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## Purpose of Knowledge Packs

In-person learning, involving traditional ELA Guidebook implementation and virtual distance learning should be prioritized. However, the Department recognizes that if school buildings do not physically open, or if a hybrid model needs to be implemented, the time available for those types of interactions might be limited.

However, it is important to remember that learning and activities assigned to students should be meaningful and should be in service of helping students master the knowledge and skills demanded by the ELA Guidebook unit. Therefore, the Department is partnering with [CommonLit](#) to release knowledge packs that will support students in building knowledge and vocabulary<sup>1</sup>.

**NOTE:** Packs should have **at least three** related texts. Some topics include more than three texts. Teachers can choose to have students read all texts or select the amount of texts their schedule allows time for.

These resources can be utilized in the following [learning scenarios](#):

- **Traditional In-person Learning:** These resources can be used to make small group instruction more meaningful for students. Teachers can support students in volume of reading and building knowledge while other students engage independently in one or more activities to support making meaning of complex, grade-level texts.
- **Virtual/Hybrid and Analog Distance Learning:** These resources can be used to give students meaningful, independent practice to support core instruction when they are learning asynchronously from home without the support of a teacher.

Directions for implementing are [available](#).

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<sup>1</sup> More information about volume of reading can be found in the [Reading Guide](#).

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**Knowledge Pack One Text Set: *Written In Bone***

**Text One**

“[Bound for a New Life](#)” by Ruth Spencer Johnson

Jamestown in Virginia was the first permanent English colony in North America. In this short story, two children describe their experiences living and working in Jamestown. As you read, take notes on the similarities of Robert’s and Sarah’s experiences in Jamestown.

**Text Two**

“[Chief Powhatan’s Address to Captain John Smith](#)” by Chief Powhatan

The Powhatan are Native American people from Virginia who share an Algonquian language. In 1607, the Jamestown settlement in the Virginia colony became the first permanent English settlement in the Americas. At the initial arrival of the colonists, people of the Powhatan Confederacy provided the settlers with food, but this relationship quickly deteriorated. In this address, Chief Wahunsenacawh (1545-1618), also known as Chief Powhatan, addresses a leader of Jamestown. As you read, take notes on the relationship between the Powhatan people and the English settlers.

**Text Three**

“[Tsenacomoco: My World](#)” by Julie Durway

The Powhatan people are a Native American tribe. They made contact with the English who would settle Jamestown in 1607. Tsenacommacah, also spelled Tsenacomoco, is the Powhatan name for their homeland — what is now Virginia and parts of the Eastern shore. As you read, take notes on how the narrator describes her life before and after the English arrive.

**Text Four**

“[Northeast Natives](#)” by BirdBrain History

This informational text explores the lives of the many Native Americans who lived in the northeastern part of the United States before Europeans arrived, claimed, and settled the land. As you read, note how the author compares native ways of life to modern ways of living.

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## Knowledge Pack Two Text Set: *A Christmas Carol*

### Text One

“[The Gift of the Magi](#)” by O. Henry

O. Henry (1862-1910), who was born William Sydney Porter, was an American author who wrote hundreds of short stories. He is known for his wit, wordplay, and twist endings. “The Gift of the Magi” was published in 1902. As you read, take notes about the relationship between Jim and Della.

### Text Two

“[I am Offering this Poem](#)” by Jimmy Santiago Baca

Jimmy Santiago Baca (b. 1952) is an award-winning American poet and writer, of Apache and Chicano descent. Following his difficult childhood, Baca was incarcerated as a young man. In prison, he taught himself to read and write. As you read, take notes on the meaning of the figurative language in the poem.

### Text Three

“[How Santa Claus Found the Poor-House](#)” by Sophie Swett

Sophia Miriam Swett (1858–1912) was an American writer from Maine who wrote over 20 children’s books. This story is about two young boys living in a “poor-house” during the late 1800s. Poorhouses and poor-farms were places that provided housing and support for people in need. As you read the story, take notes on how the author characterizes Gobaly and Methusaleh.

### Text Four

“[The Selfish Giant](#)” by Oscar Wilde

Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) was an Irish playwright, novelist, essayist, and poet. He remains well known for his literary talents, his sharp wit, and his memorable personality. His later years were characterized by failing health and deep depression. As you read, take notes on how the seasons and their elements are characterized.

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## Knowledge Pack Three Text Set: *The Giver*

### Text One

[“Someone Might be Watching - An Introduction to Dystopian Fiction”](#) by Shelby Ostergaard

Dystopian stories are commonplace in our society today. In this informational text, Shelby Ostergaard discusses the characteristics of dystopian fiction and how the genre comments on society. As you read, take notes on themes commonly found in dystopian fiction.

