Vista: Engage

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Introduction

This report was drafted using the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's High-Quality Next Generation ESL Instructional Materials (HQIM-NGESL) review process and rubric. The whole review process and rubric supports evaluation of:

- Whether materials provide a full year's worth of dedicated ESL instruction, as determined by the review panel and given the Massachusetts definition of ESL,
- Whether ESL instructional materials are aligned to the WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition (henceforth known as the ELD Framework) – and integrated with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, as determined by the review panel, and
- Quality of ESL instructional materials, as interpreted through the HQIM-NGESL rubric.

The full report features a summary of the results of a panel review of the materials. The review of the materials was done during the 2025-2026 convening of the HQIM-NGESL panel. The panel was comprised of Massachusetts district leaders, classroom educators, and representatives from higher education institutions. It is important to note that the report only summarizes the analysis of the Quality of the ESL instructional materials as interpreted through the HQIM-NGESL rubric. It does not guarantee the quality, scope, or thoroughness of the reviewed materials. It also does not endorse the use of the specific materials reviewed, but simply provides a summary of the information shared by the reviewing panel.

The HQIM-NGESL rubric is divided into two sections. Section A focuses on curricular structure and the coherence of the instructional materials for supporting a trajectory of learning for the year. Section B focuses on whether materials are student-centered and the intentional design of the materials for supporting multilingual learners. Each report:

- Opens with a brief description of the materials that is provided by the publisher or the district that submitted the materials for review,
- Includes a quick reference graphic of the ratings for each of the rubric criteria and a summary of the review of the materials, as described by the review panel, and
- Contains overall-level ratings for each of the rubric criteria, as determined by the review panel, and accompanied by descriptive strengths and challenges, and
- Information from the publisher, such as product specifications.

As you review the report, be sure to consider the following:

- The criteria in the rubric represent selected desired aspects of high quality in ESL materials. While comprehensive and useful for selecting, creating, and improving the quality of ESL instructional materials, the rubric is not, nor can it be, exhaustive. There may be additional criteria your evaluation team determines important to add, based on local needs, EL data, backgrounds, and educator

needs. Data may inform your creation of additional criteria and indicators in the evidence gathering process.

- The report can help teams determine whether they should adopt the ESL Instructional Materials, adopt the ESL Instructional Materials with supplemental guidance and materials to address gaps in quality, adopt materials and create a local plan to address gaps in quality, or to not adopt. HQIM-NGESL reports are only one component of a robust and transparent process to investigate and select high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) for your localized context. Explore our IMplement MA website to learn more about DESE's inclusive four-phase process, resources, and opportunities to support strong selection of high-quality instructional materials that is grounded in a shared vision, informed by localized equity priorities, and supported by diverse stakeholders.

The Overall Bottom Line

Section A: Curricular Structure
Alignment to MA Definition of ESL – 4
Curricular Map – 3
Unit Language Goals – 1
Lesson Objectives – 2
Assessment – 3
Functional Approach – 4
Shared Responsibility – 1

Section B – Student-centered Instructional Materials
Asset-based Orientation – 2
Linguistically Responsive – 1
Critical Stance – 2
Oral Language Development – 3
Formative Assessment – 4
Scaffolds and Supports – 3
Universal Design and Accessibility - 3

4: Evidence is clear and comprehensive; clear connection to four indicators
3: Evidence is present; clear connection to three indicators
2: Evidence is present but insufficient; clear connection to two indicators
0: Evidence is not sufficiently present; connection to one or fewer indicators

Summary of the Bottom Line
The Engage curriculum demonstrates several meaningful strengths as a comprehensive ESL instructional program. Most notably, the materials provide strong alignment to the Massachusetts definition of ESL through the integration of language development within grade-level content across all four language domains. The program's assessment system, formative assessment structures, oral language development opportunities, scaffolds, and accessibility support represent particularly strong components that districts can leverage immediately. Engage offers rich thematic units, cross-disciplinary connections, extensive instructional resources, and a clear commitment to supporting English Learners through multimodal and scaffolded instruction. The curriculum also reflects thoughtful instructional design through spiraling skills, varied genres, embedded speaking and writing opportunities, and strong digital accessibility features.

