

Escalate English

A RESEARCH-BASED APPROACH

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ACTIVE Language Production



ACCESSIBLE Rigorous Content



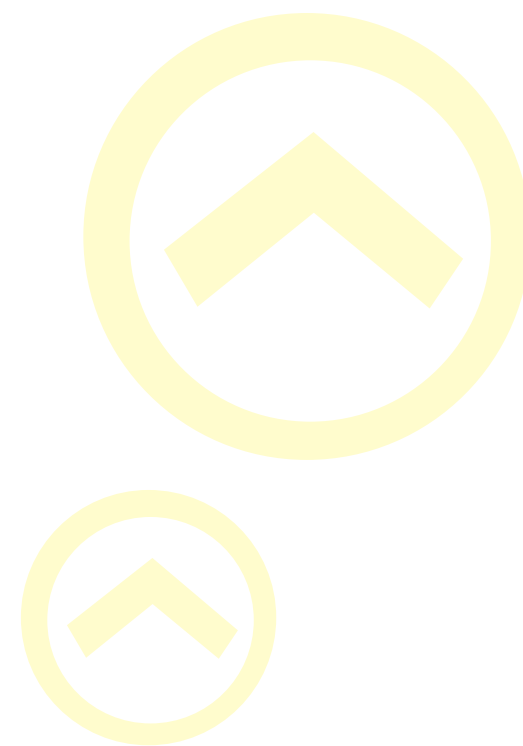
ACCELERATED English Proficiency





Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
***Escalate English* © 2017**

A Research-Based Approach



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Introduction

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt’s *Escalate English* © 2017 is a comprehensive Grades 4–8 language development program built to support both English language development (ELD) and English language arts (ELA) standards. The program was designed to be respectful of the unique needs of long-term English learners, students who have reached a plateau in their progress toward English proficiency, by providing solid language instruction in the context of developmentally appropriate and high-quality literary and informational selections. Written to rapidly improve academic oral and written language comprehension and production, and to prepare students to meet the rigor of on-grade-level English language arts standards, *Escalate English* provides support for language development across all domains, including:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing
- Viewing

The purpose of this document is to demonstrate clearly and explicitly the scientific research base for the program. The program is built around what we know about effective instruction for English learners, and particularly for long-term English learners, including how best to support their accurate and purposeful use of English for a variety of purposes, as well as how best to design instruction, utilize scaffolding, and employ technology to meet their specific needs. HMH *Escalate English* integrates these best practices into a program that research suggests will be effective with English learners.

To help readers of this document make the connections between the research strands and *Escalate English*, each strand includes the following sections:

- **Defining the Strand.** This section summarizes the terminology and provides an overview of the research related to the strand.
- **Research That Guided the Development of *Escalate English*.** This section identifies subtopics within each strand and provides excerpts from and summaries of relevant research on each subtopic.
- **From Research to Practice.** This section explains how the research data are exemplified in the *Escalate English* program.

The combination of the major research recommendations and the related features of the *Escalate English* program will help readers better understand how the program incorporates research into its instructional design.

A reference list of works cited is provided at the end of this document.

The Need for Escalate English

The Diversity of American Classrooms

American classrooms reflect the diversity of the United States. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2015c), “from fall 2002 through fall 2012, the number of White students enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools decreased from 28.6 million to 25.4 million, and their share of public school enrollment decreased from 59 to 51 percent. In contrast the number of Hispanic students enrolled during this period increased from 8.6 million to 12.1 million students, and their share of public school enrollment increased from 18 to 24 percent.” Over the same period, percentages of Asian/Pacific Islanders rose, as did students identified as having two or more races. In 2014, Americans younger than 5 years old became the first group to be majority-minority, with just over half identified as a member of a racial or ethnic group (United States Census Bureau, 2015).

The Increasing Percentages of English Learners

In these diverse classrooms, a sizable percentage of students are English learners (ELs). Public schools in every state educate ELs (Ramsey & O’Day, 2010), and the numbers are growing. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2015a), the percentage of ELs in American public schools was higher in 2012–2013, at 9.2 percent (or 4.4 million students) than in 2002–2003 (8.7 percent) and 2011–2012 (9.1 percent). In the District of Columbia and Alaska, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Texas, the percentages are even higher, with ELs comprising greater than 10 percent of the student population. Projections suggest that by the year 2025, one in four students in United States school will be an English learner (Klingner, Hoover, & Baca, 2008). In some cities and districts, the numbers are much higher. In a survey of the Council of the Great City Schools, almost a third of the Council districts reported EL enrollment of 20 to 60 percent (Council of the Great City Schools, 2013).

ELs themselves are also diverse. “...they enter U.S. schools with a wide range of language proficiencies... and of subject-matter knowledge. They differ in educational background, expectations of schooling, socioeconomic status, age of arrival in the United States, and personal experiences coming to and living in the United States” (Christian, 2006, p. 2). Some ELs are U.S. born and some are foreign born. Furthermore, their native languages vary, with the vast majority speaking Spanish, but significant numbers speaking Chinese languages, Korean, Vietnamese, Arabic, Russian, Tagalog, and other languages (Zong & Batalova, 2015).

These demographic trends create a challenge, and an opportunity, for American schools: to meet the needs of diverse English learners. Meeting these needs is a complex task.

Achievement Gaps between English Learners and Non-English Learners

Achievement gaps between ELs and non-ELs are persistent. The Council of the Great City Schools found gaps in NAEP reading scores between ELs and their non-EL peers in Grades 4 and 8 (Council of the Great City Schools, 2013). The National Center for Education Statistics (2015d) found that this gap in reading scores has been persistent; “the achievement gap between non-ELL and ELL students in 2013 was not measurably different from the gap in either 2009 or 1998.” In mathematics, similar gaps exist. In 2013 and in all previous NAEP administrations since 1996, non-EL students outperformed EL students in mathematics in Grades 4 and 8 (NCES, 2015b). Gaps also exist for Algebra I completion. About 50% of non-ELs complete Algebra 1, while only about 12% of English learners and about 33% of former ELs complete the course (Council of the Great City Schools, 2013).

While U.S. students are graduating from high school at a higher rate than ever before (U.S. Department of Education, 2015), with a recent 4 % increase among Hispanic students, these promising statistics are shadowed by more troubling numbers. Graduation rates for English learners are much lower than for the general population (59% compared with 80%) (Ross, 2015). ELs are twice as likely as those with English proficiency to drop out (Callahan, 2013).

The Challenge of New Standards

Alongside persistent performance gaps come new education initiatives that increase rigor in K–12, emphasize college- and career-readiness, and raise accountability. New standards, like the Common Core State Standards, the Next Generation Science Standards, and other rigorous state standards, and assessment initiatives, like those of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College™ and Careers (PARCC)* and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC)*, have important implications for English learners.

In addition, many states now have in place more rigorous standards for ELs. Some states have created their own standards (such as California); others have joined in the WIDA consortium to adopt the *2012 Amplification of the English Language Development Standards, Kindergarten–Grade 12*. In the WIDA Standards, Standard 1, Social and Instructional Language, focuses on the mastery of instructional language, while Standards 2–5 address the language of content-driven classrooms. These English language development standards recognize that language acquisition must be the primary goal, but at the same time, students must work towards meeting grade-level targets.

Compounding the challenge is that many teachers feel unprepared to implement the Common Core. In a survey by the Council of the Great City Schools (2012) about half of respondents indicated that they feel only somewhat or not prepared to implement the shifts and use strategies for ELs to meet the Common Core’s rigorous demands. High standards and increased accountability place dual pressure on English learners—to master English and gain rigorous academic skills and knowledge (Christian, 2006; Izquierdo, Ligons, & Erwin, 1998).

ELs need increased academic support to reach these rigorous expectations (Hakuta, 2011). As Olsen (2014) warns, without the needed support, these initiatives might increase the chance of more English learners failing to gain proficiency—and becoming long-term English learners.

Long-Term English Learners

Achieving language proficiency takes time. Acquiring a second language is a complex process that involves sociocultural, linguistic, academic, and cognitive processes. Standards, from WIDA, from California, and others, recognize that language development is a multi-year process.

The specific amount of time to reach fluency varies by the learner. ELs differ. Their school and community learning environments vary, as do their knowledge of phonology, vocabulary, morphology, grammar, semantics, and discourse, their content-area knowledge, and their learning styles (Collier, 1995).

Some ELs get stuck along the way and do not reach the level of language proficiency needed for academic success. Statistics on English learners may not include former learners, who are no longer enrolled in English language development, but may still lack full fluency and face specific academic challenges (Callahan, 2013). Some of these students are long-term English learners. The phrase “long-term English learner” is generally used to describe those students who have been in U.S. schools for six years or more, have stalled in their progression toward English proficiency, and are struggling academically (Olsen, 2014).

Why do some ELs become long-term English learners? Olsen (2010) suggests that several factors can contribute, including a lack of programming for ELs, ineffective instructional materials, poorly implemented programs, and limited opportunities to participate in the curriculum. Fillmore (2014) suggests a possible cause for increases in long-term English learners is that they have, to date, been excluded from instruction with the complex literary and content-area texts that would actually help them develop high-level, academic-language skills. Rather than view academic language as a prerequisite for reading complex texts, she argues, educators of English learners should recognize that academic-language development and complex-text reading develop hand-in-hand.

The Struggles of Long-Term Learners

Long-term ELs struggle. In a joint study conducted by Vanderbilt University and the Migration Policy Institute, researchers found that English learners who quickly exited (within three years) English language development programs achieved at much higher levels in math and reading than those students who remained long-term English learners (Wetzel, 2012).

Long-term English learners share these general characteristics:

- Struggling academically
- Demonstrating high-functioning social language, but weak academic language
- Possessing significant deficits in reading and writing
- Having gaps in background knowledge
- Failing to engage academically (Olsen, 2010)

Effective Instruction for English Learners

As well as being a challenge, new rigorous expectations, like those expressed in the Common Core State Standards and other rigorous state standards, are an opportunity to strengthen the instruction of English learners. According to Olsen (2014) the Common Core expectations can effectively complement effective instruction for ELs and long-term ELs because of the shared focus on:

- ✓ Academic language,
- ✓ Literacy and language across the curriculum,
- ✓ Collaboration and teamwork, and
- ✓ Oral language, speaking, and listening.

In addition, the Common Core focus on writing for communicative purposes (to narrate, to inform, to persuade or argue) dovetails nicely with the need of long-term English learners to view language as a tool for making meaning and meaningfully communicating.

Olsen (2010, 2014) suggests these principles for effective instruction for long-term learners:

- Focused, accelerated instruction
- Programs tailored to their specific needs
- A focus on listening, speaking, reading, and writing
- English Language Development (ELD) and content-area instruction
- Home-language development (as possible)
- Academic rigor
- Active, engaging instruction

The Value of Programs for English Learners

Survey research by the Council of the Great City Schools (2012) suggests a clear need for high-quality CCSS-aligned instructional materials for ELs. Long-term ELs need instructional programs that will:

- Help them attain required achievement on rigorous standards and state assessments;
- Bolster their academic language—so they can employ this language when listening, speaking, reading, writing, and viewing across content areas;
- Develop college- and career-readiness, and the high language skills needed to successfully contribute in the classroom, workplace, and society.

A study jointly conducted by Vanderbilt University and the Migration Policy Institute (Wetzel, 2012) found that those English learners who opted out of English language development programs were particularly disadvantaged in terms of college enrollment, suggesting the value of effective English language development programs. English learners who participate in programs designed to help them attain greater language proficiency and meet academic standards experience improved educational outcomes (Ross, Kena, Rathbun, KewalRamani, Zhang, Kristapovich, & Manning, 2012).

ELs and long-term ELs, need an effective instructional program that to help them rise to new challenges and realize their potential. HMH **Escalate English** is this program.

HMH *Escalate English* © 2017 Program Overview

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt’s *Escalate English* was designed and written to accelerate the development of students’ proficiencies across the language processes—listening, speaking, reading, writing, and viewing—that are necessary for academic success (Freeman & Freeman, 2001; Peregoy & Boyle, 2001). *Escalate English* aligns with the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts, offering students instruction in listening to, reading, and viewing the kinds of complex, grade-level selections suggested by the Common Core and in the genres suggested in the Common Core and speaking and writing, using the grammar and vocabulary of academic English.

The program is designed for the growing number of students who are at risk of becoming, or already are, long-term English learners. The program is designed to support educators at the intermediate grades who serve this population. To meet long-term English learners’ needs and to support students, teachers, and administrators, *Escalate English* meets the following criteria:

- *Escalate English* is **flexible**.

Because schools and districts employ many models of instruction—self-contained, integrated, push-in, pull-out—flexible instructional solutions are needed. HMH *Escalate English* provides up to 60 minutes a day of additional instruction that is aligned to but not dependent upon HMH’s core programs. At each grade level, Grades 4 through 8, six units of instruction are provided. Lessons are offered in 15-minute chunks to allow for maximum flexibility. Guidance on pacing helps teachers plan for varying instructional models and lengths of instructional time.

- *Escalate English* is **standards-based**.

The foundation of *Escalate English* is built on essential ELD standards and grade-level content standards in order to equip students with the language necessary to achieve grade-level success and the confidence, language skills, strategies, and opportunities to grapple with real-world, complex texts and speech. *Escalate English* is designed to move students to grade level and put them on track for college- and career-readiness.

- *Escalate English* provides **scaffolding**.

The program helps English learners rapidly increase their proficiency by making rigorous content accessible. Light, Moderate, or Substantial Scaffolding options are provided so that, depending on the task and the student’s level of challenge with that specific task, the right support can be given.

- *Escalate English* is **engaging and thought-provoking**.

