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool (IMET):

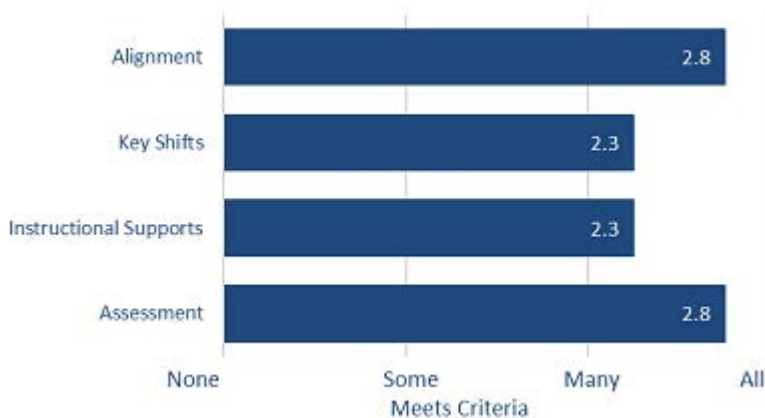
[learn more about IMET](#)



## Educators Evaluating Quality Instructional Products (EQuIP) Overall Rating:

Exemplar if Improved (10)

[learn more about EQuIP](#)



### Background from OER Project Team

Core Knowledge Language Arts™ (CKLA) is a comprehensive program for teaching skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. CKLA also builds students’ knowledge and vocabulary in literature, history, geography, and science.

Reviewers examined the CKLA curriculum in its entirety using the four “non-negotiable” categories from the Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool (IMET). The Educators Evaluating Quality Instructional Products (EQuIP) rubric was used to take a deeper dive into the first two units of the materials.

Please note that CKLA materials reviewed here are **first editions**, developed for the [EngageNY](#) curriculum. CKLA materials available for purchase through [Amplify](#) are **revised editions and were not considered in this review**.

[CKLA Publisher’s Background](#)



## Additional Info on Professional Development

There are many free professional development resources on the Core Knowledge website. These include turnkey professional development workshops with a facilitator's and participants' guides, as well as webinars. Please see [CKLA P–5 Implementation Resources Guide](#).

The Foundation is happy to help with specific questions, which may be directed to [CKLA@coreknowledge.org](mailto:CKLA@coreknowledge.org). The Foundation is also happy to provide onsite, customized PD for schools and districts. Contact above address for information on associated costs.

[FAQ on Core Knowledge Professional Development](#)

### Reviewer Comments

#### Review 1

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#### Strengths

- Domains (topics) are complex and challenging. Strong in building background knowledge.
- Skills Strand – comprehensive.

#### Challenges

- Read aloud texts and decodable texts have been created for the Core Knowledge Program. Read aloud texts used provide only images for students to view.
- Daily read alouds have a new topic each day which limits opportunities to reread texts to dig deeply into meanings.
- No texts for students that have already mastered reading skills being taught.

#### Adaptations

- Include trade books with lessons that integrate skills and concepts into units of study. Provide students opportunities to think deeply into texts where words are visible alongside text.
- Provide lessons that incorporate opportunities to reread texts to dig more deeply into meanings.
- Provide texts for advanced readers to grow.

#### Ideal Use Case

A teacher with experience in writing instruction, differentiating, and reading instruction (reading and comprehension strategies).

#### Ease of Use

It will take some time to sort out all of the resources. Lessons are well organized and easy to navigate once you're familiar with the materials.

#### Support of Balanced Literacy

CKLA meets some of the components of a balanced literacy approach.



### Strengths

- The systematic progression of reading skills and literature learning. The scope and sequence documents visually lay out the structure and organization of the curriculum.
- Broad content, engaging topics and vast opportunity for knowledge building. Amazing array of academic vocabulary.
- Extensive Assessment and Remediation Guide. Well over 1000 pages of assessment and remediation recommendations, ideas, supports, and ideas.

### Challenges

The CKLA Grade 2 curriculum does not address prefixes (or root words - L.2.4c). In response to standard RF.2.3d, CLKA claims that in their Skills Units, students will read and write words with inflectional endings and suffixes. This appears again at L.4b where instead of "determining the meaning of a new word when a known prefix is added," the CKLA standard reads, "use word parts to determine unknown words."

Reflexive Pronouns not in CKLA.

Although the teacher's guide and the other resources in the curriculum claim that there is differentiation, it is not clearly laid out in the materials. In 2nd grade the need for good differentiation is important.

### Adaptations

- Supplement the curriculum with outside materials on the meanings of prefixes, and how they alter the meaning of a base word. Also, focus on vocabulary in the curriculum that may have prefixes (or that have common root words).
- Conduct a mini-lesson on reflexive pronouns.
- Teachers could develop Learning Stations (or centers) to be used by students at different levels.

### Ideal Use Case

General education classroom at any school in any district. Teacher experience wouldn't matter. Novice teachers would love the structure and thoroughness, but may be a bit overwhelmed by the sheer volume of materials and resources. Veteran teachers may struggle with the rigor and some of the mindset changes inherent in any curriculum change, but I would imagine that they would come to appreciate the completeness of CKLA and would come to appreciate the vast amount of "stuff" available to them at the click of a mouse!

### Ease of Use

Initially this resource may be a bit overwhelming to the busy classroom teacher. Materials will need to be prepped in advanced. A good organizational system would be crucial if a teacher were to attempt to dive into both the Listening and Learning strand and the Skills units at the same time. Like any other resource, it would take time and practice to make it easy to access and navigate.

### Support of Balanced Literacy

Absolutely!

### Additional Comments

I'm impressed (and somewhat amazed) by the CLKA program. It is incredibly dense and all-inclusive. If teachers were to begin considering this program, I would encourage them to start sooner than later! There is a lot to learn! Students will need to learn right along with their teachers. Overall, I believe it is a very good product.