### Text Two

[“Conformity”](#) by CommonLit Staff

Conformity is the act of matching one’s beliefs or actions to the norms of a larger social group. Norms are the usually unspoken rules that govern the attitudes and behavior of a group of people. As you read, take notes on the different types of conformity and what motivates people to conform.

### Text Three

[“Censorship: For the People, or for Controlling the People?”](#) by Jessica McBirney

Censorship has, and continues to be, a highly debated topic. Some people believe that in order to secure the safety of citizens, information should be closely censored. However, many other people believe that this is a violation of Americans’ rights. In this piece, Jessica McBirney identifies different forms of censorship, as well its benefits and disadvantages. As you read, pay close attention to the different types of censorship and consider the pros and cons of each.

### Text Four

[“Why Teens Find the End of the World so Appealing”](#) by Elissa Nadworny

Dystopian fiction has become an extremely popular genre amongst teenagers. This genre usually focuses on a world where life is unpleasant or bad because of certain social or political structures. As you read, take notes on what teenagers like about dystopian fiction.

### Text Five

[“Compliance”](#) by Saul McLeod

Compliance is a type of social influence where an individual conforms to a rule. Unlike obedience, there is only a request rather than an order. As you read, take notes on each of the three compliance techniques and why they work.

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## Knowledge Pack Four Text Set: Memoir

### Text One

“[Door to Freedom](#)” by Jacalyn McNamara

In this memoir, Jacalyn Pauer describes her husband’s experiences escaping a war torn Hungary and how he got his immigration papers to go to America. As you read, take notes what Pal experiences while trying to get his immigration papers.

### Text Two

“[A Woman Who Went to Alaska](#)” by Mary Kellogg Sullivan

In Mary Kellogg Sullivan’s book *A Woman Who Went to Alaska*, Sullivan describes her adventures in Alaska during her search for riches. Between 1896 and 1899, an estimated 100,000 people migrated to the Klondike region of the Yukon in northwestern Canada. In the following excerpt from Sullivan’s book, she describes the experiences of miners searching for gold. As you read, take notes on who profited from the gold rush.

### Text Three

“[America and I](#)” by Anzia Yeziarska

Anzia Yeziarska (1880-1970) was a Jewish American novelist known for her writing on immigration, assimilation, and Jewish American lives. As a child, she and her family immigrated from the Russian-Polish border to the United States. The following text is an essay about her struggles adapting to living in America. As you read, take notes on how Yeziarska uses figurative language to describe America.

### Text Four

“[The Drive-In Movies](#)” by Gary Soto

Gary Soto is an American poet, novelist, and memoirist. In this short story, Soto describes his desire to go to the drive-in movies as a kid. As you read, take notes on what the narrator does to get what he wants.

### Text Five

“[The Terror](#)” by Junot Díaz

Junot Díaz is a Dominican American writer, creative writing professor, and editor. Díaz’s work often focuses on the experience of immigrants. In this text, Díaz recounts his experiences with fear after getting beat-up as an adolescent.

**Text Six**

“[Hello, My Name is \\_\\_\\_\\_\\_](#)” by Jason Kim

Jason Kim is an Asian American screenwriter and playwright. In this personal account, Kim discusses his experiences emigrating from Korea at a young age and his struggle to fit into American culture while maintaining his identity. As you read, take notes on how Kim’s experiences shaped his feelings about his identity.

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**Knowledge Pack Five Text Set: *Behind the Scenes***

**Text One**

[“The Underground Railroad”](#) by USHistory.org

In the 1850’s and 1860’s, the United States became even more divided on the issue of slavery. States in the South still practiced slavery, while many states in the North prohibited slavery. As a result, many slaves tried to run away to freedom in North. The Underground Railroad was established to provide a secret way for slaves to escape from slavery in the South to freedom in the North. As you read, take notes on how the Underground Railroad helped slaves to freedom in the North.

**Text Two**

[“Attack on Fort Sumter Marked Start of War”](#) by Carolyn Reeder

The American Civil War (1861-1865) was a war fought between Northern and Southern states. When Abraham Lincoln became president in 1860, Southern states feared that slavery would be outlawed. This caused eleven Southern states to form the Confederate States of America. The Northern states formed the Union. In this informational text, Carolyn Reeder discusses the attack that started the Civil War. As you read, take notes on the events that lead to the start of the Civil War.