The program engages students, with **Student Editions** organized around topically related selections, **Browse Magazine**, **Student Activity Books** (consumables), and online student resources, including video and podcasts. Consciously curated content includes grade-appropriate, high-interest literary and informational selections to allow for deep and rich exploration.

- *Escalate English* offers useful, aligned **tools and resources**.

Key teacher materials include a **Teacher’s Edition** and online teacher resources, including assessment tools and professional development materials.

- *Escalate English* effectively employs **technology and multimedia**.

Because educators and students want solutions that can be accessed through intuitive and mobile digital tools, the teacher and student components of *Escalate English* are delivered online and through the **HMH Player**. Authentic **podcasts** are topically related. **Stream-to-Start™ Videos** introduce the topic of each unit and **LanguageCam Videos** demonstrate academic language in real-life situations.

- *Escalate English* is **coordinated** with core ELA instruction.

The focus of *Escalate English* is on listening, speaking, reading, writing, and viewing, just as in the Common Core State Standards. Students listen to, read, and view complex selections, engage in collaborative discussions, build their academic language and vocabulary, and write for varied purposes. Relevant, age-appropriate topics support students in gaining the content knowledge and language they need to fully participate in their ELA, science, and social studies classes. While *Escalate English* is designed as a stand-alone program, the unit topics align with HMH *Journeys* © 2017 and with HMH *Collections* © 2017 so that teachers and students can smoothly transition between core programs and English language development.

- *Escalate English* supports **teachers**.

Various tools and resources support teachers using *Escalate English*. Planning tools, such as the **Unit at a Glance**, **Text X-Rays**, and **Weekly Instructional Planners**, assist teachers with planning. Explicit instruction and scaffolding help teachers target instruction effectively. Features like **When Students Struggle...** and **To Challenge Students** provide teachers with tools and resources to provide additional support for students. Prompts and responses help teachers engage students with effective questioning. The **Why This Text?** feature provides information as to why certain selections were included, which provides teachers with additional information and support for planning. The **Teacher Dashboard** includes access to all resources and to time-saving, automatically updated “Assignments” and “Reports” features that help teachers check key performance indicators and monitor student progress. In addition, the **Professional Services** website offers specific resources and courses to support teachers of ELs on key aspects of literacy and language instruction. These courses are available to support teachers in their implementation of *Escalate English*.

Escalate English reflects the simple truth that we learn language best by using it. The program encourages students to make meaning with complex texts, to express ideas in writing and speaking, to build content knowledge through wide reading, and to develop language in the context of authentic work. The program requires language production and encourages productive struggle at every step. With *Escalate English*, English learners are actively involved in listening, discussing, researching, speaking, and writing as they continue on a direct path to high school, college, and career readiness.

Strand 1: Meeting the Needs of Long-Term English Learners through Effective Instruction

Becoming literate in a second language depends on the quality of teaching, which is a function of the content coverage, intensity or thoroughness of instruction, methods used to support the special language needs of second-language learners and to build on their strengths...

August & Shanahan, 2006, p. 3

What goes on inside classrooms is equally crucial. Placing students with language needs and academic gaps into rigorous courses with high-level content depends upon instruction that is designed and adapted to their needs.

Olsen, 2010, p. 3

...districts must have a clear vision of how their instructional program for ELLs ensures attention to the instructional shifts and rigor of the Common Core, providing both the language development and the scaffolded grade-level content required for ELLs to be successful...

Council of the Great City Schools, 2014, p. 2

Defining the Strand

Effective teachers make meaningful differences in students' lives, impacting their educational success (Darling-Hammond, 2011) and such varied factors as college attendance and future earnings (Chetty, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2012). Studies show that classroom teachers' instructional strategies have a direct impact on students' reading proficiency (Pennington Whitaker, Gambrell, & Morrow, 2004). As Hougen and Smartt (2012) put it: "Our students do not have time to waste. You should feel a sense of urgency when you are teaching, making the best use of every minute" (p. 6). For English learners, the need for accelerated and effective language development is particularly acute.

Generally speaking, the principles of sound instruction for native English speakers hold true for ELs (Fitzgerald, 1995a), but some adjustments can make instruction more effective for this population (August & Shanahan, 2006). Graves, Gersten, and Haager (2004) looked at literacy outcomes in multiple-language classrooms and found that the most effective teachers had highly engaged students, clear models, ample time to actively practice skills, and scaffolded instruction. Haynes (2007) suggests effective strategies for English learners include the use of visuals and graphic organizers. Olsen (2014) recommends building students' background knowledge.

HMH **Escalate English** © 2017 supports teachers and meet the needs of English learners by providing a program built upon research-based, effective instructional approaches designed to accelerate language development.

Research That Guided the Development of *Escalate English*

Building Background and Content Knowledge

English learners approach complex texts with dual challenges—that of language comprehension and that of content comprehension. For English learners, background knowledge is even more important because the content in the classroom may be less familiar to them than it is to their English-speaking counterparts (Bunch, Walqui, & Pearson, 2014). While background knowledge alone cannot ensure comprehension, it certainly can facilitate it.

A number of studies have shown that deepening students' knowledge of the topic improves their comprehension (Graves, Cooke, & LaBerge, 1983; McKeown, Beck, & Blake, 2009). As Stotsky (2010) suggests, based on a national survey of literary study, "...there is no substitute for a coherent curriculum that addresses culturally and historically significant authors, literary periods, and movements in our own or other civic cultures, or careful analysis of assigned texts" (p. 24). For English learners, building this background knowledge may be even more essential. The Council of the Great City Schools (2014) suggests that schools and districts selecting instruction materials must ensure that these materials "attend to the role of language development in furthering conceptual understanding of content" (p. 12).

Because text is more comprehensible when the content of the text is familiar to the reader, building students' content knowledge helps English learners to better comprehend complex texts. With long-term English learners, particularly, Olsen (2014) recommends that educators should focus on building students' background knowledge, "keeping in mind that LTELs have gaps in academic background" (p. 27).

Several approaches can be effective in building a deeper and wider base of content knowledge.

Increased reading: Jago (2004) states it plainly; "reading is the best way to build background knowledge" (p. 11–12). The relationship between reading texts and building content knowledge is reciprocal; reading more builds content knowledge, and greater content knowledge supports comprehension.

Reading across genres: In addition to expanding students' familiarity with different genres and their structures, teaching with texts of varied genres builds students' background knowledge. Informational texts may be particularly helpful in increasing students' knowledge base. In a study which compared students' content knowledge after reading a narrative text compared to an informational text on the same science topic, researchers found that students answered more questions correctly and recalled more key concepts in response to the informational text (Cervetti, Bravo, Hiebert, Pearson, & Jaynes, 2009). In a study with students in Grade 3, Best, Floyd, and McNamara (2008) found that students' comprehension of narrative text was most influenced by reading decoding skills, while their comprehension of expository texts was most influenced by their knowledge base. From their research, "we can conclude that children with less prior knowledge will struggle to form a coherent situation model when reading expository texts because they are not able to generate the necessary inferences" (p. 153).

Topically organized units: Goldenberg (2008) reviewed the research on effective instruction for English learners and suggests that "teachers can teach a unit in which students read about a topic for several days or weeks. Materials can become progressively more challenging as students become more familiar with the content" (p. 18).

Content-area connections: In their description of a framework for content-based instruction for English learners, Snow, Met, and Genesee (1989) point out the importance of linking content with language instruction; integrating content into language instruction and making content-area connections makes language learning more stimulating for students and encourages higher-order thinking. This higher-order thinking, in turn, promotes higher-order language skills, because students need to understand and produce more complex ideas. Koelsch, Chu, and Rodriguez Bañuelos (2014), too, concur with the goal of inviting English learners to focus on disciplinary concepts and practices as they develop English language skills.

Pre-reading scaffolds: Activating background knowledge with pre-reading activities can particularly support English learners (Bunch, Walqui, & Pearson, 2014).

Scaffolding

Scaffolding involves providing temporary supports to students as they learn and reach competence, and then gradually decreasing the supports until students can work independently. According to Vygotsky, scaffolding can be defined as the “role of teachers and others in supporting the learner’s development and providing support structures to get to that next stage or level” (Raymond, 2000, p. 176). Embedding instructional scaffolds is an important element in mastery-based instruction and “has repeatedly been identified as one of the most effective instructional techniques available” (Graves & Avery, 1997, p. 138). Research shows that effective scaffolding results in improved student outcomes—including enhanced inquiry and achievement (White & Kim, 2008; Simons & Klein, 2007; Fretz, Wu, Zhang, Davis, Krajcik, & Soloway, 2002; Rosenshine & Meister, 1992) and increased reading comprehension (Clark & Graves, 2008; Lutz, Guthrie, & Davis, 2006). For English learners, scaffolds may be particularly important because without support, in the face of challenging texts and tasks, English learners might instead disengage (Bunch, Walqui, & Pearson, 2014).

The Council of the Great City Schools, in articulating *A Framework for Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for English Language Learners*, includes scaffolding as one of its non-negotiable criteria for materials for English learners—that is, scaffolding “without compromising rigor or content” (Council of the Great City Schools, 2014, p. 13). Without these scaffolds, many ELs would not be able to achieve the other non-negotiable criteria, which include that EL materials demonstrate the necessary rigor in language development and provide ELs with full access to grade-level instructional content. Stanford University’s Understanding Language District Engagement subcommittee’s *Key Principles for ELL Instruction* (2013) also include scaffolds: “Standards-aligned instruction for ELLs is rigorous, grade-level appropriate, and provides deliberate and appropriate scaffolds.”

To support students in reading high-quality, rich, complex texts, teachers can provide scaffolds, such as focused, text-dependent questions; multiple selections sequenced to build students’ content knowledge; opportunities for rereading; and instruction on related skills, such as vocabulary acquisition strategies. Koelsch, Chu, and Rodriguez Bañuelos (2014) find that well-designed tasks can be a basic building block to scaffolding students’ understanding.

Scaffolding students’ reading can “make the difference between a frustrating reading experience and one that is meaningful to students” (Graves & Avery, 1997, p. 138). Research (Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2008; Stone, 1998) suggests that scaffolds such as the following will support student independence: activating prior knowledge; reviewing previously learned material; modeling and thinking aloud; providing models

and different representations; questioning; using cues or tools; and providing useful feedback. Even well-timed questions can serve as scaffolds.

According to Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer, & Rivera (2006a), comprehension strategy instruction is best delivered in “a framework that emphasizes a gradual release of responsibility to the students; teachers provide high levels of support for students practicing new skills and then gradually decrease support as students become more independent in using the strategy” (p. 24). Boyle and Peregoy (1990) found that literacy scaffolds were an effective strategy for first- and second-language readers and writers. One scaffold they recommend as effective is for teachers to read a predictable book aloud to students. By making use of language and discourse patterns that repeat themselves, teachers can help to model a predictable structure that students can listen to and then repeat themselves. The researchers emphasize that effective literacy scaffolds provide a model, offered either by the teacher or peers, which students can rely upon when they comprehend or produce English language patterns.

Modeling

One useful scaffold is modeling. *Modeling* is an instructional approach in which the teacher demonstrates an approach, or an effective response to a task, or a thought process students learn through the expert performance.

In the English language development classroom, teachers can make their own literacy processes visible to students—showing them how they comprehend selections by demonstrating a think-aloud strategy, for example, or modeling how to use context clues or morphology to define a new word. After modeling, students and teachers can break this expert demonstration down into steps that can be learned, followed, and independently achieved by students.

Allington (2001) suggests that research-based programs for struggling readers must include modeling, so that students can see and understand the process involved in applying reading skills to texts; these readers “benefit enormously when we can construct lessons that help make the comprehension processes visible...” (p. 98).

Haynes (2007) suggests that think-alouds can be particularly effective with ELs and that “highly effective teachers use think-alouds to help students understand the step-by-step thinking process...” (p. 81). Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer, & Rivera (2006a) suggest that modeling is particularly effective when teaching English learners reading comprehension strategies.

Modeling is also effective for modeling effective oral language use and reading. Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer, & Rivera (2006a) recommend reading aloud and shared readings as excellent opportunities for teachers to model effective language use and appropriate expression. Similarly, classroom conversations and discussions offer an opportunity for teachers to “model effective questioning and conversational practices” (p. 28). Koelsch, Chu, and Rodriguez Bañuelos (2014) use modeled formulaic expressions to support English learners in building academic language skills.

Modeling has been shown to be effective in teaching writing. In a meta-analysis on strategy instruction and the teaching of writing, Graham (2006) found that teacher modeling of writing strategies—in which teachers showed students how to use specific strategies for writing—was effective in improving students’ writing performance. Ferris (2003) found that teachers’ feedback to students’ writing served as a model for students’ self-assessment and revision processes. The research of Colorín Colorado (2007) suggests that teachers of English learners can support the reflection and revision process by modeling their own writing and demonstrating how to ask clarifying questions about a selection.

Research suggests that working with models of effective writing in different genres is an effective instructional strategy for teaching writing in multiple genres. Their review of effective instructional practices for teaching writing led Graham and Perin (2007) to conclude that using model texts in the classroom offers students “good models for each type of writing that is the focus of instruction. Students are encouraged to analyze these examples and to emulate the critical elements, patterns, and forms embodied in the models in their own writing” (p. 20). Fisher and Frey (2003) looked at writing instruction for struggling adolescent readers, almost half of whom were English learners, and found that “some of the best writing from this group of students came after discussions of the readings,” (p. 404) reiterating the importance of writing to sources. Crowhurst’s 1991 study with native speakers came to similar conclusions about the benefits of working with models of effective writing. She compared four treatment groups: one was taught a model for persuasive writing and practiced producing persuasive text; another was taught the model and given persuasive texts for reading; a third read novels and wrote book reports and received a single lesson on the model; and the fourth read novels and wrote books reports, and received no explicit instruction on persuasive writing. Those students who read persuasive texts wrote more organized persuasive texts, elaborated their support more completely, and concluded their responses more effectively.