At the same time, the review identified several areas that may need additional supplementation and professional development to ensure full implementation aligned to Massachusetts expectations and the WIDA ELD Framework. The panel noted lacking or inconsistent evidence of clearly articulated and embedded unit-level language goals, limited explicit integration of linguistically responsive and asset-based instructional

practices, and insufficient structures for shared responsibility between ESL and content educators. While many supportive tools and resources exist within the program, they are often housed separately from core instructional materials and require educators to independently make connections that are not explicitly embedded in lessons. Overall, Engage is a strong foundational curriculum with particular strengths in assessment, scaffolding, and oral language development; however, districts adopting the program may need to provide additional guidance, collaboration structures, and professional learning to strengthen explicit language goal implementation, linguistically responsive teaching practices, and interdisciplinary collaboration in order to fully meet the needs of multilingual learners.

The Next Generation ESL Curriculum Review Rubric

Section A: Curricular Structure

Alignment to Massachusetts Definition of ESL – 4
Materials demonstrate clear alignment with the Massachusetts definition of ESL, integrating language development with grade-level content and the ELD Framework

Strengths: Engage demonstrates clear alignment with the Massachusetts definition of ESL, which requires an explicit, sustained, and systematic focus on language development within grade-level disciplinary specific contexts. Each unit clearly integrates language and content across a range of domains — listening, speaking, reading, and writing — across disciplines including ELA, science, social studies, and mathematics. The Engage Scaffolds Handbook explicitly states that theme-based learning provides a contextualized learning experience that allows English Learners to develop language skills across domains while engaging with meaningful subject matter. Units such as Unit 1 of Engage Level A feature specific grade-level key academic practices like taking notes using text structure and argumentative writing, and correlation documents including the CCR Standards List and the WIDA ELD Standards Framework 2020 correlation guide demonstrate intentional alignment to standards. The panel also noted that an efficacy study (SEG Measurement) provided evidence that students using Engage made measurable progress in both reading and writing.

Challenges: While alignment to the Massachusetts definition of ESL is evident throughout the materials, the connection to the WIDA Standards Framework is not immediately visible. Reviewers noted that the WIDA alignment only becomes apparent upon consulting the separate correlation chart, which could be overlooked by educators implementing the materials. This means educators may not readily see the integration of Key Language Uses and Language Expectations- hindering the ability to make this visible to students and educators alike. The panel noted that an additional district-level layer of support may be needed to make this alignment more explicit for both staff and students.

Bottom Line: Engage provides evidence of alignment to the Massachusetts definition of ESL. Materials simultaneously develop language and content, teach language within rich and contextualized circumstances, and attend to academic, social, and instructional language purposes. The WIDA alignment, while present, would benefit from being more prominently integrated throughout materials rather than housed only in a separate correlation document.

Curricular Map – 3
Materials Provide a clear, year-long curricular map that demonstrates a coherent progression of language development aligned with grade-level content.

Strengths: The Engage curriculum provides a functional scope and sequence that demonstrates several key features of a curricular map. The Scope and Sequence document — available as both a PDF download and within the Interactive Teacher's Edition (pages viii-xv) — shows lesson outcomes that lead to unit outcomes and highlights spiraling instruction. For example, summarizing and synthesizing appear as focus strategies across all units, and argumentative writing structure and graphic organizer-based note-taking recur across Engage Levels A and C, demonstrating coherent skill deepening over time. Each unit features connections to ELA, science, social studies, and mathematics, as well as to a range of language domains, grammar, and media. Pacing guides for 45-, 60-, and 90-minute classes and both WIDA and CCSS correlation guides are available through the tools portal.

