

# Focus on reading

## The Amplify Library as a digital instructional tool

### A digital solution to the challenge of developing broad literacy

The aim of developing broad literacy, central to the California ELA/ELD Framework, is laid out in the Amplify Library mission statement. The library's curated collection of more than 600 classic and contemporary texts spans a full range of genres, topics, and cultural perspectives—a diversity meant to support students as they develop literacy skills. The library's range of Lexile scores, with adult classics from Thoreau, Austen, and T.S. Eliot on one end of the spectrum, and a full complement of fourth- and fifth-grade level texts on the other, allows teachers and students to find appropriately challenging texts for every reader. It lets each reader climb a “staircase of text complexity,” as described in the first chapter of the California ELA/ELD Framework.

**For classroom teachers, the virtual Amplify Library facilitates a Common Core-aligned curriculum in ways that no physical library can.**

**Everyone is holding a copy.** Whatever book you or a student is discussing, the whole class can pull it up on their screens. Keyword search, a chapter navigation bar, and numbering for chapters, pages, paragraphs, even lines, allows everyone to quickly find the exact spot in the text.

**Tools for active reading.** Bookmarking, highlighting, and annotating functions are built into the digital texts, just as they are built into daily reading assignments. Teachers can easily differentiate reading practices; those practices can become habits.

**Integrated with gaming.** The virtual library is, itself, the vast, fantasy library in which the Amplify ELA game world, Lexica, is set. Players explore this library with a personal avatar that grows and earns magical powers as they read. Embedded games within Lexica help students to develop spelling, vocabulary, and grammar skills.

**Integrated with research.** Deeply in tune with California's emphasis on inquiry-based learning, and its increased emphasis on informational texts, the Amplify Library is designed for two kinds of research experiences: one that guides you through a major unit of the ELA curriculum at two points each year, and another that's composed of independent reading. Each is discussed further in sections that follow.

The increased emphasis on content-rich informational texts is identified in the CA ELA/ELD Framework as one of the most important shifts in the new standards—part of preparing for college and career. Literacy standards are now, for the first time, demanded for non-ELA content areas (history/social studies, science, technical subjects, and others), and ELA is called on to lead the way.