Visual Learning

The combination of text with visuals has been shown to engage multiple pathways to learning, as Paivio (1979, 1983, 1986) describes in his dual-coding theory. Studies show that learning is enhanced when students learn from both pictures and words, rather than from text only (Mayer, 2001; Mayer & Gallini, 1990; Levin, Anglin, & Carney, 1987; Levie & Lentz, 1982). Nonlinguistic representations are one of the nine most effective instructional strategies identified by Marzano (2003) and have been shown to help students better understand informational text (Center for Improvement of Early Reading, 2003). By supporting linguistic and nonlinguistic (visual, sensory, and kinesthetic) means of acquiring information, teachers support increased reflection and recall and maximize learning (Kapusnik & Hauslein, 2001; Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001).

In its review of the literature on effective strategies for teaching reading comprehension, the National Reading Panel found graphic organizers an important strategy for improving students’ comprehension (National Reading Panel, 2000). Numerous studies have come to this same conclusion (Dickson, Simmons, & Kame’enui, 1996; Pearson & Fielding, 1991). Graphic organizers are particularly effective at helping students to focus on the structure of text and the relationship of ideas within text (Center for the Improvement of Early Reading, 2003; Robinson & Kiewra, 1995). The use of graphic organizers to graphically depict the relationships of ideas in texts has been shown to improve both students’ comprehension of the text—and their recall of key ideas (Snow, 2002; National Reading Panel, 2000).

While the findings above have been demonstrated with the general population of students, research suggests that English learners can particularly benefit from visuals and graphic organizers. Sigueza (2005) suggests that as teachers share a visual or graphic organizer they can support student understanding by verbalizing the ideas in the visual (providing for another pathway to learning, through oral comprehension). They can invite students to participate in discussions around the visuals. They can explicitly support students in integrating the visuals with their prior knowledge of the subject. For long-term English learners, Olsen (2014) suggests that non-linguistic representations and visuals can “bolster comprehension and make ideas concrete, and structure hands-on learning experiences and projects” (p. 27).

Engagement

When students can answer “yes” to the questions “Can I do it?” and “Do I want to do it?” then they are engaged in classroom learning. A sense of efficacy and a feeling of motivation are needed for engagement. To maintain this engagement, students must work with the teacher to determine what supports they need to be successful.

While *engagement* and *motivation* are often used interchangeably, the two have distinct meanings. *Engagement* generally refers to the level of interest and involvement in a task while *motivation* generally refers to the desire to complete the task successfully. Both are desirable in the classroom, but engagement may be more powerful. Sparking a students’ interest in a text can help motivate that student to persist in learning. While engagement generally leads to increased motivation, one can be motivated (by the desire for a grade, for example) without being engaged (Kamil, Borman, Dole, Kral, Salinger, & Torgeson, 2008). Engaged learners generally create a more positive learning environment for all students. They may have more process-oriented goals for learning than performance-oriented goals, which ultimately makes them more persistent in their learning (Kamil et al., 2008). At the opposite end are those students who are disengaged. At the extreme, disengagement is reflected through chronic truancy and dropout rates and places students at risk. But even students who attend school may have disengaged from the learning process. For long-term English learners, the lack of academic engagement is particularly troubling (Olsen, 2010).

Learning is an active process of engagement. If students are interested in what they are learning, they will persist in spending the time and energy needed for learning to occur (Hidi & Boscolo, 2006; Guthrie & Humenick, 2004; Eccles, Wigfield, & Schiefele, 1998). In this way, engagement leads to motivation leads to learning.

In its articulation of knowledge and skills for the 21st century, the National Research Council (2012) concludes that “motivational factors (engagement, interest, identity, and self-efficacy) and dispositional factors (conscientiousness, stamina, persistence, collaboration)” are important in deep learning in English language arts (p. 111–112). Engagement and motivation are important in teaching reading (Stipek, 2002). In the language arts or literacy classroom, students who are interested in what they are reading or writing, and are willing to expend effort to persist, are mentally engaged (Hidi & Boscolo, 2006). In describing approaches to fuel the academic growth of English learners, Cummins (2011) points out that literacy engagement includes the time students spend reading and writing, their enthusiasm about what they read and write, their use of strategies to deepen understanding, and their active seeking of opportunities to read and write.

Student engagement is a “powerful determinant of the effectiveness of any given literacy approach” (Dalton & Strangman, 2006, p. 559). In their study, Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, Humenick, and Littles (2007) found that “interest and positive affect for reading invariably were associated with high cognitive recall and comprehension of text” (p. 306). Research across grade levels from elementary through high school has shown that students who are interested in a text persist with reading and completing tasks related to the reading (Ainley, 2012). Taylor, Pearson, Peterson, and Rodriguez (2003), too, found a connection between engaged learning and reading comprehension growth in low SES schools.

How can teachers engage learners?

Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) suggest teaching strategies, increasing students' conceptual knowledge, and fostering collaborative interactions. Teachers should also construct lessons that are interesting, match activities to students' abilities, and connect reading and writing and content-area learning (Bohn, Roehrig, & Pressley, 2004). Educators can increase achievement by increasing engagement and motivation through strategies such as making connections, focusing on authentic literacy tasks, encouraging critical literacy, using technology, and improving students' proficiency (Irvin, Meltzer, & Dukes, 2007). Lo and Hyland (2007) found increased motivation and engagement among English learners with a writing program that encouraged them to write to genuine audiences about topics of interest and relevance to them.

Cohen (1998) suggests that collaboration can be particularly effective in engaging English learners. Cummins (2011) suggests that, for English learners, "sustained engagement derives at least as much from the social interactions around books and ideas as from the individual cognitive processes...within the classroom, animated discussions and debates about the social and moral issues embedded in both fictional and expository texts should be the norm rather than the exception" (p. 145).

Students are engaged when they believe that they can learn; when they are actively learning, such as through interesting texts, multimedia, and technology; and when they are working with others to make meaning and communicate ideas.

From Research to Practice

Building Background and Content Knowledge in Escalate English

Escalate English meets the research recommendations on building the background knowledge of English learners with:

- A text-centered program
- Units organized by topics
- Delivery of content in different formats to support development of reading, listening and viewing skills
- The inclusion of varied genres, including informational texts
- Content connections, such as on science and social studies topics
- Pre-reading supports

Escalate English is built around strong selections organized by engaging topics. In *Escalate English*, the organization of multiple selections around a topic helps students to build knowledge of a topic over time and supports their continued interest in learning. While *Escalate English* is a stand-alone program, the topics align to work done in the core programs of HMH *Journeys* © 2017 and HMH *Collections* © 2017 to facilitate seamless instruction, deepen students' exposure to grade-level content, and allow for a deeper dive.

The organization by topics/themes, which spiral across the grade levels but are filtered through grade-appropriate lesson topics, provides continuity and a meaningful progression as students build content knowledge through engaging complex texts.

In *Escalate English*, every lesson follows a predictable routine so that teachers and the English learners they teach can focus on teaching and learning important content and skills—not learning new instructional patterns and expectations.

Each lesson in *Escalate English* follows a four-part structure, with each part designed to take about 15 minutes of instruction time. In Part 1 and Part 2, students consistently have an opportunity to **Explore the Topic**, by reading, listening, and viewing selections and engaging in first-read, close reading. **Explore the Topic** sections range from investigating topic-related language to analyzing and responding to the selections. In Parts 3 and 4, students develop vocabulary and language knowledge and skills.

Before they read, students have access to background-building, pre-reading information, designed to support their comprehension, such as these examples from the Grade 7, Unit 5 **Student Edition**:

"Clubbing"



The working teenage narrator of "Clubbing" is deeply familiar with the uncomfortable tension that can arise between people for whom money is plentiful and people for whom money is scarce.

Know Before You Go

Homeroom Diaries is a story about a group of and full-of-attitude friends who go to a "Freakshow." Led by outspoken leader, the friends support each other through money woes, problems in school, and more. Tired of the way their high school friends are hating and being mean to each other, they launch an attempt they call "Clubbing" with the goal of bringing everyone together.

Setting the Purpose

Read the text to the narrator's voice. How does the narrator's view draw in the reader? Do the text encourage any connections with your own life?

Great Expectations

You just read about a city known for excess. Now you will read about people who prove the old **adage** that money can't buy happiness.

An **adage** is a traditional saying about a common experience.

Know Before You Go

Charles Dickens (1812–1870) was an English novelist who created some of the world's most well-known fictional characters. *Great Expectations*, written in 1860–1861, is widely considered to be one of his greatest literary achievements.

THE SETTING: The story is set in London, England.

THE MAIN CHARACTER: Pip is a young, orphaned boy living with his cruel sister when *Great Expectations* begins. Many of the events in the story are taken from Dickens' own life. When Dickens was twelve, he dropped out of school to work in a rat-infested factory where he earned practically nothing. Like Pip, he felt abandoned and betrayed by the very adults who were supposed to take care of him.

The characters in this story are:



Pip Miss Havisham Estella The Convict

Within the lessons, students will find connections to **Language Cam Videos**. These videos, designed to model academic language usage, also offer students the chance to build their background knowledge on the topic being covered.



In each unit, texts include informational selections, many on science and social studies topics, to support learning and reinforce standards across content areas. For example, see this page from a social studies text from the Grade 7, Unit 5 **Student Edition**:

▲ Detail from *The Creation of Adam*, Sistine Chapel ceiling, by Michelangelo

Like his grandfather, Lorenzo was an influential patron of the arts. He supported some of the world's most famous artists, such as Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, and Botticelli. He bought their works, paid them to beautify Florence, and even hosted them at his court. Known to be close to many artists, Lorenzo's relationship with Michelangelo was particularly significant. Lorenzo influenced Michelangelo's life from the time the artist was a fifteen-year-old student at the art school Lorenzo founded and living in Lorenzo's palace. Michelangelo is perhaps best known for his sculpture, *David*, and his painting on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Rome.

Lorenzo had a broad idea of art, not just limited to painting, drawing, and sculpting. He spent lavishly on Greek and Roman books and manuscripts, paying a lot of money to have them copied. He **prized** writers and artists of many other kinds.

David, by Michelangelo

The word *prized* is a **multiple-meaning** word. As a noun, a *prize* is a reward. As a verb, to *prize* something means to value something greatly. How is it being used here?

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Scaffolding in Escalate English

To help all students reach independence and gain mastery of skills and content, the **Escalate English** program integrates scaffolding into the program design, and offers multiple, varied scaffolds as supports for student learning and mastery.

The program helps English learners rapidly increase their proficiency by making rigorous content accessible. Throughout the **Teacher's Edition**, **Just-Right Scaffolding** provides varied levels, Light, Moderate, or Substantial, of differentiated support, depending on each student's needs to successfully complete each specific task.

See this example from the Grade 7 **Teacher's Edition**:

Just-Right Scaffolding
Use these strategies with all of your class discussions.

Substantial Support	Provide structure to the discussion by displaying the central question you're discussing. Refer to the question if the discussion goes off course.
Moderate Support	Provide structure by displaying key points as students make them. Refer to the key points to inspire further discussion. For example: <i>We've said a consuming culture is based on buying and selling. What does that mean for people who don't have much money to buy with?</i>
Light Support	Provide structure by displaying key points as students make them. Encourage students to connect new points to those already made.

Other scaffolds employ various techniques, including sentence frames, model responses, and suggestions for eliciting more information from students.

Scaffolding is embedded in the design of **Escalate English**. For example, scaffolding may take the form of suggested prompts and possible student responses, tools which enable educators to draw upon students' knowledge and to encourage students to produce the language needed to communicate their thoughts.

In each unit, one selection, designated as a **Supported Read**, is accompanied by more extensive support in the **Teacher's Edition**. This instructional support provides content to make a challenging selection into an accessible read-aloud.

Skills Toolboxes support students in building their receptive and productive skills. Along with the **Toolboxes**, students are often provided **Useful Phrases**, supplying appropriate language for the task at hand.

The language and selections in **Escalate English** are not simplified. Instead, the program offers substantial scaffolding that allows students to access the content while experiencing rich language. The scaffolded instruction in **Escalate English** makes rigorous content accessible, bridging the achievement gap that threatens to derail English learners on their path to high school, college, and career readiness.

Modeling in Escalate English

In **Escalate English**, students read models of effective texts and listen to models of language in use. Students experience how language is used for multiple purposes. The rich, varied, and challenging selections in **Escalate English** serve as models for students on how to use language effectively and purposefully.

Informational text selections, designed to support science and social studies standards, provide mentor texts to illustrate the uses of academic language for specific purposes.

Blogs and **Podcasts** provide engaging, rich models for language used for various functions such as entertaining, describing persuading, explaining, and informing.

Language Cam Videos provide additional models, giving students opportunities to hear—and see—how academic language is used in everyday situations.