Challenges: The panel noted that at times the unit outcomes are not clearly articulated, making it difficult to confirm that lesson outcomes build toward annual benchmarks (Indicator 2). Reviewers found that while the scope and sequence shows lesson-level outcomes and spiraling skills, the unit-level outcomes themselves are at times insufficiently defined. The essential questions present in the materials are a promising structural element but do not substitute for explicit unit-level language goals. Additionally, while CCSS correlations are available, specific correlations to Massachusetts standards were absent — other states such as Texas, Florida, and California were listed, but not Massachusetts.

Bottom Line: The Engage curriculum provides solid evidence for three of four curricular map indicators — spiraling instruction, Key Language Use integration, and content-area connections — but lacks clarity around unit outcomes that connect lesson-level learning to annual benchmarks. Districts using Engage may need to supplement the scope and sequence with explicit unit level goals.

Unit Language Goals – 1
Materials present clearly defined unit-level language goals that integrate content standards with language development, providing a coherent focus of instruction over several weeks.

Strengths: Engage provides language objectives for each unit which appear to be generally aligned to content connections. Both Engage Level A and Level B include language objective documents, and the unit sequence structure reflects intentional instructional organization. The 'In This Unit' section of the Teacher's Edition (e.g., Engage A, page 155) offers a helpful orientation to the learning for teachers and students. Some evidence was found for WIDA ELD Standards Framework elements (Indicators 3 and 4), suggesting that the underlying infrastructure for language goal development exists.

Challenges: The panelists noted an absence of clearly defined unit-level language goals. Reviewers found that language objectives are present but housed in a separate PDF document, not embedded within lessons or the Teacher's Edition, meaning educators could easily overlook them. The objectives that do exist are at times very general — appearing as if they could apply to any lesson rather than being specific to the unit at hand. Because unit-level goals are inconsistent and vague, it is difficult to determine if the lesson objectives build toward unit goals, and the connection to the WIDA ELD Standards Framework requires deductive reasoning on the educators' part rather than being explicitly stated. There is also insufficient evidence that students have adequate time to meaningfully engage with stated objectives, as pacing at times does not appear fully aligned with intended outcomes.

Bottom Line: While language objectives exist, they are not clearly defined at the unit level, not embedded within instructional materials, and not explicitly connected to WIDA ELD Framework components. Districts adopting Engage may need to develop and embed explicit unit-level language goals aligned to both content standards and the Massachusetts ELD Framework.

Lesson Objectives – 2
Materials provide clear, actionable lesson-level language objectives that directly support progress toward unit language goals and can be reasonably accomplished within a single lesson.

Strengths: Lesson-level language objectives are present in the Engage materials and show evidence of alignment to content connections. Both Engage Level A and B include language objective documents that show objectives appropriate for the scope of a daily lesson. In Engage Level C, activities in the Engage with Listening and Speaking strand appear aligned to the objectives presented in the language objectives document. The curriculum also includes pacing guides for different class lengths (45, 60, and 90 minutes), which attempt to frame instructional time appropriately for lesson-level work.

Challenges: Despite their presence, lesson objectives are housed in a separate Language Objectives PDF available through the Tools portal rather than embedded within the Teacher's Edition or lesson plans themselves. Reviewers struggled to find references to language objectives in the Teacher's Edition or Scope and Sequence, raising concern that educators may not encounter them organically during planning or instruction. At times objectives are quite general — reviewers noted they 'seemed as if they could be for any lesson,' lacking the specificity needed to clearly connect to individual instructional lessons and learning activities. There is insufficient guidance about whether and how teachers should share objectives with students, and no evidence that students are prompted to monitor or self-assess their progress toward daily objectives.

Bottom Line: Lesson objectives exist and align with the curriculum's content connections (Indicators 1 and 2), but significant missed opportunities remain for Indicators 3 and 4 — specifically, prompting educators to make objectives visible and comprehensible to students and encouraging ongoing self-assessment. Schools and districts using these materials may need to provide professional development on how to incorporate language objectives explicitly into daily instruction.

