

# Why Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) Curriculum?

Northwest Education Services (North Ed) is committed to supporting all districts throughout the region in deeply embedding high quality curricular materials to support instruction, which directly aligns to the vision for high quality instruction.

While Michigan's Third Grade Reading Law has recently inspired educators/leaders across the state to think carefully about current instructional practices utilized to support our youngest readers, the [Core Knowledge Foundation](#) has been exploring this topic for years. The Core Knowledge Foundation assembled in the effort to uncover how to better prepare our children for the skills they would need to achieve success in tomorrow's world. They worked tirelessly, not motivated by profit margins, but driven by the statistics that sadly reflected our nations decline in producing literate citizens. They are passionate about reaching the same goal as North Ed, and that is to provide EVERY child with the skills and supports needed to achieve literacy success.

Unlike the large publishing companies that were busy repackaging, supplementing, and loosely aligning their *already developed curriculum* to address the demands of the new standards, Core Knowledge Foundation was working to unlock the mystery of why, as a nation, we continue to landslide away from reading and writing proficiency. They began *developing* a comprehensive curriculum. The Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) program was designed as a resource that is NATIVE (developed specifically) to specific standards and to support teachers and students as they interact with and master the rigorous standards they are presently required to achieve. Teachers across the North Ed region immediately noticed the difference between the CKLA resources and past literacy curriculum resources. CKLA is different, in a great way...The news of CKLA and its effectiveness started to spread from teacher to teacher, parent to parent, and even student to student.

CKLA has been a "grass roots" movement fueled by teachers' sense of success through strong instructional support, in addition to evidence of outstanding student growth and achievement. As North Ed started to explore how to make this program available to all schools/educators/students who wanted access to CKLA resources, we began to understand even more about the company that publishes and provides professional learning for this curriculum. Only then, did we truly understand what makes CKLA so very different from other resources.

Below, we have provided just a few talking points that specifically outline what makes CKLA such an amazing curriculum resource. Not only are the curriculum resources helping our teachers scaffold their instructional practices, but the company's dedication to outstanding, supportive, and ongoing professional learning opportunities have consistently helped teachers shift their current understanding of literacy instruction!

## CKLA: A different kind of comprehensive ELA program

The Core Knowledge Language Arts program (CKLA), a promising comprehensive PreK-5 ELA program, requires a *change in beliefs and behaviors* for most educators. A uniquely structured knowledge-based program, built on solid research, CKLA focuses on foundational reading skills, comprehension, and vocabulary from PreK forward. Organized in a dual-strand model in the early grades, with a heavy emphasis on building background knowledge in all grades, CKLA is built to support all students in acquiring the two essential elements of reading proficiency -- decoding/encoding and comprehension. Simply, CKLA is a different kind of literacy program that requires a change in teaching.

You can't expect different results if you keep acting and reacting the same way.

### Amplify.

#### Our Philosophy

We believe that **we will close the third grade reading gap and make students college and career ready** only by preparing them to encounter complex written text in Kindergarten (and earlier). That requires systematic exposure to knowledge-rich content, often above grade level, so that students can develop the necessary vocabulary and connections to understand new, unfamiliar texts.

Increasing bodies of research identify that students must not only learn to decode in the earliest grades but must build up the background knowledge, vocabulary, and analytical skills that allow them to access and understand complex texts in late elementary school and beyond. That is the core of our philosophy.

# EdReports: Core Knowledge Language Arts & Journeys

[EdReports.org](http://www.edreports.org) is an independent, nonprofit organization designed to help educators identify and demand instructional materials that are effective, reliable, and aligned to high standards. Using a comprehensive, rigorous review process led by expert practitioners, EdReports.org provides free reviews of instructional materials to help educators make informed decisions about which materials to use with their students.

<http://www.edreports.org/ela/reports/compare.html?level=k8#?g=2>

## Professional Development Plan

- Professional, nationally certified, CKLA experts will be flown in from across the country to deliver CKLA professional learning. Currently scheduled:
  - June 14 and 15: Grades K-2 and 3-5 initial training
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  - August 21: Grades K-2 new to the second edition CKLA training (for buildings that have implemented version 1 of CKLA)
  - August 22: Grades 3-5 new to the second edition CKLA training (for buildings that have implemented version 1 of CKLA)
  - August 29 and 30: Grades K-2 and 3-5 initial training
- CKLA trainers will provide ongoing trainings throughout the school year on-site and provide support during webinars. They will offer support through virtual question and answer sessions to help teachers get answers to questions as they arise.
- Amplify (the publishers for CKLA) have allocated a program manager for the North Ed region – a content and logistical expert that will help with all system level work, building support, and technology.
- Amplify will send a team three times a year to work directly with district and building leadership and coaches to review data and make district/building plans to enhance CKLA implementation. Future professional development will be created based on these data reviews.
- Additional professional learning sessions for teachers supporting tiers 2 and 3 will be provided.
- Administrator sessions will be offered to move buildings efficiently through implementation stages
- Coaching will be supported by CKLA trainers

In addition to this national level expert support from CKLA, North Ed literacy team will work with buildings to provide:

- Regional PLCs
- Regional Huddles that teachers can come together and problem solve implementation issues together
- On-site coaching
- Third Grade Reading Bill support
- Other needs that administrators feel his/her building will benefit