Visual Learning in Escalate English

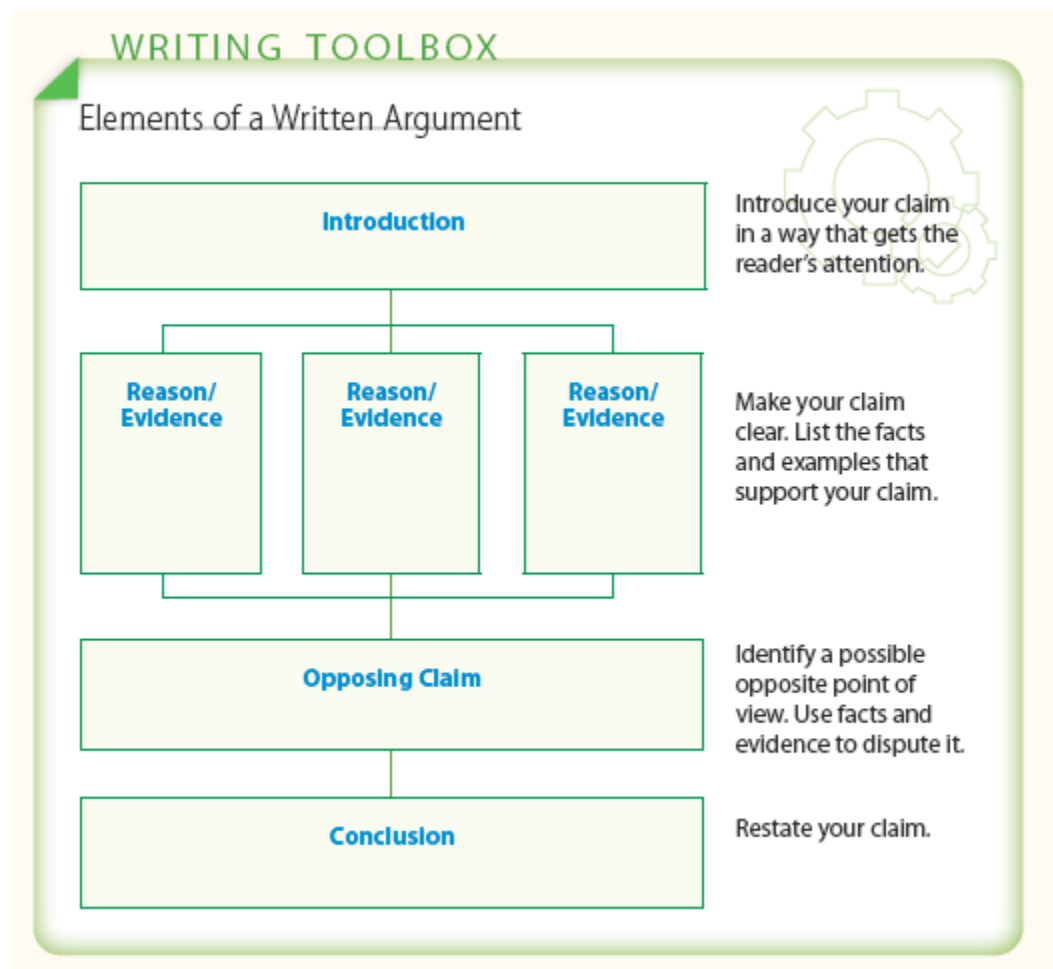
In *Escalate English*, the power of visuals and graphical representations are harnessed to meet the needs of English learners.

Each unit opens with a compelling image, a powerful quotation, and an **Essential Question**. Students begin to formulate their ideas and their language as they connect the image, theme, and words.

Show-It Visuals provide visual support and context for all content. The **Show-It Visuals** allow students to focus on the presented content and not become distracted by information they do not understand.

Graphic organizers, used throughout *Escalate English*, help students follow, comprehend, and organize information. For example, see this graphic organizer for planning an argument in the Grade 7, Unit 5

Performance Task:



Each unit of *Escalate English* features an illustrated selection. Classic fiction and biographies are presented in **Graphic Novels** format, to employ the power of visual learning to build students' background knowledge of foundational literary texts.

For example, see this version of Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* from Grade 7:



Engagement in Escalate English

Escalate English © 2017 is designed to engage and motivate learners. One of the characteristics of Long-term English learners is that they are disengaged. By providing contemporary, high-interest materials, demanding active participation and engaging students with multimedia **podcasts** and **videos**, **Escalate English** is designed to re-engage students.

Escalate English engages and motivates English learners by including high-interest texts on relevant topics and ample supports, in the form of peer collaboration and other scaffolds, to ensure that students feel that they can be successful learning with **Escalate English**.

Research also suggests the benefits of active learning for engagement and motivation. Tools like those in **myNotebook** and **myWriteSmart** invite students to actively engage in their learning by taking notes, annotating, organizing ideas, and tracking new vocabulary words.

Consumable **Student Activity Books** include personalized toolboxes; a glossary; and additional listening, speaking, reading, writing, and viewing practice. These activities engage students in active learning, fostering engagement by giving students the resources they need to feel that they can succeed.

The many program features described in detail throughout this report contribute to students' engagement and motivation. Scaffolding, explicit strategies instruction, and opportunities for collaboration and discussion all work together to ensure that students experience success and build independence. This sense of confidence ensures that students have the motivation to persist in learning.

Strand 2: Reading

Instructional materials must incorporate rich and complex text, chosen through both quantitative measures (readability) and qualitative measures (levels of meaning, structure, language, conventionality and clarity, knowledge demands), to promote the development of sophisticated grade-level language and content knowledge for ELLs.

Council of the Great City Schools, 2014, p. 12

Reading and writing are gateways to academic learning and success, and LTELs [Long Term English Learners] struggle with both. ... Effective educators of all content areas [must] work with students to read text closely—identifying the text genre and purpose of the reading, honing in on how the text is structured, and spending time on key vocabulary.

Olsen, 2014, p. 26

Defining the Strand

While learning to speak another language may come somewhat naturally, as it does in students' first language, learning to read in another language is a complex process requiring instruction. As Prater (2009) states: "...the complexity of reading comprehension in L2 is evident. Research suggests that a student's language proficiency in the heritage language and English, the student's control of basic reading skills such as word recognition, the student's ability to construct meaning from text, and the way in which the student is asked to demonstrate text understanding are all factors that impact English language learners' reading comprehension" (p. 617).

While the process is complex, it is imperative. "The ability to read and comprehend English-language material is of major consequence for ELLs in American schools and society. Becoming a skilled English reader improves access to education and, by extension, the benefits of larger society" (Proctor, Carlo, August, & Snow, 2005, p. 254). Adding challenge, as students progress, the texts they encounter become increasingly complex. [But they should not be excluded; all students should participate in reading complex texts (Coleman & Pimentel, 2012).]

Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer, and Rivera (2006b) find that comprehension strategies instruction and a focus on academic language are research-based approaches for ELs. Kamil and colleagues (2008) recommend vocabulary instruction, comprehension instruction, and opportunities for extended discussion of texts, as well as efforts to increase student engagement.

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's Escalate English engages students with thought-provoking, high-quality, complex texts. Before, during, and after reading, students engage in activities to comprehend, build vocabulary, and make connections between listening, speaking, reading, writing, and viewing.

Research That Guided the Development of *Escalate English*

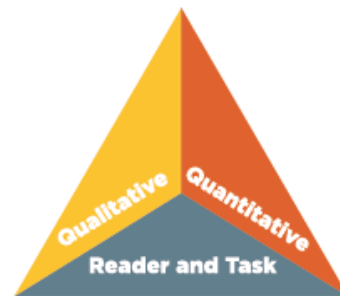
Text Complexity

Students read and write in English classes at every grade level—what changes is the complexity of the texts that they encounter and produce. With the creation of the Common Core State Standards and state adoption of increasingly rigorous expectations in English language arts, the discussion of text complexity has been at the forefront in recent years. Text complexity is central to the construct of the Common Core and many sets of rigorous state standards which “hinge on students encountering appropriately complex texts at each grade level to develop the mature language skills and the conceptual knowledge they need for success in school and life.” (Coleman & Pimentel, 2012, p. 3)

The relatively recent high level of attention to text complexity reflects the findings of research that show that the ability to read complex texts successfully is a sign of both proficiency and readiness. Research on college readiness conducted by ACT concluded that “The clearest differentiator in reading between students who are college ready and students who are not is the ability to comprehend complex texts” (ACT, 2006, Executive Summary, p. 2), and that “this is true for both genders, all racial/ethnic groups, and all family income levels” (ACT, 2006, p. 17). By the time students complete high school, they must be “able to read and comprehend independently and proficiently the kinds of complex texts commonly found in college and careers” (NGA and CCSSO, Appendix A, 2010b, p. 2). To ensure proficiency and readiness, Riches and Genesee suggest that these texts are particularly important for English learners; “...research suggests that ELLs need more exposure to and instruction relevant to complex genres of literacy” (p. 83).

Text complexity can be measured in different ways—by a quantitative calculation of the length of words or the complexity of sentences or by a qualitative analysis of the content and levels of meaning of the text. In an attempt to integrate these different text elements, the creators of the Common Core (NGA and CCSSO, 2010a) identified three factors involved in measuring a text’s complexity:

1. A qualitative evaluation of text, which looks at the levels of meaning in the text, the structure of the text, the conventionality and clarity of the language, and the knowledge demands that the content places on readers.
2. A quantitative evaluation, which involves readability measures and other calculations of text complexity based on word and sentence length and familiarity.
3. A matching of the reader to the text and task, which involves considering the reader’s motivation, knowledge, and experiences and the task’s purpose and complexity.



In its research on reading and college readiness, ACT (2006) identified the following elements as making texts complex:

- **Relationships:** Interactions among ideas or characters in the text are subtle, involved, or deeply embedded.
- **Richness:** The text possesses a sizable amount of highly sophisticated information conveyed through data or literary devices.
- **Structure:** The text is organized in ways that are elaborate and sometimes unconventional.
- **Style:** The author’s tone and use of language are often intricate.
- **Vocabulary:** The author’s choice of words is demanding and highly context dependent.
- **Purpose:** The author’s intent in writing the text is implicit and sometimes ambiguous. (ACT, 2006, p. 17)

Complexity matters. Increasing the complexity of texts used for instruction across grade levels is essential to adequately prepare students for 21st-century school and work. In 2006, ACT, Inc. analyzed test data and concluded that the primary difference between those students who reached the benchmark score level and those who did not was the ability to answer questions based on complex texts. This data relates to a worrisome problem; while the level of texts that students will encounter in school and in the workplace has increased, few students are adequately prepared to comprehend these complex texts (ACT, 2009). Even more troubling, some students are not taught to comprehend these kinds of texts. In their study on discussion-based approaches in middle and high school English classrooms, Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, and Gamoran (2003) found that “upper-track classes read more traditional literature and essays; lower-track classes read more young adult literature and poetry” (p. 714). As Palincsar and Schleppegrell (2014) attest, “English learners (ELs) in the United States have too often been denied access to rich and complex texts, especially informational texts” (p. 616). For long-term learners particularly, Olsen (2014) suggests that these learners have been given watered-down texts in the past, which has been a disservice.

High-quality literature should not be made available for only certain populations of students. These kinds of differences put students on a permanent track, with struggling learners never having the exposure to foundational texts that they need. In order to be able to comprehend these kinds of texts, readers need to have encountered these kinds of texts; simplified texts “actually prevent [English learners and language minority students] from discovering how language works in academic discourse” (Wong Fillmore & Fillmore, 2012, p. 2). High-level reading will be essential for the success of today’s students. “Today’s economy demands a universally higher level of literacy than at any time in history, and it is reasonable to expect that the demand for a literate workforce will only increase in the future” (ACT, 2006, p. 27).

In the Council of the Great City Schools' *A Framework for Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for English Language Learners*, access to complex texts are a non-negotiable element of instructional materials for English learners. According to the Council, English learners should be provided "access to text that increases in complexity, with intentional connections between ESL and ELA instruction, all anchored in the CCSS" (Council of the Great City Schools, 2014, p. 13).

Walqui and van Lier (2010) stress the importance of increasing the intellectual challenge of instruction for English learners, stressing these principles for succeeding with English learners:

- Sustain academic rigor
- Hold high expectations
- Engage students in quality interactions
- Sustain a language focus
- Develop quality curriculum

For English learners, providing access to and instruction on texts with important ideas and powerful language can help these students develop needed levels of literacy. Appropriately complex texts demand multiple readings, and encourage critical response, for students to comprehend and analyze texts at the deeper levels required for college and workplace preparedness. "With appropriate instructional supports, texts can be reread and analyzed to unearth complex structures, themes, and insights. Revisiting a text offers the possibility that all readers will be challenged to think more deeply about texts that they are already able to comfortably and fluently decode and understand at a surface level. The emphasis can then be on close reading even after automaticity has been achieved" (Fisher, Frey, & Lapp, 2012, p. 16). According to Fillmore (2014), "complex materials are in fact precisely *what they have needed*, and lack of access to such materials is what has prevented them from attaining full proficiency in English to date" (p. 624).

Only with complex, engaging, high-quality texts can ELs develop high levels of literacy.

Comprehension

Learning to read, and developing the comprehension skills to understand more complex and content-area selections, is a complex and lengthy process. Because it is such a complex process, ELs, even those who learn word-level skills in English, may fail to achieve proficiency in comprehension (August & Shanahan, 2006).

Researchers who look at the development of reading among ELs have found that instruction in the same kinds of skills that are effective with English speakers are often effective with English learners. A study by Linan-Thompson, Vaughn, Hickman-Davis, and Kouzekanani (2003) looking at the effectiveness of supplemental instruction for ELs found that they benefit from instruction in the same kinds of strategies effective with all developing or struggling readers—instruction in fluency (repeated reading, echo reading, paired reading), phonological awareness (phoneme substitution, blending, segmenting, substitution), instructional-level reading (for practicing decoding, vocabulary, and comprehension skills), word study (word analysis, cognates, multiple meanings), and writing. In their study, those who received supplemental instruction for 13 weeks demonstrated significant gains in comprehension and oral reading fluency—with gains persisting over the longer term.

Their synthesis of research on the specific needs of English learners led Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer, and Rivera (2006b) to conclude that explicit strategy instruction, teacher modeling, and practice opportunities benefited students' comprehension.