Assessment – 3
Materials include an assessment system that provides multiple opportunities to measure language growth, aligns with curriculum goals and standards, and informs long-term instructional planning.

Strengths: Assessment is identified as a strong feature of the Engage curriculum. The program includes a comprehensive, multi-layered assessment system encompassing diagnostic assessments, progress monitoring assessments (quizzes and tests), proficiency assessments (summative exams), mid-unit and end-of-unit tests, and mid-book and end-of-book tests. The Engage Benchmark Diagnostic Test provides domain-specific diagnostic tools, and the Assess to Learn system enables teachers to view performance data by standard, student, and group and to assign targeted practice and instruction. The Scaffolds Handbook describes a backwards design approach in which writing preparation begins on day one, building toward an end-of-unit writing project. Speaking prompts and rubrics, as well as writing prompts and rubrics, are available through the Tools portal. Every lesson page also includes Formative Assessment boxes alongside Differentiated Instruction boxes to support in the moment decision-making.

Challenges: Despite the breadth of the assessment system, reviewers noted a lack of clarity in assessment criteria. Writing assessment answer keys note that 'answers will vary' without specifying how student writing will be evaluated, and rubrics that are included (such as for writing and debate) appear limited in scope — reviewers noted they seem to align only with 'proficient' responses, leaving unclear guidance for evaluating student work at a range of proficiency levels. Additionally, the overall assessment system lacks sufficient clarity for tracking language growth across the full continuum through proficiency levels.

Bottom Line: Assessment represents a strength of the Engage program, with clear evidence across multiple assessment types, frequencies, and modalities. However, schools and districts using these materials may need to strengthen the clarity and completeness of the scoring criteria, particularly for writing and speaking rubrics, to ensure educators can evaluate language growth at all proficiency levels.

Functional Approach – 4
Materials implement a purpose-driven approach to language development that explicitly links language forms and functions to communicative goals across academic disciplines.

Strengths: The Engage curriculum demonstrates strong evidence of a functional approach to language development by connecting language forms and functions to communicative goals across academic disciplines. The Activity Library includes a wide variety of resources that help students communicate meaning for different purposes within meaningful disciplinary contexts — for example, Unit 3: Hidden Patterns in Engage Level A. The Practice Book offers multiple opportunities to practice language in different disciplinary contexts, with Build and Expand Vocabulary sections in every unit. Genre-based instruction is varied and includes diverse formats such as podcasts, and guiding questions prompt students to analyze the purpose, audience, and genre of texts they read. The Scope and Sequence highlights the various opportunities students have to engage with texts and language patterns, and the curriculum incorporates language of mathematics throughout the units. Reading Guide graphic organizers are available for genres and Engage with Grammar and Engage with Writing sections appear in every unit.

Challenges: While the functional approach is evident across most of the curriculum, reviewers noted missed opportunities in the language of science and social studies specifically, where summarization tends to dominate as the primary instructional focus rather than deeper engagement with discipline-specific language patterns. The panel also noted that identifying and analyzing common language patterns such as conventions of disciplinary genres and linguistic structures is not as prominently integrated into the materials, as many activities require students to summarize texts or answer comprehension questions rather than explicitly analyzing how language structures communicate meaning within each disciplinary context.

Bottom Line: Engage demonstrates evidence of alignment with a functional approach to language development, particularly in its use of varied genres, cross-disciplinary texts, and attention to audience and purpose. Educators using these materials may need to consider additional ways to explicitly develop students' ability to analyze discipline-specific language patterns in science and social studies contexts, moving beyond summarization toward deeper linguistic analysis.

Shared Responsibility – 1
Materials promote shared expertise, responsibility, and accountability for students in the program.