**Text Three**

[“Frederick Douglass: A Biography”](#) by National Park Service

Frederick Douglass (1818-1895) was born a slave but died an accomplished and respected individual. This short biography traces his life’s work and involvement in the abolition movement, which worked to end slavery. As you read this text, identify Douglass’s contributions to social change during his lifetime.

**Text Four**

[“Letter from Frederick Douglass to Harriet Tubman”](#) by Frederick Douglass

In 1869, Sarah Hopkins Bradford published an authorized biography called *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*. Harriet Tubman was an abolitionist who helped slaves escape through the Underground Railroad. She often worked with fellow abolitionist Frederick Douglass, a public speaker and author. When Harriet Tubman reached out to Frederick Douglass requesting he speak to her accomplishments, he responded with this letter. As you read, take notes on how Frederick Douglass defines private and public accomplishments.

**Text Five**

[“Learning to Read”](#) by Frances Ellen Watkins Harper

Frances Ellen Watkins Harper (1825-1911) was the child of free African-American parents. She attended the Academy for Negro Youth until she was 13 years old. In her adult life, Harper helped slaves escape through the Underground Railroad

(a network of routes and safe houses used by slaves in the 19th century) and wrote for anti-slavery newspapers. As you read, take notes on the obstacles the students face while learning to read.

**Text Six**

[“Am I Not a Woman and a Sister?”](#) by Elizabeth Crawford (adaptation of original text)

Many groups of people fought against slavery, but the majority of these organizations were led by men. This article explores the efforts women made in the anti-slavery campaign, despite not having a voice in politics. As you read, take notes on the impact women had on the abolitionist movement.

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## Knowledge Pack Six Text Set: Understanding Other People

### Text One

“[Middle School](#)” by Ira Glass

Ira Glass is the host of WBEZ Chicago’s public radio show *This American Life*, which uses interviews and real-life stories to examine different topics each week. On October 28, 2011, *This American Life* spoke with a mixture of middle school students about their experiences as adolescents.

### Text Two

“[The Moustache](#)” by Robert Cormier

Robert Cormier (1925-2000) was an American author, columnist, and reporter, known for his deeply human stories. In this short story, a boy visits his grandmother at her nursing home.

### Text Three

“[Sol Painting, Inc.](#)” by Meg Medina

Meg Medina is a Cuban American writer whose stories focus on how a person’s family, culture, and heritage influence them. “Sol Painting, Inc.” is from *Flying Lessons & Other Stories*. The main character reappears in Medina’s novel *Merci Suárez Changes Gears*, which earned Medina the 2019 Newbery Medal.

### Text Four

“[Names/Nombres](#)” by Julia Alvarez

Julia Alvarez is a Dominican-American poet, novelist, and essayist. Alvarez was born in New York but spent the first ten years of her childhood in the Dominican Republic until her family had to flee the country due to her father’s involvement in a political rebellion. Much of Alvarez’s work focuses on her experiences as a Dominican in the United States. In this essay, Alvarez discusses the multiple names she has been given over the years. As you read, take notes on how the author reacts to the different pronunciations of the names discussed in the text.

## Knowledge Building Journals

Experts collect knowledge and vocabulary as they go along. You will do this by keeping two different types of journals – a “Rolling Knowledge” journal and a “Sensational 6” vocabulary journal. Annotating the text is one way to collect knowledge and vocabulary in order to become an expert on a topic. Teachers will need to explicitly teach the skill of annotating the text to students who have not previously used this strategy.

### Rolling Knowledge Journals

Complete the Rolling Knowledge journal after reading and annotating each text. The Rolling Knowledge journal is a place for you to collect new learning about the knowledge topic and capture connections that add to your existing knowledge on the topic.

1. Read and annotate each text, then answer the following questions in the correct columns:
  - What new knowledge did I collect about the topic while reading this text?
  - How did this text add to knowledge I already had about this topic?

### Sensational 6 Journals

Complete the Sensational 6 journal after reading and annotating each text. The Sensational 6 journal is a place for you to collect and practice using vocabulary that is important to understanding the knowledge topic.

1. Read and annotate each text, then determine the six words from each text that are most important to understanding the central idea or theme of the text.
2. Next use your six words to write about the most important ideas of the text. You should have as many sentences as you do words.
3. Complete this chart for each text that you read.
4. After reading all the texts included in the knowledge pack, go back and review your words.
5. Select six words from ALL the word lists that stand out as the most important to the central idea or theme of the texts you read. These words will be known as the “Sensational 6.”
6. Use the “Sensational 6” words to summarize the knowledge you gained from the texts in this knowledge pack.