Strategy instruction, too, has been shown to be effective. In their study of Mexican-Americans' construction of meaning while reading academic texts, Langer, Bartolome, Vasquez, and Lucas (1990) found that "abilities to use good meaning-making strategies made the major difference in how well they comprehended in both Spanish and English"—more so even than the students' fluency levels in English—suggesting that teaching students' strategies for making meaning is an important element in developing reading comprehension. Bunch, Walqui, and Pearson (2014) suggest that comprehension strategy instruction is a research-based approach for ELs.

But, English learners need additional support and adjustments to instructional strategies to make learning most effective for them. While they benefit from the key components of reading instruction identified by the National Reading Panel (2000), including a focus on text comprehension, as August and Shanahan (2006) argue: "It is not enough to teach language-minority students reading skills alone" (p. 4).

Integrating listening, speaking, reading, and writing in the classroom is especially important for ELs. August and Shanahan's (2006) review of research led them to the conclusion that "Extensive oral English development must be incorporated into successful literacy instruction" (p. 4). Esmaili (2002) found benefits to connecting reading and writing after comparing the performance of English-as-a-second-language students when they read and wrote unrelated texts with when they read a text, and then wrote about it. Students in the thematically related study condition performed significantly better on reading comprehension and a writing task, supporting the instructional practice of having students write about what they are reading.

Building students' prior knowledge is also a useful way to build ELs' comprehension. In her review of research on English language learning, Fitzgerald (1995b) concluded that "instruction targeting specific students' knowledge, such as vocabulary knowledge, background knowledge, and text-structure knowledge, was generally effective" (p. 115). Working with informational texts can also build students' background knowledge to better comprehend further informational texts (see Best, Floyd, & McNamara, 2008; Cervetti, Bravo, Hiebert, Pearson, & Jaynes, 2009; Peregoy & Boyle, 2000; and Jago, 2004).





Close reading is another approach that teachers can incorporate to support complex-text comprehension. According to Cummins (2013), close reading is

...when the reader analyzes any given text at the word or phrase level and also at the paragraph and section levels. As the reader analyzes the text, he or she determines which details are most important and how these fit together logically to convey the author's central idea(s) or theme(s). As a result of close reading, the reader begins to critically evaluate these ideas or themes. (p. 1)

Wong Fillmore and Fillmore (2012) suggest that close reading at the sentence-level is a promising practice for developing English learners' comprehension of academic-language texts.

Teaching across genres is also important (Klingner, Vaughn, & Boardman, 2007; Ogle & Blachowicz, 2002; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). Students develop skills in recognizing and analyzing arguments over time and with experience (Chambliss & Murphy, 2002), and engaging in these practices can help even younger students develop improved critical-thinking skills (Riley & Reedy, 2005). Just as with native English speakers, English learners “need to develop proficiency in different types and genres of literacy if they are to achieve their full literacy potential” (Riches & Genesee, 2006, p. 80). Furthermore, research with ELs specifically points to the importance of working with multiple genres, because an awareness and understanding of text structures also supports comprehension (Carrell, 1987, 1992). Peregoy and Boyle (2000) hypothesize that understanding text structure supports comprehension because readers can better make predictions about plot or argument, helping them to focus on the overall meaning of text as they read; “Because text structure conventions can vary from one language to another, explicit instruction on English text structures is beneficial for English learners. ...Familiarity with English text structures results from extensive experience reading a variety of texts in English, especially when explicit discussion of text structure is provided to help students perceive these patterns and use them to understand text” (p. 240). Langer, Bartolome, Vasquez, and Lucas (1990) looked at the ways that Mexican-American students constructed meaning as they read academic texts and found that “students’ familiarity with genre affected their ability to build meanings in both languages”—and that informational reports were more challenging for students to comprehend and recall than were stories—suggesting a benefit from increased instruction with informational texts.

Gee (2003) discusses the importance of teaching multiple genres as an equity and social justice issue; if all students are going to be assessed on how well they can comprehend informational texts, then they must have experience reading these genres of texts and engaging in connected academic activities. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) includes literary texts (fiction, literary nonfiction, and poetry) and informational texts (exposition, argumentation and persuasive texts, procedural text and documents). In NAEP, passages are distributed differently by grade level, with an increased weight on informational texts as students progress.

 Distribution of Literary and Informational Passages by Grade Level in 2009 NAEP Reading Framework		
 Grade	 Literary	 Informational
4	50%	50%
8	45%	55%
12	30%	70%

(National Assessment Governing Board, 2008).

Similarly, the *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects* strongly emphasize a multi-genre approach and stress the importance of content-area instruction in reading. The Standards advocate for “balancing the reading of literature with the reading of informational texts, including texts in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects” (NGA and CCSSO, 2010a, p. 5).

Vocabulary

In identifying effective literacy and English language instruction approaches for English learners, Gersten and colleagues (2007) concluded that the research evidence is strong to support a focus on vocabulary instruction for English learners. Teachers should “provide high-quality vocabulary instruction throughout the day. Teach essential content words in depth. ...Use instructional time to address the meanings of common words, phrases, and expressions not yet learned” (p. 2).

To understand and communicate in any language, readers and listeners must understand the vocabulary of that language; the link between vocabulary and comprehension cannot be overstated. On both the 2009 and the 2011 NAEP Reading Assessments, “at all three grades, students who scored higher on vocabulary questions also scored higher in reading comprehension” (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012). According to Lems, Miller, and Soro (2010) “it is the ability to learn thousands of new words in a new language that, more than anything else, determines a learner’s success, both academic and social” (p. 91).

Research with language learners points to this strong vocabulary-comprehension connection. In their study of Grade 4, Spanish-speaking ELs, Proctor, Carlo, August, and Snow (2005) looked at students’ reading comprehension and found that “L2 vocabulary knowledge is crucial for improved English reading comprehension outcomes” (p. 246). In her review of research on English language learning, Fitzgerald (1995b) concluded that “instruction targeting specific students’ knowledge, such as vocabulary knowledge, background knowledge, and text-structure knowledge, was generally effective” in increasing comprehension (p. 115). Carlisle, Beeman, Davis, and Spharim (1999) investigated the role of vocabulary and phonological awareness development on language learners’ reading comprehension in English. They found that word knowledge significantly explained students’ performance and contributed to their successful comprehension. From their findings, they concluded that “bilingual education programs should make vocabulary development” a high priority for instruction (p. 475). The findings of Jiménez, García, and Pearson (1996) support this notion of the importance of vocabulary. The researchers examined the readings strategies used by successful bilingual English readers, finding that more successful readers “were able to draw upon an array of strategic processes to determine the meanings of these [unknown vocabulary] words” (p. 91).

Academic language, specifically, should be a focus of instruction; English learners may lack the academic language necessary for success in school. Students may appear fluent in English in conversation, but may lack the specific knowledge of academic English that would allow them to fully succeed in the classroom. For these students, while the development of conversational English may have occurred naturally through social interactions, additional support and explicit instruction in academic language is needed for them to succeed in school (Fitzgerald, 1995b; Learning Point Associates, 2009). Academic vocabulary is like a “third” language that takes students much more time to master than social English (DeLuca, 2010). [Academic vocabulary is also sometimes referred to as Tier 2 or Tier 3 words. In this tiered classification, Tier 1 includes basic, everyday vocabulary; Tier 2 includes high-frequency vocabulary useful across domains; and Tier 3 includes context- and content-specific terms (for more discussion, see Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002, 2008).]

A lack of proficiency in academic language affects ELs’ ability to comprehend and analyze texts in middle and high school, to write and express themselves effectively, and to succeed across content areas; “Academic vocabulary is central to text and its comprehension, and plays an especially prominent role in the upper elementary, middle, and high school years as students learn about concepts, ideas, and facts in content-area classrooms such as math, science, and social studies” (Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer, & Rivera, 2006a, p. 8).

Particularly with the implementation of the rigorous Common Core State Standards across the nation, Hakuta (2011) concludes that ELs' success against these standards "will entail a great deal of support for academic language" (p. 172). Scarcella (2003), too, challenges the notion that academic English is naturally acquired after conversational English because "learners who live in communities that are linguistically isolated and who are not exposed to academic English in their communities—either in their homes or in their schools—often never acquire this English" (Scarcella, 2003, p. 6). A distressing suggestion, since, according to Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer, and Rivera (2006b), "mastery of academic language is arguably the single most important determinant of academic success for individual students" (p. 5).

[It is important to note here that academic English (AE) is not limited to vocabulary and includes forms of writing, registers of speaking, and use of grammar that differ from conversational English. As Arnstrom and colleagues (2010) point out, "A limited conceptualization of AE as academic vocabulary limits the effectiveness of AE instruction" (p. 30). Academic English is not vocabulary alone.]

Research suggests a number of effective approaches for teaching vocabulary. In reviewing the research on promising practices for building the vocabulary knowledge of ELs, Proctor, Carlo, August, and Snow (2005) recommend the following: engaging students in word-focused tasks and activities; teaching cognate awareness; supplying engaging texts; and focusing on depth of vocabulary knowledge, through instruction in morphology, meaning, and other word-learning strategies. Jones and Plass (2002) found the greatest benefits when students heard and saw vocabulary explanations presented verbally and visually, not in text alone. Ellis and He's 1999 vocabulary-acquisition research suggests that students learn more when they can interact and discuss words together.

Direct instruction has also been shown to support ELs' vocabulary acquisition. Genesee and Riches (2006) reviewed research on effective instructional strategies and found "all three studies that examined vocabulary report significant improvements in performance" (p. 111) for English learners as a result of direct, explicit instruction.

Morphological analysis, too, is important. When learners understand the structure of words, they have a powerful tool for vocabulary growth (Templeton, Bear, Invernizzi, & Johnston, 2010). According to Lems, Miller, and Soro (2010), "morphemes are powerful tools for building English vocabulary" (p. 92), and can be particularly effective in helping ELs learn new content-area words. The study of morphology encompasses the study of all of the smallest parts of words, which include the Greek and Latin prefixes, suffixes, and roots that can help students understand the meaning of unfamiliar words and the inflectional endings that can help students recognize the tense, number, possession, or comparative nature of words. Because most unfamiliar words students encounter are morphological derivatives of familiar words (Aronoff, 1994), students with morphological analysis skills can more successfully broaden their academic vocabulary and comprehend new texts (Carlisle, 2010; Kieffer & Lesaux, 2007). Goodwin and Ahn's 2010 meta-analysis supported this, finding that morphological skill instruction improves students' literacy achievement and was "particularly effective for children with reading, learning, or speech and language disabilities, English language learners, and struggling readers" (p. 183). Researchers have found that ELs at every grade level and proficiency level benefit from instruction in analyzing words' morphology (Kieffer

& Lesaux, 2009). In a study of the relationship between morphological awareness and comprehension among Grade 4 and 5 Spanish ELs, Kieffer and Lesaux (2008) found that the students' morphological awareness was a significant predictor of comprehension. Carlo and colleagues (2008/2009) found that Grade 5 ELs showed significant improvement on their vocabulary knowledge and comprehension when they received an instructional intervention, in the context of meaningful text, on word study, which included instruction in: strategies for using context clues to determine meaning, word morphology and spelling, multiple-meaning words, and cognates.

The recognition and use of cognates between typologically similar first language and second languages are another source of support for language learners. According to Riches and Genesee (2006) research in this area suggests that more successful language learners are able to recognize cognates and make use of them to support reading comprehension. (In this way, native language vocabulary contributes to second language literacy development.)

From Research to Practice

Text Complexity in Escalate English

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's *Escalate English* © 2017 includes appropriately complex selections, with rich themes, grade-appropriate content, distinctive language, and effective stylistic elements, that provide rich opportunities for students to respond verbally, through collaborative discussion, and in writing.

Each unit includes selections that represent the topic of the unit and are selected for their complexity and depth of meaning, which allows for close reading, textual analysis, and reflective response. Appropriately complex and diverse language helps students build their academic language skills and their vocabulary knowledge. Poems and literary texts build students' skills with figurative language. Selections across genres ensure that English learners build the skills to independently comprehend increasingly complex and content-rich informational and literary selections. To ensure that English learners dive deeply into these complex texts, questions and tasks are text-dependent, and discussion and writing activities require students to cite specific evidence and make connections across selections.

The program meets the non-negotiable criteria of the Council of the Great City Schools' framework (2014) by providing access to appropriately complex selections and making connections between the materials for English learners and the English Language Arts classroom. *Escalate English* clearly links to HMH *Journeys* and *Collections*.

The program offers selections across the grade levels that are appropriately complex, as based on:

- quantitative measures of complexity;
- qualitative measures of complexity; and
- the match of tasks, texts, and readers.

The **Text X-Ray** feature in the **Teacher's Edition** informs teachers about the genre, demands, challenges, and opportunities of each selection. The **Text X-Rays** precede each unit and provide descriptive information and instructional suggestions organized by the qualitative measures of text complexity: Levels of Meaning/Purpose, Structure, Language Conventuality and Clarity, Knowledge Demands, and Suggested Read/Task Consideration. The **Text X-Ray** helps teachers determine where best to spend instructional time.

With the **Text X-Ray**, teachers can choose between texts or assign specific selections to particular students.

The screenshot shows the 'Text X-Ray' interface for the text 'Revolutionary Air'. It includes a 'TEXT X-RAY' logo, the title 'Revolutionary Air', and an introductory paragraph: 'English Language Support Before teaching, use the Text X-Ray below for an overview of the text's complexity. The Text X-Ray and the Teacher Edition supports and scaffold will help you guide students with different proficiencies and skill levels.'

