



CommonLit 360 for Middle School (6-8)

Publisher's Response

As a company that believes in the power of the classroom teacher, CommonLit strives to continually listen to and learn from practicing educators to know how best to provide engaging, high quality ELA materials. The CommonLit team appreciates the careful consideration and thoughtful attention the educator reviewers put toward our EdReports review. We understand the tremendous time and effort it takes to complete these reviews, and we thank the review team and EdReports staff for their detailed report about CommonLit 360 6-8.

The CommonLit 360 curriculum fosters genuine, real-world connections, enabling students to build rich, conceptual knowledge of the world around them and apply their learning in substantial, practical ways. By incorporating diverse texts, multimedia resources, and project-focused learning opportunities, CommonLit 360 helps students make meaningful connections between their lives and the content they are studying.

Each CommonLit 360 unit includes the following core components:

- **A series of lessons that focus on essential content and skills**, including close reading of complex texts, evidence-based writing, collaborative discussions, vocabulary development, and research. Each lesson is accompanied by comprehensive student and teacher-facing materials, including facilitation guidance, differentiation strategies, and exemplar responses to support effective implementation.
- **Engaging Related Media Exploration lessons** that help students delve into diverse multimedia resources to deepen their understanding of unit topics and themes while building media literacy skills.
- **Formative assessments embedded throughout** the unit lessons, such as short written responses, application questions, and multiple-choice questions, to monitor student progress and inform instruction.
- **A culminating task**, which requires students to demonstrate their mastery of core knowledge and skills through writing, speaking, presentations, research, or a combination of modes.
- **Optional supplemental texts and Independent Reading resources**, offering additional reading practice for remediation or extension of unit themes and skills. These texts are available at various complexity levels to support a wide range of learners.

Following is a snapshot of some of CommonLit 360's features highlighted in the report.

A robust text selection with compelling topics and themes to grow students' reading comprehension. We believe *all* students are capable of achieving success with grade-level learning, and it's essential that students work with appropriately rigorous texts. CommonLit 360 includes carefully curated text sets, organized to spark interest as students level up their reading and writing skills. CommonLit 360 units are built around high-quality, grade-level stories, articles, and novels, which provide the foundation for rich content and deep inquiry.

The essential questions in our units allow for students to find connection and meaning as they read and analyze the themes and topics presented in each text set. We continue to seek out authors and texts that reflect the identities of students and communities who use 360 in their classrooms.

Engaging units build skills in different modes of reading and writing while building knowledge and supporting student choice and agency.

- **Thematic Units:** These units feature an assortment of short texts that share a common theme or topic. By exploring various genres and styles, students gain exposure to different perspectives and develop a more comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.
- **Novel/nonfiction text Units:** In these units, a longer text serves as the anchor text, and students engage with additional shorter texts to enrich their understanding of the novel's content. This approach enables students to delve into the complexities of the novel, make connections between texts, and explore related themes or issues.
- **Research Writing Units:** Students are tasked with researching a specific topic by reading a curated collection of topically-related texts. They synthesize information and present their findings to an authentic audience beyond students' teachers or classmates, which helps them develop research, critical thinking, and effective communication skills.
- **Argumentative Writing Units:** In these units, students read a series of texts related to an engaging, debatable issue. They use this information to form a stance on the issue and create a well-reasoned argument to present to an authentic audience. This process encourages critical analysis, persuasive writing, and the ability to defend one's viewpoint with evidence.

Writing and Language Instruction. CommonLit 360 offers students consistent opportunities to grow and stretch their writing in multiple modes. We are currently working on enhancing our writing instruction to include more practice with narrative writing, more language and in-context grammar practice, and even more authentic writing practice and application for students.

To that end, we would like to clarify some of the information found in the **1J Indicator Report**. While we do not disagree that currently there is a lack of *explicit* narrative instruction in most units, we do dispute the claim that students do not have ample opportunity to *practice* this type of writing. Students **are** provided with multiple narrative writing opportunities in all grades.

Discussions and authentic tasks. The CommonLit 360 curriculum encourages a learning environment that emphasizes cooperation, peer interaction, and the expression of diverse perspectives. Every day in a CommonLit 360 class, students engage in collaboration and reflection, sharing what they're learning in small and large groups and practicing analyzing and communicating complex ideas. Each unit ends with a culminating task that provides students with authentic, interesting ways to share what they've learned—from creating podcasts to presentations for their local community.

CommonLit is excited to partner with schools nationwide to implement CommonLit 360 in order to empower students with the essential literacy skills and knowledge they need to succeed in college, career, and beyond.