Strengths: The Engage curriculum includes some tools that could support collaborative practices between ESL and content educators, most notably the Assess to Learn system. This platform provides data on standards, students, and groups, allowing teachers to view which standards require additional instruction, form small groups based on specific learning gaps, and assign targeted practice and assessments. The Linguistic Contrastive Chart was also identified as a resource that could support educator collaboration. The Assess to Learn Guide, available through the Tools portal, provides a framework for using data to personalize instruction.

Challenges: Despite the presence of these tools, the curriculum does not explicitly prompt collaboration between ESL and content educators. There is no guidance within the materials directing ESL teachers to meet with content teachers to share student performance data, jointly analyze student work, or collaboratively plan curriculum and assessments. The collaborative tools that exist are not accompanied by explicit protocols or processes for how to use them in a shared-responsibility model.

Bottom Line: While some data analysis tools are available, the program lacks explicit structures, prompts, and guidance for fostering collaboration between ESL and content educators. Districts adopting Engage may need to build in professional development and collaborative structures to support co-planning and shared accountability for English Learners' language growth and development.

Section B: Student-Centered Instructional Materials

Asset-based Orientation – 2
Materials consistently promote an asset-based approach, actively incorporating and building upon students' diverse backgrounds, languages, cultures, experiences, knowledge, and interests to enhance language development and content learning.

Strengths: Engage includes several features that support an asset-based orientation. Glossaries in multiple home languages are available through the Tools portal, encouraging students to draw on their linguistic backgrounds. Spanish-English cognate lists support students whose home language is Spanish. Units include engaging thematic content with a wide variety of texts representing diverse cultures and perspectives — for example, Unit 4: Hope and Courage in Engage Level A offers opportunities for students to make meaningful personal connections. The Teacher's Edition includes sensitivity notes alerting teachers to potentially sensitive topics (e.g., Engage A, page 26), and writing prompts encourage students to share personal narratives and explore their identities, such as the autobiographical essay prompt on page 78 of Engage Level A.

Challenges: While resources are present, the instructional materials do not consistently or explicitly direct teachers to activate students' home languages and cultural knowledge as instructional resources. Reviewers noted that teachers are expected to draw these out without specific guidance on how to do so. The identity-affirming elements in the curriculum tend toward general personal relevance rather than deeply centering students' multilingual and multicultural identities. The cognate lists are limited to Spanish-English, leaving out students who speak other languages. There are no explicit directions in the materials connecting student cultural experiences to instructional tasks, and the program lacks guidance for educators in systematically gathering information about students' funds of knowledge.

Bottom Line: Engage has some evidence of an asset-based orientation, with culturally diverse texts, multilingual glossaries, and opportunities for personal connection. However, opportunities to authentically and explicitly leverage students' full linguistic and cultural repertoires are inconsistently embedded. Schools and districts using these materials may need to provide additional professional development and instructional practices to support educators to make asset-based practices more explicit and systematic.

Linguistically Responsive – 1
Materials consistently promote linguistically responsive practices, actively supporting the use of students' full linguistic resources while facilitating English language development across all domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing).

Strengths: Some linguistically responsive features are embedded in the Engage curriculum. Multilingual glossaries available in a variety of home languages through the Tools portal represent resources that could be used to support students' home language development alongside English. The Spanish-English cognate lists provide an explicit bridge between linguistic systems for Spanish-speaking students. The Engage Scaffolds Handbook notes that every strand of every unit includes opportunities for students to read, write, speak, and listen — ensuring language development across domains — and the digital platform supports students with accessible features such as interactive text with audio.

Challenges: Despite the presence of multilingual glossaries and cognate lists, the panelists noted a lack of clear guidance to educators on how to use these resources in daily instruction to build upon students' diverse linguistic backgrounds. The panelists noted that the materials lacked evidence of explicit instruction on language transfer, activities that develop metalinguistic awareness, and strategies for supporting students' ongoing development of home languages alongside English. Evidence of translanguaging as an instructional strategy was not found. The cognate lists are restricted to Spanish-English, and there is no scaffolding for making cross-linguistic connections for speakers of other languages.