The interface is divided into several sections:

- AT A GLANCE:** Lists key details in the text, such as Robert Boyle's experiments in the 1650s, the discovery of atoms, and the invention of a new discipline—chemistry.
- DEMANDS Text Complexity Rubric:** Shows 'Reading Level' and 'Levels of Meaning / Purpose' with progress indicators.
- Critical Vocabulary:** Lists words like 'candlelit', 'invisible', 'existence', 'patterns', 'philosophers', and 'devices'.
- CHALLENGES Language:** Discusses the 'Academic Register' and provides 'Vocabulary for Scientific Experiments' (e.g., airless, particles, air pump experiment, matter, gas, atoms, molecules, chemical reaction).
- OPPORTUNITIES:** Discusses the use of complex scientific terms and the roots of scientific words.
- Focused Support:** Lists phrases like 'a candlelit room', 'airless space', and 'unseen particles'.
- Multiple-Meaning Words:** A table with columns for 'Word', 'Definition Students Probably Know', and 'Definition as Used in the Selection'.

Word	Definition Students Probably Know	Definition as Used in the Selection
worked	performed a task or did some kind of job	came out successfully
shape	figure, form	to give form, model, sculpt
matter	problem, issue	physical substance of objects
gas	gasoline	a state of matter that is not solid or liquid

Comprehension in Escalate English

In *Escalate English*, students are given direct instruction and opportunities to read and comprehend challenging selections.

The program’s design and teaching and learning activities align with best-practice research in second-language reading comprehension. In *Escalate English*:

- Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are integrated, so that students read, listen or view and then discuss or write about texts;
- Building students’ knowledge base and activating prior knowledge are the focus of explicit instruction;
- Students practice close textual analysis and gather textual evidence in support of their responses to texts;
- Varied genres are included and their text structures discussed in instruction.

In *Escalate English* students are given tools and purposes for reading. In this example, from the Grade 7, Unit 5 **Student Edition**, students are given explicit information about the structure of an argument and are guided to identify the main argument and its elements as they read.

READING TOOLBOX

Reading an Argument

In an **argument**, a speaker or writer makes a claim supported by reasons and evidence. A **claim** is the speaker’s position on a problem or issue. To make a strong argument, it is important to have support. **Support** consists of reasons and evidence that prove the claim. **Reasons** are declarations made to explain an action or belief. **Evidence** includes specific facts, statistics, and examples.

To follow the reasoning of an argument:

- ▶ Identify the claim or claims.
- ▶ Look for the reasons and evidence given to support the claim.
- ▶ Pay attention to the way the author connects the claim, reasons, and evidence.
- ▶ Identify **counterarguments**, or **opposing arguments**, which are statements that present contrasting viewpoints. The writer or speaker of a good argument knows the possible contrasting viewpoints. He or she can then provide counterarguments to disprove the opposing views.

SETTING A PURPOSE

As you read, think about what the main argument is. Find places where there are components of an argument—such as claims, support, and counterclaims.

The **Reading Toolbox** helps students build skills such as:

- **Identifying Purpose and Audience**
- **Analyzing Points of View**
- **Identifying Facts versus Opinions**
- **Reading for Transitions**
- **Following a Cause-and-Effect Chain**

In *Escalate English*, varied genres are included in each unit, including informational texts, myths, novel excerpts, classic fiction, plays, poetry, newspaper articles, and biographical narratives. The varied genres and carefully chosen content challenge English learners to grow as readers and thinkers and extend their knowledge base.

After reading, students engage in activities to analyze what they have read and think more critically about texts. Students are reminded to use textual evidence in support of their ideas, such as in these examples in the Grade 7, Unit 5 **Student Edition**:

Analyzing the Text

Cite Text Evidence

1. **Evaluate** Evaluate the advertisement for EarPhones. Does it make you want to purchase them? What else would you need to know before you agreed to buy them?
2. **Analyze** Reread lines 31–49. What assumptions can you find in the text about advertisements and their influence? Are there any reasons and evidence to support the claims?

Vocabulary in Escalate English

In *Escalate English*, academic language and vocabulary are central elements of instruction.

The **Unit at a Glance** feature shows the **Academic Vocabulary** for the unit. Each unit includes a consistent number of **Academic Vocabulary** words, which are studied throughout the unit and align to the HMH Core Academic Vocabulary.

Each unit is made up of lessons. Each lesson is divided into four parts. In Parts 3 and 4, students practice with **Academic Vocabulary** and oral language production.

Throughout the text selections in *Escalate English*, challenging words and phrases are called out to help students navigate the text. These call-outs often provide explanations, strategies or topics for discussion.

Build Vocabulary lessons in the **Teacher’s Edition** support students as they internalize words and learn shades of meaning. **Build Vocabulary** lessons might focus on **Critical Vocabulary, Word Families**, or other relevant vocabulary acquisition instruction.

Vocabulary Strategy lessons in the **Student Edition** give students additional information on strategies for vocabulary acquisition, in the context of the texts they have just been reading, such as in this example from Grade 7, Unit 5:

Vocabulary Strategy: Suffixes –er and –est

Suffixes are added to the end of words. When you add –er and –est to adjectives, you are comparing or showing a difference between things. These **comparatives** (–er = more) and **superlatives** (–est = most) indicate relationships.

The goal of its ruler, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum, is to make it even grander. <lines 14–15>

grander = more grand

In this sentence, the suffix –er is showing a comparison; Dubai was grand before, and it is being made even more so now.

Vocabulary Strategies reflect the findings of research in vocabulary acquisition and align with key grade-level standards. For example, see this set of strategies from Grade 5, Unit 3:

Vocabulary Strategies

- Specialized Vocabulary** Lesson 4
- Reference Aids: Dictionary** Lesson 14
- Comparative and Superlative Forms** Lesson 8
- Word Origins** Lesson 9
- Connotation** Lesson 17
- Multiple-Meaning Words** Lesson 18
- Affixes** Lesson 22
- Visual Clues** Lesson 24
- Compound Words** Lesson 25

Unit pretests on vocabulary and language help diagnose students’ strengths and weaknesses and enable teachers to determine how much time to spend on **Build Vocabulary** lessons.

Tools, such as **My Word List**, encourage students to build a deep vocabulary base.

In the back of the book, additional resources offer further learning opportunities and reference sources.

Vocabulary and Spelling resources include:

1. Using Context Clues
2. Analyzing Word Structure
3. Understanding Word Origins
4. Synonyms and Antonyms
5. Denotation and Connotation
6. Analogies
7. Homonyms, Homographs, and Homophones
8. Words with Multiple Meanings
9. Specialized Vocabulary
10. Using Reference Sources
11. Spelling Rules
12. Commonly Confused Words

The **Glossary of Literary and Informational Terms** defines content-area words for students.

Vocabulary instruction in **Escalate English** establishes the strong foundation English learners need to communicate purposefully.

Strand 3: Writing

Writing is a highly complex cognitive ability which comprises a range of different cognitive processes. It includes low-level processes focused on handwriting and spelling and higher level processes associated with determining and structuring content in such a way as to meet the demands of the reader. Unlike speech, writing ... requires protracted instruction and practice.

Torrance & Fidalgo, 2013, p. 338

Although newcomers may not be as fluent when writing in English as they are in their native languages, and their writing may not be as fluent or as standardized as that of their fluent English-speaking peers, they are clearly able to use writing to express their thoughts and emotions. When working with ELLs whose writing is filled with unconventional uses of English, it is important to keep in mind that writing is a developmental process...

Samway, 2006, p. 58

Defining the Strand

Writing well is important. As Graham and Perin assert in their Carnegie report, *Writing Next*, helping students “to write clearly, logically, and coherently about ideas, knowledge, and views will expand their access to higher education, give them an edge for advancement in the workforce, and increase the likelihood that they will actively participate as citizens...” (p. 28). Students’ 21st-century social, academic, and professional advancement will depend in part on their writing ability (Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 2009). For English learners who face additional challenges in learning to write well, targeted instruction is imperative.

Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer, and Rivera (2006b) synthesized research on ELs’ learning needs and concluded that effective instruction must include, among other elements, intensive academic writing instruction (through meaningful writing assignments with opportunities to see models and receive feedback). Esmaili (2002) compared the performance of ELs when they read and wrote unrelated texts with when they read a text, and then wrote about it. Students in the thematically related study condition performed significantly better on writing and comprehension. Writing for varied communicative purposes is another element of effective instruction; both NAEP and the Common Core refer to varied text types and purposes—students must be able to inform, persuade, and narrate. Finally, students must be taught standard English in the context of writing, and be given opportunities for practice.

In *Escalate English*, the activities and **Performance Tasks** demand that students speak and write in response to the content they study—creating opportunities for productive struggle in a supported environment. Students learn to use academic language, share information, justify opinions, argue thoughtfully and respectfully, and use textual evidence to support their ideas.

Research That Guided the Development of *Escalate English*

Writing for Communication

Canale and Swain (1980) reviewed research in the field of language acquisition and concluded that a communicative approach (as opposed to a grammatically based approach) to language learning is crucial. Reflecting the kinds of communicative activities in which the learner is likely to engage makes learning more meaningful, engaging, and useful. Learners should recognize that language is a resource for making meaning, expressing ideas, and interacting with others.

Research with native speakers suggests that students develop skills with various purposes for writing and their associated genres, forms, and structures through instruction. Applebee and Langer (2006) analyzed NAEP data and found a correlation between the quality of students’ writing and the types of writing they had been assigned to do in the classroom. English learners, too, need experience with the kinds of writing types and forms they will use in workplace, school, and real-life situations.

Rigorous standards and assessment frameworks, too, emphasize writing for authentic communicative purposes. In the 2011 writing framework for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), three communicative purposes are assessed:

- **To persuade**, in order to change the reader’s point of view or affect the reader’s action.
- **To explain**, in order to expand the reader’s understanding.
- **To convey experience** (real or imagined), in order to communicate individual and imagined experience to others (National Assessment Governing Board, 2010, p. 21)

The Common Core State Standards emphasize the need for writing in a range of text types and for varied purposes in this way: “To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students need to learn to use writing as a way of offering and supporting opinions, demonstrating understanding of the subjects they are studying, and conveying real and imagined experiences and events” (NGA and CCSSO, 2010a, p. 18).

As part of instruction on varied communicative purposes, students must learn to write in academic English; “Learning academic English is probably one of the surest, most reliable ways of attaining socio-economic success in the United States” (Scarcella, 2003, p. 3). Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer, and Rivera (2006b) emphasize that ELs must receive intensive academic writing instruction through meaningful writing assignments, study of models, and regular feedback.

Models of various text structures and explicit instruction in the essential characteristics of different writing genres is important for English learners because “Genre knowledge develops, in part, from experience with text structures...” (De La Paz & McCutchen, 2011, p. 45). In the same way that English learners need to read different genres in the classroom, they need experience working with the structures of different genres in their writing to reach their full potential in English (Riches & Genesee, 2006). Fisher and Frey (2003) worked with a group of struggling adolescent readers, almost half of whom were English learners, in a class on genre studies, and found that placing a significant emphasis on writing instruction was an essential part of an effective literacy curriculum, and that “students benefited from daily writing instruction” (p. 404).

Persuasive writing, particularly, is a form in which students benefit from explicit instruction. Just as native writers earlier and more naturally develop an understanding of narrative structures because of their exposure to story forms as young children (De La Paz & McCutchen, 2011), so too do English learners benefit from more explicit instruction in informational and persuasive forms of writing. Specific elements of persuasion make it a challenge for students; “Persuasive writing is a challenging form of communication even for typically developing writers” and requires “sophisticated uses of syntax, semantics, and pragmatics...” (Nippold, Ward-Lonergan, & Fanning, 2005, p. 126, 125). After examining the degree to which persuasive writing was incorporated into second language instruction, Bermudez and Prater (1994) concluded that, in general, Hispanic writers demonstrated unsophisticated use of persuasive strategies in their writing and could benefit from instruction that would help them developing knowledge of the genre and its structures and incorporating more complex forms of persuasion into their own writing.

Language and Grammar

For all writers and speakers, native language speakers and language learners, grammar is the structure of language. Making grammar explicit for students helps them understand the rules for making meaning in a language. Students who understand grammar understand the varied ways that they can combine words to make meaningful, effective sentences. When they follow grammatical conventions and rules, writers and speakers “ensure understanding and avoid distractions...allowing the reader to focus on the writer’s [or speaker’s] thoughts and ideas” (ACT, 2007, p. 46–47).

Ellis (2002) argues for grammar instruction for English learners, mounting the case “from different perspectives: (1) acquisition theory, (2) the learner, and (3) language pedagogy. Taken together, arguments based on these perspectives provide a compelling argument in favor of teaching grammar” (p. 18). He continues, arguing that while most L2 learners fail to achieve high levels of competence with grammar, there is evidence that learners can fully acquire the norms of their learned language through formal, explicit instruction; that many learners expect grammar instruction; and that instruction in grammar can provide teachers and learners with a clear sense of progression in language learning.

Language and grammar skills should be taught to English learners in the content of communicative meaning making. Instruction is best done in the context of meaningful literacy contexts, just as it is for native speakers (Fearn & Farnan, 2005; Hillocks, 1986; Polette, 2008; Weaver, 1997). Olsen (2010) argues that language development for long-term English learners should focus on “academic uses of English, with a focus on comprehension, vocabulary development, and advanced grammatical structures needed to comprehend and produce academic language...Language objectives should target the language forms needed for the academic work” (p. 35).

Celce-Murcia (2002) concurs, arguing that English grammar can be explained only partly at the sentence level; for full understanding, a context at the discourse level is needed—and, therefore, instruction must take place not at the sentence level, but at the discourse level. The research of Ellis, Basturkmen, and Loewen (2001) on adult English learners, found that communicative lessons offered many opportunities for focus-on-form episodes—and that the learners showed a high level of uptake overall after these kinds of episodes—suggesting that form can be taught in the context of meaning-oriented lessons.

