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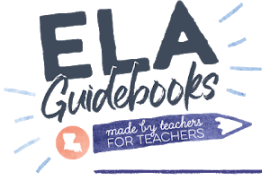
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Purpose of Knowledge Packs

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 vocabulary¹.

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](#).

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

Knowledge Pack One Text Set: “Flowers for Algernon”

Text One

“[Why I Refuse to Say I ‘Fight’ My Disability](#)” by Karin Hitselberger

Karin Hitselberger is a disability rights activist and freelance writer. She has cerebral palsy: a permanent movement disorder that affects one’s coordination and whose symptoms include stiff or weak muscles and tremors. Hitselberger blogs about the intersection of disability, fashion, and body acceptance. In this post, Hitselberger takes issue with the language sometimes used in discussing cerebral palsy and disability. As you read, take notes on the author’s perspective on disability and ableism.

Text Two

“[How Autism Freed Me to be Myself](#)” by Rosie King

In this transcription of a TED Talk, 16-year-old Rosie King shares her experiences with autism and how it has uniquely shaped her worldview. Additionally, King explores the desire people have to be “normal,” and the effects that this desire can have. As you read, note how King describes her autism compared to how others view her.

Text Three

“[Stephen Hawking](#)” by Jessica McBirney

Stephen Hawking, born in 1942, is a renowned physicist and author who studies the universe: its origins, evolution, and eventual fate. In this informational text, Jessica McBirney discusses Hawking’s contributions, as well as his battle with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), a disease that has paralyzed him over the decades. As you read, take notes on what Hawking has contributed to science, as well as disability rights.

Text Four

“[Was Albert Einstein a Space Alien?](#)” by NASA Science News

Albert Einstein (1879-1955) was a German-born physicist whose work has had a strong influence on the philosophy of science. He is also often considered the greatest physicist of the 20th century. This informational text discusses Einstein’s contributions to science, specifically his discovery regarding the composition of light. As you read, take notes on how Einstein differed from other scientists of his time.

Knowledge Pack Two Text Set: “The Tell-Tale Heart”

Text One

“[On Twitter, Fake News has Greater Allure than Truth Does](#)” by Maria Temming

How credible is the news that you read and spread on social media? In this informational text, Maria Temming discusses a study that compares the spread of false news and true news on Twitter. As you read, take notes on what scientists were able to learn from this study.

Text Two

“[How the News Media Works](#)” by Jessica McBirney

Society is affected by how people access their news and the quality of the news that they receive. In this informational text, Jessica McBirney explores what “news media” means today, and how people acquire the information that shapes their views of the world. As you read, take notes on how news media affects society.

Text Three

“[Conflicting News Reports on the Fate of the Sinking Titanic](#)” by Various Authors

The *RMS Titanic* was a British passenger liner that sank in the North Atlantic Ocean in the early morning of 15 April 1912, after colliding with an iceberg. More than 1,500 passengers died as a result of the ship sinking. After the ship sank, there were conflicting reports about what really happened, with nobody knowing for certain whether or not the ship had sunk at the time. As you read, take notes on the similarities and differences of the details presented in the two newspaper articles.

Text Four

“[The Journalist](#)” by J. Patrick Lewis

J. Patrick Lewis is the author of more than fifty books of poetry for children. “The Journalist” is a tribute poem to award-winning Asian American journalist, Helen Zia, which is featured in Lewis’s 2013 book *When Thunder Comes: Poems for Civil Rights Leaders*. In this poem, the speaker describes how she uses journalism to address social issues. As you read, take notes on the figurative language the poet uses to reveal the speaker’s perspective.

Knowledge Pack Three Text Set: Conservation

Text One

“[Water Scarcity: A Global Issue](#)” by Shelby Ostergaard

In areas where water is easily accessible, it’s easy to forget that access to clean water can mean the difference between life and death. In this informational text, Shelby Ostergaard discusses the different factors that contribute to water scarcity in various regions throughout the world. As you read, take notes on the causes and effects of water scarcity.

