

THE VIRGINIA LITERACY ACT

First Review of Updated Core Instruction Program Guide

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OBJECTIVE AND AGENDA

Objective:

First review of updated *Core Instructional Program Guide K-5*

Agenda:

- Overview of the Virginia Literacy Act (VLA) and Instructional Review Process
- Core Instructional Program Guide
- Next Steps

Overview of the VLA and Instructional Review Process

KEY COMPONENTS OF THE VLA

1. Defines Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction and Science-Based Reading Research

2. Aligns Core Curricula, Supplemental, and Intervention Materials

- Requires all divisions to use core instructional (K-5), supplemental (K-8), and intervention (K-8) programs in grades K-8 that are aligned with science-based reading research, as set out in their literacy plan.
- Adds a division-wide staffing ratio of one reading specialist per 550 students in K-5 and one reading specialist for each 1,100 students in 6-8.

3. Requires Professional Development for Reading Specialists, Teachers, and Principals

4. Partners with Families

- Ensures parents are engaged in student reading plans and have access to resources.

5. Aligns Educator Preparation and Licensure

- Requires certain educator preparation programs to ensure candidates have a program of coursework and demonstrate mastery in science-based reading research and evidence-based literacy instruction.
- Requires literacy assessment for licensure or alternate route to licensure with certain endorsements.
- Establishes a micro-credential program for add-on reading specialist endorsement.

INSTRUCTIONAL REVIEW PROCESS

- Review teams comprised of Virginia educators used rigorous and comprehensive rubrics developed by Virginia Literacy Partnerships (VLP) to conduct a robust review of each submitted instructional program.
- Facilitated by literacy experts, these teams ensured programs are aligned to science-based reading research as well as Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs).
- Providers that did not meet expectations were given the opportunity to appeal, and review teams evaluated additional evidence to make a final determination for each program.
- The review process aligns with textbook adoption: materials will be available for public review and public comment will be accepted for 30 days.

Core Instructional Program Guide

CORE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM GUIDE

The Core Instructional Program Guide aims to clearly communicate the results of this rigorous review process and to equip educators and decision makers with the necessary information to determine what program will best support the literacy instruction of students in their division.

This guide includes:

1. A list of K-5 core instructional programs that Virginia educators determined to align to VLA requirements
2. A “Snapshot,” which is an overview of each approved program that summarizes the strengths and challenges of each program to help guide decision-making.

The first version of the Core Instructional Program Guide was approved by VBOE in June 2023. Since then, VLP conducted a second cycle of reviews and prepared additional recommendations for an expanded Guide.

RECOMMENDED CORE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

Provider	Product Title	Publishing Date	Approved in June 2023	Recommended for approval in December 2023
Amplify Education	CKLA	2022	K-3	4-5
Benchmark Education Company	Benchmark Advance	2022	K-3	4-5
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company	Into Reading	2020	K-3	4-5
Imagine Learning LLC	Imagine Learning EL Education, 2nd edition	2019	K-3	4-5
McGraw Hill LLC	Open Court Reading, 1st edition	2016	K-3	4-5
McGraw Hill LLC	Wonders, 1st edition	2023	K-2	4-5
Open Up Resources	Bookworms K-5 Reading & Writing, 1st edition	2022	K-3	4-5
Open Up Resources	EL Education Language Arts Curriculum, 1st edition	2017	K-2	
Savvas Learning Co	myView Literacy	2020		K-5
Zaner-Bloser	Superkids Reading Program	2020		K-2

EXAMPLE OF CURRICULUM SNAPSHOT

Bookworms Reading and Writing SNAPSHOT

OVERALL RATING

K (Approved)	Meets Expectations
1st (Approved)	Meets Expectations
2nd (Approved)	Meets Expectations
3rd (Approved)	Meets Expectations
4th (Recommended for Approval)	Meets Expectations
5th (Recommended for Approval)	Meets Expectations

PROGRAM STRENGTHS

- Offers an easy-to-implement structure of three components consisting of a shared reading block, small group block, and English Language Arts (ELA) block.
- Materials for teachers are easy to navigate and offer support for differentiated instruction. Professional development is included within the teacher's manuals and includes video webinars and written explanations of each of the highlighted components within the program.
- Program includes a varied collection of texts centered around a theme that facilitates vocabulary building. Students often work within the same text across multiple days which allows for deep conversation about the text and the opportunity to practice new vocabulary words.
- The writing component provides students opportunities to write across multiple genres, including narrative, opinion, and nonfiction as well as writing in response to readings.

PROGRAM CHALLENGES

- Materials provide limited guidance for feedback and precise teacher language within each lesson. While veteran teachers may navigate this well, new teachers may need additional support delivering effective and efficient instructional explanations when introducing new skills or concepts.
- This program would be strengthened by providing additional practice opportunities in the areas of encoding and text reading. There is limited regular encoding practice and, while there is text available for practicing newly introduced phonetic elements, there are not additional decodable or controlled text books included with the program.
- Materials provide only a few complete sample small group foundational lessons and a generic lesson plan template. The program does not provide small group lesson plans for the whole year; as such, teachers will need continued support to effectively plan small group instruction for students over the course of the school year
- Divisions adopting this curriculum may want to consider ways to incorporate additional titles into each module as some of the text used are dated and may not be representative of the community the division serves.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Bookworms is a comprehensive core literacy program that offers an easy to implement structure and teacher guidance. Divisions should consider providing additional support to teachers to ensure lessons are delivered with an appropriate level of explicitness and practice opportunities. While some guidance on small group instruction is provided for lower elementary grades, divisions should consider how to support lower elementary grade teachers to properly integrate small group and whole group instruction and upper elementary grade teachers to support the needs of learners who may be struggling to obtain grade level skills.

BOOKWORMS READING AND WRITING

	K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Phonological & Phonemic Awareness			N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Phonics & Word Study						
Vocabulary						
Text Reading & Fluency	N/A					
Developing Comprehension & Background Knowledge						
Small Group Instruction & Independent Practice						
Writing						

- Meets Expectations
 - Partially Meets Expectations
 - Does Not Meet Expectations
- N/A = Not Assessed in This Grade Level

Next Steps

NEXT STEPS

- VBOE will review the Core Instructional Program Guide for approval at its next meeting in December.
- Materials are available for public review for 30 days. Public comment can be submitted via [survey](#).
- Cycle II reviews of K-8 supplemental and intervention programs will conclude in early 2024. The Recommended Instructional Program Guides will be presented in spring 2024 to the VDOE and VBOE.
- Cycle II K-8 supplemental and intervention programs will be presented to the VBOE in March.
- The VDOE will launch a VLA Implementation Playbook to include a framework and implementation guidance for school divisions. This will also be supported with in person professional learning in each region throughout the Commonwealth.