Grammar, not just vocabulary, is important to students’ acquisition of academic English. Grammar and vocabulary interact to develop formal and informal registers that vary by context (Halliday & Mathiessen, 2004). Knowledge of grammatical structures is essential to mastering academic English. As Scarcella (2003) points out, “the grammatical component of academic English entails all the knowledge of the grammar of everyday English and, in addition, knowledge of additional structures—such as parallel clauses, conditionals, and complex clauses” (p. 15).

Spelling instruction, too, can be helpful for English learners. Because of the inconsistencies in English phonetics, English learners need more explicit instruction in phonemic awareness and spelling because of the many different spelling patterns used for the same sounds. In addition, students can benefit from using words’ morphemes and spelling patterns as clues to the meanings of words (Templeton 2003a, 2003b).

Research suggests that sentence combining—an approach in which students “construct more complex and sophisticated sentences through exercises in which two or more basic sentences are combined into a single sentence” (Graham & Perin, 2007, p. 18)—is effective for English learners (Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer, & Rivera, 2006b; Sjolie, 2006).

Study in grammar also appears to have implications for other literacy skills; grammar study appeared to improve the reading comprehension of English learners, according to research conducted by Achugar, Schleppegrell, and Oteiza (2007).

From Research to Practice

Writing for Communication in Escalate English

In *Escalate English*, students produce varied types of writing for multiple purposes in each unit. Students write for clear communicative purposes, to make and communicate meaning. Students practice language production in a variety of ways—and for a variety of purposes—in features threaded through each unit.

The **Write On!** feature is one program feature which gives students regular opportunities to describe what they have read and to explain what they have learned.

In addition, students have the chance to analyze the texts they read and cite textual evidence in writing in response to prompts that guide them to **Evaluate** and **Analyze**, such as in this Grade 7, Unit 5 example:

Analyzing the Text

Cite Text Evidence

- 1. Evaluate** Evaluate the advertisement for EarPhones. Does it make you want to purchase them? What else would you need to know before you agreed to buy them?
- 2. Analyze** Reread lines 31–49. What assumptions can you find in the text about advertisements and their influence? Are there any reasons and evidence to support the claims?

Performance Tasks require students to synthesize information from selections and to express and justify their own opinions. **Performance Tasks** include such genres as:

- Short Stories
- Informative Essays
- Responses to Literature
- Research Essays
- Written Arguments

For example, see this **Writing Activity** from Grade 7, Unit 5:

Performance Task



Writing Activity: Argument Response Using the questions in the Speaking Toolbox, write a short response to the following question from the end of “Want vs. Need”: What will you decide, and why?

- Think about your opinion on the topic. Was your original opinion different than the one you now have after reading the article?
- Next, think about the reasons for your opinion. How can you support your opinion? Make note of examples from the text to support your opinion.
- Include an opposing opinion. Give examples to counter this opinion.
- Restate your opinion in a concluding sentence.

Consumable **Student Activity Books** offer students additional writing practice in response to texts and in preparation for **Performance Tasks**.

Analyzing the Text

1. Evaluate

Does the advertisement for earphones make you want to purchase them? _____

What else would you need to know before you agreed to buy them? _____

2. Analyze

What assumption can you find in the text about advertisements and their influence?

Are there reasons and evidence to support the claims?

Language and Grammar in Escalate English

In **Escalate English**, students receive explicit grammar instruction to build their language knowledge and skills. In **How English Works**, students are taught a sequence of discrete points of grammar and language orally so that they build automaticity that transfers into all of their productive work.

The **Vocabulary and Spelling Handbook** and **Grammar Handbook** offer additional practice with language skills.

For example, in Grade 7, the **Grammar Handbook** includes information on:

1. Nouns
2. Pronouns
3. Verbs
4. Modifiers
5. The Sentence and Its Parts
6. Phrases
7. Verbals and Verbal Phrases
8. Clauses
9. The Structure of Sentences
10. Writing Complete Sentences
11. Subject-Verb Agreement

The **Vocabulary and Spelling Handbook** includes:

1. Using Context Clues
2. Analyzing Word Structure
3. Understanding Word Origins
4. Synonyms and Antonyms
5. Denotation and Connotation
6. Analogies
7. Homonyms, Homographs, and Homophones
8. Words with Multiple Meanings
9. Specialized Vocabulary
10. Using Reference Sources
11. Spelling Rules
12. Commonly Confused Words

The consumable **Student Activity Books** include activities to practice language skills.

Strand 4: Listening and Speaking

For English Language Learners (ELLs) in U.S. schools, developing proficiency in oral English is essential for academic and future professional and personal success. Developing proficiency in oral English involves acquiring vocabulary, gaining control over grammar, and developing an understanding of the subtle semantics of English. At the same time, acquiring proficiency in English involves learning how to use the language to interact successfully with other speakers of the language.

Saunders & O'Brien, 2006, p. 14

...it is important to note that well-developed oral proficiency in English is associated with more highly developed reading comprehension and writing skills in English. As a result, comprehensive literacy programs for ELLs should...incorporate an ongoing and intensive focus on oral English development...

Learning Point Associates, 2009, p. 9

Defining the Strand

English learners may not have had adequate exposure to oral English, and so they clearly benefit from models of academic English. But, English learners cannot be just recipients of information; rather, they need to be actively engaged in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Participating actively in English oral language development is essential for English learners (Saunders & O'Brien, 2006, p. 14). Listening, too, "is a key second language skill ...[with] a vital role in the language acquisition process..." (Brett, 1997, p. 39). Students learn from interactions in English, and benefit from instruction in strategies that support listening and speaking (Saunders & O'Brien, 2006).

By building oral language skills, educators foster the development of other literacy skills. Research shows that learning opportunities with oral language support students' reading comprehension and writing (August & Shanahan, 2006). Oral language skills relate to word-level vocabulary and to higher-level comprehension skills (Cain & Oakhill, 2007). To develop readiness for college, careers, and civic life, students must have skills in listening and speaking.

To build these skills, Fisher, Frey, and Rothenberg (2008) suggest the benefit of content-area conversations in which academic language use is promoted, scaffolds are provided, and students are actively engaged. Opportunities for communication and collaboration are emphasized by the *Framework for 21st Century Learning* (2009) and the Common Core State Standards.

HMH **Escalate English** recognizes the fundamental importance of oral language skills, and helps students develop their oral language proficiency through ample opportunities to engage in listening and speaking, vocabulary development, oral grammar, and social language.

Research That Guided the Development of *Escalate English*

Listening and Speaking

Students who are English learners must master multiple elements of literacy, as well as different forms of English. To communicate orally in English, ELs must learn social, conversational English and academic English. To master social English, students must learn interpersonal skills (such as greetings and making requests) and distinguish formal and informal speech. Some students, particularly long-term English learners, who have mastered social English may sound like fluent speakers but may not have yet mastered academic English. Learning academic English can be more cognitively demanding and requires the use of content-specific vocabulary and structures. (See Haynes, 2007, for a deeper discussion of social and academic language.)

For these reasons, developing communication skills in verbal English is a complex process which takes time. Research “suggests that ELLs require several years of schooling to attain L2 oral proficiency. Progress from beginning to middle levels of proficiency is relatively rapid, but progress from middle to upper levels of proficiency is slower” (Saunders & O’Brien, 2006, p. 40).

While the process is complex, developing oral language is important to becoming literate. Numerous studies have supported the connection between oral language development and reading achievement (Saunders & O’Brien, 2006), suggesting that the development of oral language skills is important to academic success. August and Shanahan (2006), too, found that oral proficiency correlates with reading comprehension and writing skills and that “Literacy programs that provide instructional support or oral language development in English, aligned with high-quality literacy instruction, are the most successful” (p. 4).

How best, then, to develop students’ oral communication skills? Research suggests that English learners’ oral language skills can be developed using the same kinds of strategies that have been proven to be effective with native speakers (Linan-Thompson, Vaughn, Hickman-Davis, & Kouzekanani, 2003). Teachers can provide ample opportunities for receptive and productive interactions and discussions. Supporting students’ communication in their first language, too, has been shown to be effective (Haynes, 2007). In addition, to develop students’ listening skills, research suggests that technology can be a useful tool; dynamic visual information has been shown to support language learners’ oral comprehension (Plass & Jones, 2005). In his research comparing a technology tool that integrated text, video, and audio with tasks that employed audio or video separately with pen-and-paper, Brett (1997) found that students using the multimedia learning environment “showed more effective comprehension and recall” and that “multimedia-delivered listening comprehension tasks may be more efficient”, in part because of the possibility for regular feedback to learners (p. 39).

For long-term English learners, practicing academic language orally is an important foundation to building skill in reading and writing. As such, it is crucial that long-term learners receive ample opportunities to participate in the classroom by presenting ideas, working in teams, and collaborating with peers (Olsen, 2014). In addition, because the language of their peers may not represent the academic language that they need to develop, Fillmore (2014) suggests that English learners will benefit from daily, academically productive, teacher-led conversations in which teachers guide students in considering a featured sentence from the text.

Collaboration

According to the Common Core State Standards, “To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students must have ample opportunities to take part in a variety of rich, structured conversations—as part of a whole class, in small groups, and with a partner. Being a productive member of these conversations requires that students contribute accurate, relevant information; respond to and develop what others have said; make comparisons and contrasts; and analyze and synthesize a multitude of ideas in various domains” [National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA) and Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), 2010a].

Human learning occurs within a social context (Vygotsky, 1962), and communication and collaboration are skills identified as essential for the 21st century (see the Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 2009). Teaching practices that develop students’ interpersonal competencies and encourage small-group discussions, structured classroom conversations, and collaboration have been shown to support deeper learning—and are key to developing students’ 21st century skills (Applebee, 1996; Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, & Gamoran, 2003; National Research Council, 2012).

To meet the grade-level expectations of rigorous standards, English learners, too, must participate in these rich conversations. And these conversations will serve additional benefits to the English learner. Research shows that collaboration and interaction in the classroom result in improved performance and skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

In her research, Collier (1995) has found that “classes in school that are highly interactive...are likely to provide the kind of social setting for natural language acquisition to take place, simultaneously with academic and cognitive development” (online). In her research on EL and mainstream learners, Langer (1995, 2000, 2001) has identified discussion—when used to develop students’ understandings rather than as an assessment of recall—to be a particularly important element of effective English language arts classrooms. In their review of research, Genesee and Riches found that “virtually every study in this corpus reported that ELLs in interactive learning environments demonstrated improvements in reading and writing or behaviors related to reading and writing as a consequence of participation in an interactive learning environment” (p. 118). Specifically, the body of research that they reviewed provided evidence that interactive learning environments can support student development of reading comprehension skills, vocabulary acquisition, and writing skills. In their study of strategy instruction with second language learners, O’Malley et al. (1985) found that students’ oral language skills were improved by training in cooperative learning strategies. Fisher and Frey (2003) looked at writing instruction for struggling adolescent readers, almost half of whom were English learners, and found that students produced some of their most successful efforts in writing after group discussions of the texts—suggesting that collaborative discussions can impact various aspects of EL’s literacy. Klingner and Vaughn (2000) investigated the effectiveness of collaborative strategic reading with bilingual and limited English proficient students and found that cooperative learning groups had a significant impact on the vocabulary knowledge of students in both groups. Interaction—particularly when it was modified during the interaction to facilitate comprehension—helped high-school, English-language-learners in Japan develop their comprehension skills, in a pair of studies conducted by Ellis, Tanaka, and Yamazaki (1994).

The benefits of collaboration are clear. To include effective exchanges in the classroom, teachers must keep in mind certain elements. First, classroom discussion and collaboration must involve sharing and generating of ideas—not simply participation by producing simple, correct answers. According to Wilkinson and Nelson (2013) classroom discussion is best defined as “the open-ended collaborative exchange of ideas among a teacher and students or among students for the purpose of furthering students’ thinking, understanding, learning, or appreciation of text” (p. 299). To meet this definition, teachers should ensure that discussions are focused, are led (but not dominated) by the teacher, allow for time for student responses, and involve open-ended questions.

Finally, collaborative learning arrangements can also contribute to creating the inclusive, positive school climate that research suggests is crucial to English learners’ full participation, engagement, and development of healthy self-concepts and social connections (Olsen, 2010).

From Research to Practice

Listening and Speaking in Escalate English

In *Escalate English*, listening and speaking are central elements of each lesson.

Throughout *Escalate English*, students practice language production in a variety of ways—and for a variety of purposes. The organization by topics allows students to listen, view, and read as they dive deeply into the content.

Students respond orally to selections throughout *Escalate English*. In **Performance Tasks** they express and provide evidence for opinions. They prepare and make oral presentations, both persuasive and informative, in **Speak Out!** In **Collaborative Discussions** (discussed further below) they listen and speak to share ideas with peers.

The units and lessons of *Escalate English* follow a predictable structure.

Each unit is made up of lessons, with each lesson divided into four parts. The fourth part of each lesson includes oral language lessons that focus on the mechanics of English in the feature **How English Works**. Students gain practice with their oral language production and are helped to build automaticity with the proper use of Standard English. **How English Works** lessons are sequential and planned to take only 15 minutes of instructional time.

How English Works lessons zoom in on aspects of the English language—such as easily confused words—that are uniquely challenging to English learners. **Teacher Features** in the **How English Works** lessons illuminate transfer issues and help teachers to understand why certain structures may confuse some students.

Unit pretests help diagnose students’ strengths and weaknesses and enable teachers to determine how much time to spend on **How English Works** lessons.

Collaboration in Escalate English

In *Escalate English*, students regularly engage with others to discuss, describe, explain, inform, justify, persuade, and clarify their ideas.

Collaborative Discussions follow each selection in *Escalate English*. In **Collaborative Discussions**, students work to negotiate ideas and clarify their thinking, within the context of facts and ideas presented in the lesson. Students must interpret what they have read or heard, and then use appropriate academic language to discuss.