## Review 3

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### Strengths

- I LOVE how each unit begins with a clear overview and targeted standards.
- I LOVE how each unit gives an overview of what students have already learned in kindergarten and first grade. So helpful to know what has been taught to use a springboard for the learning to take place in the current grade.

### Ideal Use Case

The ideal use is as an ELA core program. I see its value in being an ELL program.

### Adaptations

- Include trade books (that align with the requirements outline in the standards) with lessons for instruction.
- Opportunities for multiple guided readings to dig deeply into meanings of texts.
- Provide regular opportunities for students to express themselves in a full range of writing, including writing narratives, writing to inform, and writing opinions.

### Ideal Use Case

Teachers with experience in writing instruction, facilitating conversations to guide students to deeper meanings in texts, and creating lessons with trade books to embed in units.

### Ease of Use

Lessons are organized with clear directions for teachers. However there are many components to the curriculum to navigate and read.

### Support of Balanced Literacy

This resource has components of a balanced literacy approach.

## Review 4

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### Strengths

- Foundational skills are closely addressed. They are listed at the start of each lesson in detail. There are skills such as flip books that address them. The ancillary components includes fluency practice.
- The lesson plans are very detailed. The plans are provided as an overview, by day and by detail by lesson.
- The read alouds offer lots of opportunities to think about text, especially text based evidence. The plan is detailed.

### Challenges

- Lack of opportunity for close reading. Each day the lesson plan shows a different text.
- Lack of writing opportunities. The worksheets were the only referenced writing I found.

### Adaptations

- Spending more time digging into text and developing text based thinking skills.
- More text based evidence writing opportunities.

### Ideal Use Case

For small group instruction for readers that may need extra support with reading instruction. The read alouds would work well with the whole group. The teacher would need some experience to understand the purpose of chaining and other tasks. They need a strong understanding of foundational skills.



## Ease of Use

It was fairly easy to navigate. The lesson plans were detailed.

## Support of Balanced Literacy

It needs more engaging literature. I was confused because I found a list of literature in first grade to reference, but looked a few times and still couldn't find a list for second grade.

## Review 5

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### Strengths

- Variety of student engagement strategies. Curriculum presents baseline and extension activities in a variety of ways. Riddles, On Stage: Act it Out, Wagon Train, Quilt Squares, etc.
- Integration of other content areas is evident throughout the CKLA curriculum. Specific references to songs with included lyrics.
- Checkpoint assessments are embedded. The Assessment and Remediation Guides include a multitude of assessment options with rubrics, including diagnostic tools. Performance Task Assessments examples: map work, push and pull factors.
- Questions are text dependent and begin to incorporate prompting for locating evidence for question responses. Every read aloud addresses remaining questions and permits conducting further examination or research to identify answers. Prompting for supporting text claims includes, "How do you know?" "Why?" and written responses to questions.

### Challenges

- Decodable student readers lack range in complexity to meet the needs of diverse learners.
- Overwhelming amount of vocabulary introduced that may be beyond the schema of a first grader. This much vocabulary can make it difficult for students to access the text. Ancient Greek Civilization presents 57 vocabulary words in 12 lessons. Vocabulary instruction is brief (i.e. explanation of meaning throughout read aloud) and students are assessed on words.
- Assessments should become more complex by second grade. Vocabulary assessments are true/false (happy face, frowny face).
- Read aloud anthologies should include visual text by second grade, not just images. It is critical to have visual text when teaching students to find evidence to support claims. All read aloud anthologies in the Listening and Learning domain are images only. Teacher instructed to re-read text to students to facilitate accurate question response.

### Adaptations

- Include a greater range in text complexity. Add additional student readers to review similar skills so students are not repeatedly reading the same stories until skill mastery is evident.
- Reduce vocabulary words and include more specific instruction to provide deeper understanding of vocabulary.
- Increase the standard by incorporating multiple choice, fill in the blank, or written response.
- Include visual text with images on all anthologies.

### Ideal Use Case

CKLA has a clear and systematic approach coupled with specific instructions and activities, permitting easy access for new or seasoned teachers. Notes: This resource will require supplemental materials to address CCSS Writing standards. Although CKLA provides supplemental resources, teachers will require some experience level to identify lesson extensions and modifications to meet the needs of diverse learners. Daily lessons total 110 minutes. Teachers may need to become effective at eliminating activities to meet time constraints.



### Ease of Use

CKLA is divided into two strands; the Skills Strand and the Listening and Learning Strand. Teachers will reference two teachers manuals for one daily lesson. Lessons are well organized; relatively scripted, fluidly transitioning from one activity to the next. Overall organization is manageable, once you understand the structure. Additional resources, supplemental guides, and author's narratives can make navigation time consuming.

### Support of Balanced Literacy

CKLA meets the needs of a balanced literacy approach incorporating components of foundational skills and engaging literature; however, in my opinion, modifications are necessary to fully implement.

### Additional Comments

Second Grade CKLA is primarily a whole group instructional model. It has limited small group instruction time. This model inhibits much of the instruction that enables differentiation, permitting substantial time with decodable texts, and the promotion of building stamina with student selected texts and independent activities. The decodable student readers provided for small group instruction lack range in complexity. Differentiating small group lessons for learners will require supplemental resources. Vocabulary may require modification to facilitate appropriate access to text. There are 40+ vocabulary words for each Listening and Learning section. Vocabulary words are briefly introduced and lack the attention to promote a deep understanding of new vocabulary. Some intentionality in incorporating writing instruction is evident but lacks the required instruction to adequately address the CCSS. Students need frequent exposure to the writing process to become fluent.