Bottom Line: While multilingual glossaries and cognate lists exist, they are isolated resources without instructional guidance, and the materials do not systematically develop teachers' capacity to draw on students' full linguistic repertoires. Schools and districts using these materials may need to provide professional development to operationalize linguistically responsive practices using these materials.

Critical Stance – 2
Materials consistently foster a critical stance, encouraging students to use language as a tool for inquiry, analysis, and action on issues relevant to their lives and communities.

Strengths: Engage includes several features that support the development of student agency and critical engagement with language. Writing and speaking prompts across the curriculum incorporate student voice and choice — for example, the Research Report Assignment in Engage Level A encourages students to choose their own essay topic (a famous person who overcame an obstacle), and the autobiographical essay prompt on page 78 invites students to reflect on their own identity. Units in Engage Level B, such as Unit 2: Survival, support student inquiry, problem-posing, and communication about issues from multiple perspectives. The 'Rate the Reading' feature included in each unit (e.g., Engage A, page 110) invites students to evaluate and respond to texts critically.

Challenges: While the panelists found some evidence of student autonomy/agency and multi-perspective inquiry, they did not find consistent evidence in the materials of systematic support for students in communicating to affirm their own identities and maintain relationships in ways that are explicitly tied to language learning goals. The panelists also noted limited evidence that materials encourage students to question inequities, injustices, or community issues and to act upon them. Additionally, engagement with social justice and community-action orientations is largely absent.

Bottom Line: Engage provides some meaningful opportunities for student voice, choice, and inquiry, supporting the foundation of a critical stance. However, the materials do not consistently encourage students to examine inequities or engage in community-oriented critical action. Educators using these materials may need to supplement units and lessons with additional tasks and texts that explicitly cultivate critical inquiry and action to help foster students' critical language use and social awareness.

Oral Language Development – 3
Materials provide daily, structured opportunities for all students to engage in meaningful oral interactions that develop listening and speaking skills for social and academic purposes.

Strengths: Oral language development is identified as a strength of the Engage curriculum. Every unit includes a dedicated Listening and Speaking section, and the Activity Library for Engage Level D confirms that oral language is systematically integrated into the materials. 'Guided Talk' activities are incorporated into every lesson, with the Scaffolds Handbook (page 24) describing a structured we do/you do together model for developing speaking and listening skills. Each unit features speaking assessments — such as personal narrative prompts in Engage Level D — and opportunities for structured academic discourse including debates and presentations. Speaking prompts and rubrics are available in the Tools portal. The curriculum also connects oral discourse to other language modalities, for instance through the 'Listen to and Create a Podcast' activity in Engage with Literature and Content, Level A (pages 46-47).

Challenges: While oral language development opportunities are integrated throughout the materials, the panelists noted a lack of evidence of guidance to support teachers in leveraging students' linguistic assets during oral discussions. The panelists did not find evidence of explicit prompts or instructional moves for teachers to draw on students' full linguistic repertoires — including translanguaging — during oral interactions. Guidance for sustaining meaningful academic discourse and building from students' home language strengths in conversational contexts was also noticeably absent.

Bottom Line: Oral language development is a strength in the materials, with daily structured opportunities for dialogue, grade-level instructional conversations, and multimodal connections. The panelists noted a lack of explicit guidance on leveraging students' full linguistic repertoires during oral activities. Educators using these materials may need to embed more translanguaging strategies and teacher moves for sustaining academic discourse.

Formative Assessment - 4
Materials integrate formative assessment practices throughout instruction, providing tools and strategies for teachers and students to monitor learning, adjust teaching, and support language growth in real time.