Successful collaboration and discussion require instruction and practice. Throughout *Escalate English*, lessons about choosing the right language for the right situation helps teachers to guide students in their language choices. In addition, the **Student Edition Toolboxes** provide reminders to enhance students’ participation in discussions.

In *Escalate English*, students are engaged with one another in meaningful tasks and discussions.

Strand 5: Technology

For hundreds of years the primary vehicle for instruction has been words, such as lectures or textbooks. Advances in computer and communication technologies now allow instructors to supplement verbal modes of instruction with visual modes of instruction, including dazzling graphics that students can interact with.

Research on multimedia learning provides encouraging evidence that under appropriate circumstances, students learn better from words and pictures than from words alone...

Mayer, 2013, p. 396

The 21st century is a period of dramatic change in defining literacy. Contemporary students use both traditional text and digital media to communicate and locate information for both in-school and out-of-school purposes.

This period of change has required researchers, educators, and students themselves to redefine and expand their concept of literacy.

Rhodes & Robnolt, 2009, p. 153

Defining the Strand

Technology is pervasive in 21st-century society, and as such plays a role in English learners' lives in and out of school. Students ages 8 to 18 spend an average of 1 ½ hours on the computer each day and 7 ½ hours on various entertainment media (Rideout, Foehr, & Roberts, Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010). Nearly all high school students use technology to study or complete school assignments for homework (CDW, 2011). By using instructional technologies to promote learning, teachers meet students where they are, using a medium that engages them.

Numerous studies show technology's impact on student learning and increased achievement (see syntheses and meta-analyses conducted by Cheung & Slavin, 2012a, 2012b; Goldberg, Russell, & Cook, 2003; Means, Toyama, Murphy, Bakia, & Jones, 2010; Waxman, Lin, & Michko, 2003; Tamim, Bernard, Borokhosvski, Abrami, & Schmid, 2011; and Teh & Fraser, 1994). And, for English learners, particularly, technology has benefits (Lopez, 2010); "computer technology provides learners with new and varied options for language learning" (Chapelle, 2007, p. 98). Computers are beneficial because they can offer varied support for language learning—scaffolds, such as point-of-need vocabulary definitions or note-taking resources; integrated audio models and engaging multimedia videos; opportunities for assessment; and ongoing feedback (Chapelle, 2007). Technology offers interactive opportunities that are student-centered and engaging.

In **Escalate English**, technology is used purposefully to facilitate instruction and enhance learning. Interactive tools for close reading, annotating, and writing, and resources for additional learning, engage students in learning, skill building, and practice. A blended digital and print approach, with interactive and collaborative digital tools, means that all learners develop skills for college and career readiness.

Research That Guided the Development of Escalate English

Technology for English Learners

As discussed on the previous page, technology has been shown to support increased learning and achievement across a variety of students of different age levels and characteristics and with varying technologies.

Technology is important in the English language arts classroom both because new technologies are redefining literacy, with new forms of information and new ways to interact with that information (International Reading Association, 2009), and because technology has been shown to be particularly effective in English language arts classrooms, in the development of reading comprehension and writing.

Technology has proven effective with language learners in terms of:

Comprehension: In his research comparing the outcomes of students learning via multimedia with those learning through more traditional means, Brett (1997) found that students in the multimedia condition showed greater comprehension and recall in listening tasks, and benefited from technology's ability to provide ongoing performance feedback to the learner.

Writing: In their review of research on technology and second-language writing instruction, Yim and Warschauer (2014) concluded that "overall, the studies on L2 students' writing on new, but prevalent, technology tools reveal the power of technology both in shaping and improving their writing as well as enabling distinctively collaborative patterns of interactions" (p. 305). Pennington (2004) reviewed research on computer-assisted language learning (CALL) specifically related to writing and found that computer-based writing activities resulted in the production of longer texts, more positive attitudes towards writing, and a greater focus on the process of writing (planning, drafting, and revising). Silver and Repa (1993) used a pre-post study design to conduct a thirteen-week study of 66 urban ELs and found that experimental-group students who wrote using a computer significantly outperformed pen-and-paper, control-group students on the quality of their writing. Hegelheimer (2006) found that an online grammar resource for ELs helped them to increase awareness of grammatical structures and correct grammatical errors in their own writing. Finally, technology also offers new genres; Fotos (2004) proposes that because email mimics conversational speech, the "genre" of email can motivate ELs and increase their writing proficiency.

Vocabulary: Silverman and Hines (2009) looked at the effects of multimedia-enhanced vocabulary instruction on the vocabulary acquisition of EL and non-EL students and found that the multimedia-enhanced condition resulted in an increase for the English learners' vocabulary knowledge and a narrowing of the gap between the vocabulary knowledge of the two groups of students. Their research points to the potential benefits of multimedia-enhanced instruction for vocabulary instruction. Research on the benefits of vocabulary annotations provided in a multimedia environment have been one of the most widely studied topics in the use of technology to support English language acquisition (Plass & Jones, 2005).

Collaboration: Technologies support greater collaboration, and these “collaborative practices are being increasingly advocated in second language classrooms” (Kessler, Bikowski, & Boggs, 2012, p. 91). In their study with language learners, Kessler, Bikowski, and Boggs (2012) looked at the benefits of technology-based, collaborative writing practices and found that writers demonstrated improved accuracy, offered each other collective scaffolding, and focused more on process. Online discussion tools enable English learners to participate in a collaborative environment (Lacina, 2004).

Scaffolds: With technology, tools and scaffolds can be provided at the point-of-need. In the 2011 computer-based administration of the NAEP writing assessment, students in both Grades 8 and 12 “who used the [online] thesaurus [tool] scored higher, on average, than students who did not use it, and students who used it two or more times scored higher than students who used it only once...” (p. 18). Similarly, the highest performers also used the backspace key and the spell-check tool more frequently than the lowest performers. For English learners, multimedia, through audio and visuals, can serve as a kind of scaffold, bridging the gap between students’ everyday language and more challenging academic language vocabulary and structures (Cruz, 2004).

Assessment: Computer-enhanced assessment allows for the rapid and accurate analysis of performance and immediate delivery of feedback, making technology a requirement for an effective assessment system. Because of the benefits technology offers for assessment, students and educators can expect assessments increasingly to be delivered online, including the computer-based assessment systems being developed by the multistate Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC).

To realize technology’s benefits, instructional technologies for English learners must be designed thoughtfully. In their 2005 review of research on multimedia for second language learning, Plass and Jones identified the following research-based principles relevant to the context of second language acquisition:

1. Students learn more from text with pictures than from text alone.
2. Students show greater language acquisition when they are presented the choice of verbal vs. visual annotations.
3. Advance organizers, which include verbal and visual prereading concepts, help students better comprehend during reading and listening activities.

Lopez (2010) found that the use of interactive whiteboard technology in the classroom helped to close the achievement gap between English learners and native speakers. This may be in part because of the decreased demand for note-taking by English learners, who can focus more fully on content as it is delivered.

As technologies evolve, so do the possibilities for technology in the classroom. The field of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) has continued to evolve with the development of new technologies (Thouésny & Bradley, 2011), and students and educators are continually seeing new ways to incorporate technology effectively into language learning. For students who do not have online access at home, new programs with offline access to highly engaging and personalized materials show promise.

From Research to Practice

Technology in Escalate English

In *Escalate English* © 2017, technology meets the needs of 21st-century English learners and their teachers. With *Escalate English*, students use real-world technology that fosters college- and career-readiness.

The program’s digital elements are integrated thoughtfully to support the goals of the program and to engage learners with digital tools, whenever they want to access content. The program’s **eBook** offers an entryway to a full complement of digital resources, and a place where students can read, listen, view, annotate, write, collaborate, get extra help, assess, and get feedback. In keeping with the program’s focus on high-quality texts at the center of instruction, the digital resources and tools in *Escalate English* © 2017 are designed to support students in grappling with complex texts and formulating interpretations from textual evidence.

In *Escalate English* © 2017, digital connections are made at the point of use, so that students and teachers move seamlessly between print and digital environments and so that English learners get the scaffolds they need at the point they need them.

As students engage in the steps of the writing process, additional digital tools, lessons, and opportunities for collaboration and support are provided along the way.

- **hmhfyi.com** offers students additional resources to explore their topics and enhance their research.
- **Online Tools** allow students to annotate important passages, phrases, and words by using highlighting, underlining, and notes.
- Students can use **myNotebook** to save annotations and notes, and gather textual evidence.
- For their initial drafts, students can use **myWriteSmart** to compose.
- To improve their drafts, students can collaborate by having a partner or group of peers review their drafts in **myWriteSmart**.

Technology and multimedia are employed to engage students in learning.

- Linguistically rich audio and video demonstrate academic language in real-life situations.
- The **Language Cam Video** program models academic language usage in every day contexts.
- Authentic **podcasts** are topically related.
- **Stream-to-Start Videos** introduce the topic of each unit.

Escalate English is a 21st-century program, in which students engage in authentic practice of 21st-century skills. Students have ample opportunities to evaluate real websites, engage in digital collaboration, conduct Web research, critique student discussions, and make digital connections at the point of use. Because of the demand for solutions that can be accessed through intuitive and mobile digital tools, the teacher and student components of *Escalate English* is delivered through **HMH Player**®. The **HMH Player** app offers offline access and functionality and collaboration, with easy-to-use interfaces and customizable options. Through **HMH Player**, teachers and students can download content to their devices so that they can access content whenever they want to—including when the device does not have an active Internet connection. So, even students who do not have Internet access at home can continue to advantage

themselves of the **Escalate English** digital tools.

The program's digital tools and resources support teachers in learning, planning, delivering instruction, differentiating, and assessing.

The **Teacher Dashboard** offers a single point of access for the varied program resources and tools, from audio and video to professional development.

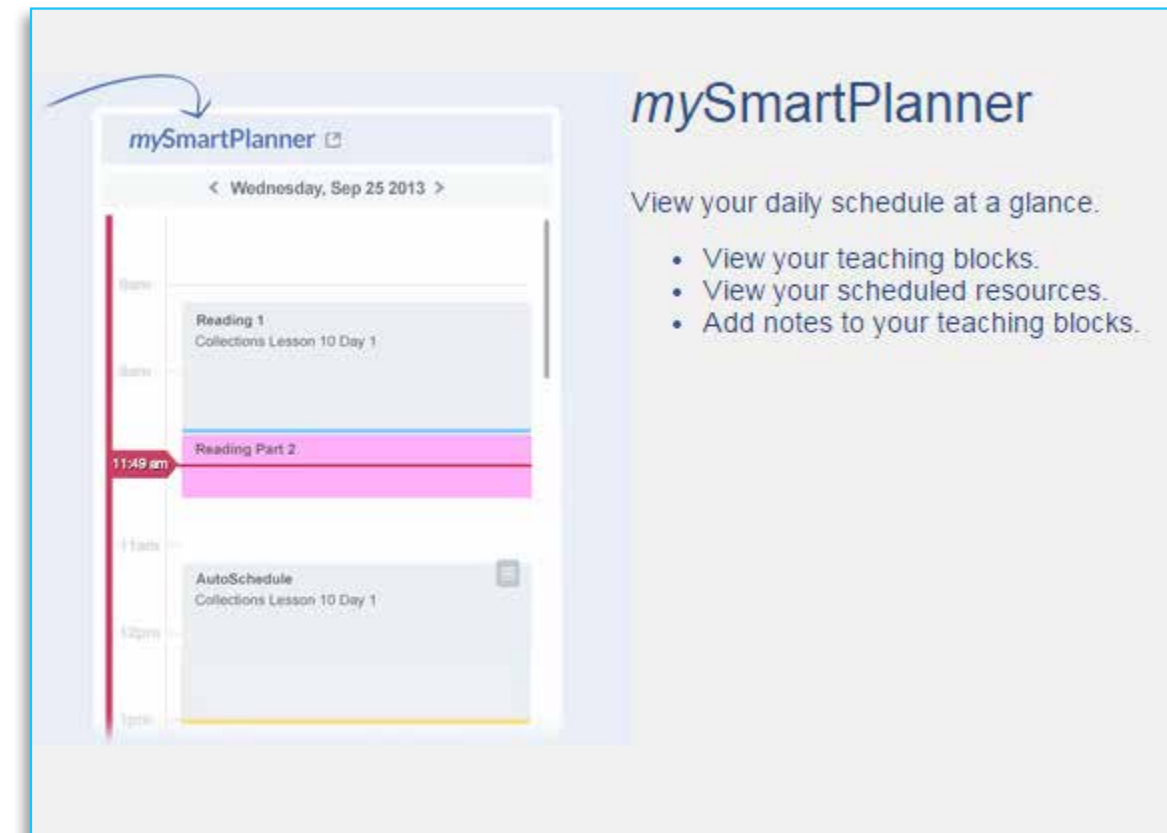


Some of the resources available in the **Teacher Dashboard** include:

- Rubrics for Evaluation
 - Speaking Performance Tasks
 - Writing Performance Tasks
- Performance Checklists
- Language Analysis Formative Assessments
- Student Writing Models
- Video Transcripts
- Podcast Transcripts
- Grammar and Language Handbook
- Phonics and Spelling Handbook
- Magazine Reader's Guide
- Family Letters

The **Dashboard** can also be viewed on tablets.

With **mySmartPlanner**, teachers can view their daily schedule at a glance, to facilitate scheduling for a flexible program like **Escalate English**:



Together, the **Teacher Dashboard** and **mySmartPlanner** offer versatile and fully searchable tools for teachers to flexibly plan instruction and customize lessons to engage students and achieve instructional goals.

In these ways, **Escalate English** employs technology to effectively support teachers in delivering English language development instruction that is accelerated, focused, and research-based—and designed to take learners where they need to go.

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