Text Two

“[Tiny Plastic, Big Problem](#)” by Alison Pearce Stevens

When plastic was invented at the turn of the 20th century, it was lauded as a miraculous new material that could be used to create innumerable products. Few could have recognized the impact that plastic would have on our world – particularly in our oceans – over the course of a century. As you read, take notes on the problems that plastic has caused in the oceans and the potential solutions to them.

Text Three

“[Your Food Climate Affect Earth’s Climate](#)” by Janet Raloff

Are you a meat-eater, vegan, or something in between? In this text, Janet Raloff discusses a study about how your diet can affect the Earth’s climate. As you read, take notes on the effects that the production of certain foods has on the environment.

Text Four

“[‘Couch Potatoes’ Tend to be TV-Energy Hogs](#)” by Kathiann Kowalski

How many hours of television do you watch a day? Depending on your answer, you could be responsible for wasting a lot of electricity. As you read, take notes on how couch potatoes can help save energy and reduce global warming.

Text Five

“[Growing Trees for Kenya](#)” by Elizabeth Cregan

Wangari Maathai (1940-2011) was a Nobel laureate and environmental activist. She is responsible for starting the Green Belt Movement, which worked to restore depleting forests by planting trees. In this informational text, Elizabeth Cregan discusses Maathai’s motivations for planting trees and how her actions helped people in Kenya. As you read, take notes on Dr. Maathai’s impact on Kenya and the people who live there.

Text Six

“[Coming: The Sixth Mass Extinction](#)” by Alison Pearce Stevens

Mass extinction is when a large number of species die within a short period of time. So far, the Earth has experienced five mass extinctions, and it could be facing a sixth. As you read, take notes on how humans rely on diverse species of plants and animals.

Text Seven

[“Explainer: Global Warming and the Greenhouse Effect”](#) by Agnieszka Bishop

In this text from Science News for Students, Agnieszka Biskup explains what the greenhouse effect is and why temperatures on Earth are rising. As you read, take notes on what role humans play in Earth’s rising temperatures.

Knowledge Pack Four Text Set: *The Call of the Wild*

Text One

“[The Man in the Arena](#)” by President Theodore Roosevelt

Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919) was the 26th President of the United States from 1901 to 1909. He was an early supporter of social activism, progressive political reform, and environmental conservation. Henry Adams, an American historian who ran in the same circles as Roosevelt, described the former president as such: “Roosevelt, more than any other man... was pure act.” The following excerpt comes from a much longer speech entitled “Citizenship in a Republic” that Roosevelt gave in France a year after he left the office of the presidency. The excerpt has become known as “The Man in the Arena” speech, because someone who is heavily involved in a situation that requires courage, skill, or tenacity (as opposed to someone sitting on the sidelines and watching), is sometimes referred to as “the man in the arena.” As you read, take notes on how the diction and structure of the excerpt contribute to its meaning.

Text Two

“[Klondike Gold Rush](#)” by Anonymous

On August 16, 1896, miners found gold in the Klondike region of the Yukon in northwestern Canada. This inspired a migration of an estimated 100,000 people between 1896 and 1899, hoping to find similar success and riches. As you read, take notes on what miners expected to find and how this compared to the reality of their experiences.

Text Three

“[The Wild Dog of Caucomgomoc](#)” by Charles Boardman Hawes

Charles Boardman Hawes (1889-1923) was an American author of both fiction and nonfiction stories of the sea, well known for three historical novels. Unfortunately, he died suddenly at 34 with only two of his five books published. In this short story, a dog loses his owner and rejects future relationships with humans. However, this changes when he helps the town in an unexpected way. As you read, take notes on how the characters react to the dog throughout the story.

Text Four

“[What Good is the Big Bad Wolf?](#)” by Linda Zajac

In Banff National Park, wolves and elk have largely separated into two different areas. By studying these two species in separate areas, scientists can determine the effect that the presence and absence of wolves can have on the surrounding environment. As you read, take notes on how elk respond to the absence of wolves.