Strengths: Formative assessment is identified as a strong feature of the materials, with strong and comprehensive evidence across the indicators. The Scaffolds Handbook (page 28) describes a robust system in which every lesson includes Formative Assessment boxes that provide quick in the moment questions to enable immediate teacher intervention, alongside Differentiated Instruction boxes. Progress Monitoring Quizzes enable educators to assess knowledge strand by strand, pinpointing specific students and skill gaps. Independent assignments are also recommended as formative tools. The Proficiency Assessment Overview provides a clear structure for quizzes and tests. The curriculum includes self-evaluation rubrics providing opportunities for student self-assessment, and the Assess to Learn system allows teachers to track performance data across standards and students to inform grouping and instruction.

Challenges: Reviewers noted no significant challenges for this criterion. Formative assessment is comprehensively embedded throughout the curriculum with clear, actionable guidance for teachers.

Bottom Line: The program provides a coherent, multi-layered system of ongoing assessment that supports teacher decision-making, student self-monitoring, and timely feedback.

Scaffolds and Supports – 3
Materials provide a range of scaffolding strategies and supports that assist students in accessing grade-level content and developing language, with guidance on how to gradually remove supports as students gain proficiency.

Strengths: Scaffolds and supports represent another strong feature in the materials. The panelists noted that the materials include 93 specific graphic organizers available through the Tools portal, as well as sentence frames for discussion and strategy practice embedded in each unit (e.g., sentence frames for making inferences in Engage Level A, Unit 2). The Writer's Handbook provides procedural steps for writing essays, graphic organizers, and model responses. The Scaffolds Handbook articulates a 'High Ceiling, Low Floor' philosophy and a gradual release model (I do, We do, You do together, You do alone), with Scaffold/Amplify sections built into every Teacher's Edition unit. The Index of Accessible Activities, audioscripts, and video content are available for every unit.

Challenges: Despite the volume of scaffolding resources, reviewers noted inconsistency in their application across lessons — some lessons include a substantial number of scaffolds while others are less supported. Scaffolds also appear general in nature, available across all lessons without clear differentiation for specific lesson needs or individual student profiles. Students may not always know when or how to use the available supports, and the scaffolds are not always explicitly targeted to the particular text or task in the lesson. There are also some missed opportunities for scaffolding techniques that engage students in higher-order thinking with complex texts, as in the Engage with Reading: The Necklace activities.

Bottom Line: Scaffolds and supports are a significant strength of Engage, with a large and varied toolkit grounded in evidence-based instructional strategies. However, the educators using these materials may need additional explicit guidance on selecting and targeting specific scaffolds for individual lessons and students, ensuring that supports are intentionally deployed rather than uniformly available.

Universal Design and Accessibility – 3
Materials provide varied means for accessing the content and demonstrating learning, helping teachers meet the diverse needs and abilities of a variety of students, including those with different abilities and those working above or below grade level.

Strengths: Engage incorporates a range of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) features that support diverse learners. The digital platform includes built-in text-to-speech and read-aloud functionality for all readings, highlighted target vocabulary, interactive text with audio, and embedded glossary support (e.g., Engage Level A, Unit 1: Choices and Pathways). Video content is integrated into every unit through the Engage with Media strand. The Teacher's Edition includes Scaffold/Amplify sections for every activity, and the Index of Accessible Activities provides additional flexible options. The curriculum's High Ceiling, Low Floor philosophy reflects a commitment to meeting learners at multiple entry points.

Challenges: While the curriculum includes an inclusion insert at the beginning of each unit in the Teacher's Edition addressing students with disabilities, reviewers noted that this insert uses identical language across all units, limiting its utility as a targeted instructional guide. Specific guidance for supporting English Learners with IEPs (dually identified students) is not embedded within lesson activities — for example, no prompts appear in read-aloud activities or other instructional moments where accommodations would be most relevant.

Bottom Line: Universal design and accessibility features are a strength of Engage, with strong digital tools, multimodal content, and differentiated instruction pathways. Schools and districts using these materials may need to provide more targeted, lesson-specific guidance for supporting English Learners with disabilities, moving beyond the generic inclusion insert to provide actionable, context-specific prompts for teachers throughout instructional materials.