## Annotation Strategy

- *Underline* the major points.
- *Circle* key words or phrases that are confusing or unknown to you.
- Use a *question mark (?)* for questions that you have during the reading. Be sure to write your own question.
- Use an *exclamation point (!)* for things that surprise you, and briefly note what it was that caught your attention.
- Draw an *arrow (→)* when you make a connection to something inside the text, or an idea or experience outside the text. Briefly note your connections.

Rolling Knowledge Journal Template

	New Learning	Adds to Learning
	What new knowledge did I collect about the topic while reading this text?	How did this text add to knowledge I already had about this topic?
Title of Text One	•	•
Title of Text Two	•	•
Title of Text Three	•	•

NOTE: Adjust the template to represent the number of text you assign to students.

**Sensational 6 Journal Template**

	Six Words	Six Sentences (new sentences)
Title of Text One	1.	1.
	2.	2.
	3.	3.
	4.	4.
	5.	5.
	6.	6.
Title of Text Two	1.	1.
	2.	2.
	3.	3.
	4.	4.
	5.	5.
	6.	6.
Title of Text Three	1.	1.
	2.	2.
	3.	3.
	4.	4.
	5.	5.
	6.	6.
<b>Sensational 6</b>		
<p><b>Summary</b> Write a summary using the “Sensational 6.” Be sure to underline the vocabulary words.</p>		

NOTE: Adjust the template to represent the number of text you assign to students.

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## Teacher Directions for Implementation

### Analog/Print-Only Option

1. Create a [CommonLit](#) account.
2. Use the Knowledge Pack Text Set links from page two to access each text.
3. Select “Download PDF” at the top of the text and make a copy of each text for each student.
4. Assemble student packets with student-facing directions.
5. Ensure students understand how to complete knowledge building journals using a notebook or offline compatible word processing program.

### Virtual/Technology Enhanced Option

1. Create a [CommonLit](#) account.
2. Select “My Classes” and follow the directions to get your students into classes.
3. Use the Knowledge Pack Text Set links from page two to access each text.
4. Assign each text to each student via the CommonLit digital platform.

Ensure students understand how to complete knowledge building journals using an online compatible word processing program.

## Final Project

Each knowledge pack should culminate with students creating a final project to showcase their knowledge of the topic and express their understanding of the texts. Final projects should include both a product and a presentation.

- **Product:** Students will create a product which expresses their understanding of the texts and topic. This product should be appropriate to the grade level and task. Teachers should choose the final product or offer a selection of options for a final product and allow student choice.
- **Presentation:** Students will showcase their products and knowledge of a topic. Presentations can be in person, virtual via video conference, and/or prerecorded and shared.

## Possible Final Project Products

- Develop a multimedia presentation explaining your topic.
- Create and publish a story related to your topic.
- Create a podcast to discuss your topic.
- Create a poster to promote change related to your topic.
- Give a TEDTalk related to your topic.
- Create a graphic novel related to your topic.
- Create a mixed media art project that visually represents your topic.

## Final Project Planning and Development

To support students in developing final projects, the [Final Project Tool](#) can be shared with students.

**Sample Student Schedule**

Day One	Day Two	Day Three	Day Four	Day Five
Read text one and complete the questions that follow.	Reread text one and complete the rolling knowledge entries for that text.	Re-read text one and complete the Sensational 6 journal entries for that text.	Read text two and complete the questions that follow.	Reread text two and complete the rolling knowledge entries for that text.
Day Six	Day Seven	Day Eight	Day Nine	Day Ten
Re-read text two and complete the Sensational 6 journal entries for that text.	Read text three and complete the questions that follow.	Reread text three and complete the rolling knowledge entries for that text.	Re-read text three and complete the Sensational 6 journal entries for that text.	Reread the three texts and identify the Sensational 6 words and write a well-developed summary of the texts using the Sensational 6.
Day Eleven	Day Twelve	Day Thirteen	Day Fourteen	Day Fifteen
Make a plan for your final project.	Brainstorm the product of your final project.	Draft the product of your final project.	Develop your product for your final project.	Plan your presentation of your final project.
Day Sixteen	Day Seventeen	Day Eighteen	Day Nineteen	Day Twenty
Present your final project.	Reflect on your final project.	View a peer final project presentation on your topic and reflect on what you learned.	View a peer final project presentation on your topic and reflect on what you learned.	View a peer final project presentation on your topic and reflect on what you learned.