Text Five

“[The House Dog and the Wolf](#)” by Gail Terp

This story is based on a fable originally written by Aesop. Aesop was a storyteller who lived in ancient Greece between 620 and 560 BCE. Aesop's fables, which did not survive in writing but were passed down by people retelling them, have

deeply influenced modern storytelling culture. As you read, take notes on how the Dog and Wolf view their own lives, as well as one another's lives.

Knowledge Pack Five Text Set: Genes

Text One

[“The Nature vs. Nurture Debate”](#) by CommonLit Staff

Are people the way that they are because of their genes (nature), or because of how they were brought up (nurture)? If two people are brought up in the same home environment, will they be the same? For years, scientists have been debating the answer to this question. As you read the article, take notes on the details the author uses to provide evidence for both sides of the debate.

Text Two

[“Gene Editing Wiped Out a Population of Mosquitoes in Lab Tests”](#) by Tina Hesman Saey

Mosquitoes are more than just pests; some of them are deadly. Today, scientists are working to protect people from mosquitoes by editing mosquitoes’ genes. As you read, take notes on what exactly scientists are changing about mosquitoes.

Text Three

[“About Treacher Collins Syndrome”](#) by CommonLit Staff

This informational text gives a brief overview of the causes and effects of Treacher Collins syndrome, the same condition that Auggie, the protagonist of *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio, has. As you read this text, try to imagine the different ways Treacher Collins might impact a life or shape someone’s identity, and identify 2-3 main ideas of the article.

Text Four

[“Woolly Mammoth Sparks Debate Over Cloning”](#) by Joyce Grant

The woolly mammoth is an extinct species of mammoth (a mammal related to the elephant) that lived during the ice ages. The animal is known from bones and frozen carcasses from northern North America and northern Eurasia. The species disappeared around 10,000 years ago, but modern technology has sparked a debate about whether or not extinct species like the woolly mammoth should be brought back. As you read, take note of the pros and cons of cloning extinct species.

Text Five

[“Explainer: How CRISPR Works”](#) by Tina Hesman Saey

In this informational text, Tina Hesman Saey discusses how scientists are able to edit organisms’ genes. As you read, take notes on how CRISPR changes DNA.

Knowledge Pack Six Text Set: Resilience

Text One

[“Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance”](#) by Angela Lee Duckworth

Angela Lee Duckworth is a psychologist and author who studies grit and self-control at the University of Pennsylvania. In this TED Talk, Duckworth discusses the role that grit plays in success. As you read, take notes on what grit is and how it impacts an individual’s ability to overcome obstacles.

Text Two

[“Want to get into College? Learn to Fail”](#) by Angel B.. Perez

Many students experience intense pressure to be perfect in school, especially to ensure that they are accepted to a top university. But how important is a perfect college application? In this informational article, a dean of admissions discusses what colleges are really looking for and offers his surprising take on the importance of failure. As you read, take notes on the reasons why the author thinks students should be honest about their failures on college applications.

Text Three

[“The Characteristics of Resilient People”](#) by Set to Go

How do people successfully rebound from the challenges they face in everyday life? This informational text discusses the characteristics that resilient people have in common. As you read, take notes on how a person can increase their resilience.

Text Four

[“Winston Churchill’s ‘Never Give In’ Speech”](#) by Prime Minister Churchill

Winston Churchill (1874-1965) was the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from 1940 to 1945 and from 1951 to 1955. Churchill was an officer in the British army, writer, artist, and non-academic historian. On October 29, 1941, Churchill visited Harrow School (a private boarding school for boys that he attended in 1888) to hear the traditional songs of the school and deliver his speech, “Never Give In.” This speech was given as the United Kingdom’s continued to struggle against Nazi Germany; while also receiving support from the United States in the form of war materials to aid them in World War II. As you read, take notes on how Winston Churchill convinces his audience to remain strong, despite the hardships of war.

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.
Sensational 6		
Summary Write a summary using the “Sensational 6.” Be sure to underline the vocabulary words.		

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

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.