

# A CLOSER LOOK

**ELA Guidebooks** is a curriculum for whole-class instruction. **Made by teachers for teachers**, the guidebook units ensure all students can read, understand, and express their understanding of complex grade-level texts.

Teachers across the state began work on the guidebooks in the spring of 2013 and have continued to improve them to provide Louisiana teachers with a **high-quality, affordable curricular option**.

ELA Guidebooks units are a coherent set of plans focused on **real learning grounded in a collection of texts**. Each text collection has a shared idea, such as the American Revolution, and contains authentic texts and novels commonly celebrated by teachers and students. Students engage with the texts and ideas repeatedly throughout a unit to build knowledge and tackle big ideas.

**Support is central to the design of ELA Guidebooks**. Student-friendly slides create a consistent structure across all grades and lessons, which **help students and teachers stay on track** and work toward a series of unit assessments aligned to end-of-year expectations. Student look-fors and example responses set the bar for quality student work.

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Read the **Pilot Feedback Report** to learn about Louisiana teachers' experiences with ELA Guidebooks.

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Watch a **video** of a Louisiana classroom to learn how guidebooks improve learning.

## WHAT ARE PEOPLE SAYING ABOUT THE GUIDEBOOKS?

*"The lesson questions and look-fors are more streamlined. The look-fors are directly connected to the CWT (culminating task). The "Section Diagnostic" always includes a higher order thinking question for assessing student understanding. The diagnostic is oral and/or written responses to a prompt that aligns with a lesson."*

*- a district committee*

*"The kids really enjoy the text. They are more challenging and offer lots of opportunities with vocabulary."*

*- Louisiana teacher*

*"We love the core and optional activities. Having a little flexibility will better allow teachers to meet the needs of their students."*

*- Louisiana teacher*

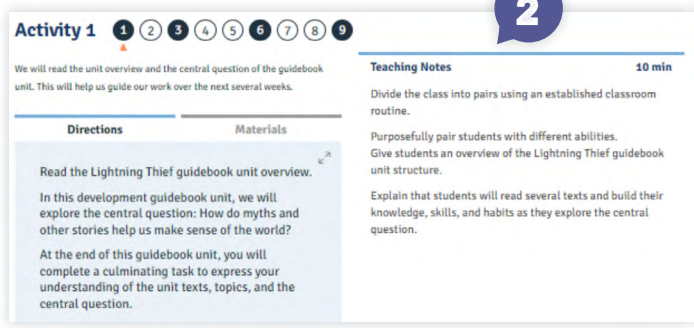
*"The graphic organizers helped students organize their evidence."*

*- Louisiana teacher*

# WHAT COMES WITH THE ELA GUIDEBOOKS?

Each ELA Guidebooks unit comes with three unit assessments and approximately 40 classroom-ready daily lessons on an online platform. Because the lessons include everything a teacher needs to teach, teachers can focus on adjusting the lesson supports so all students meet the lesson and unit assessment goals, instead of spending time finding something to teach.

**The lessons include many resources:**



**Activity 1** 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

We will read the unit overview and the central question of the guidebook unit. This will help us guide our work over the next several weeks.

**Directions** **Materials**

Read the Lightning Thief guidebook unit overview.

In this development guidebook unit, we will explore the central question: How do myths and other stories help us make sense of the world?

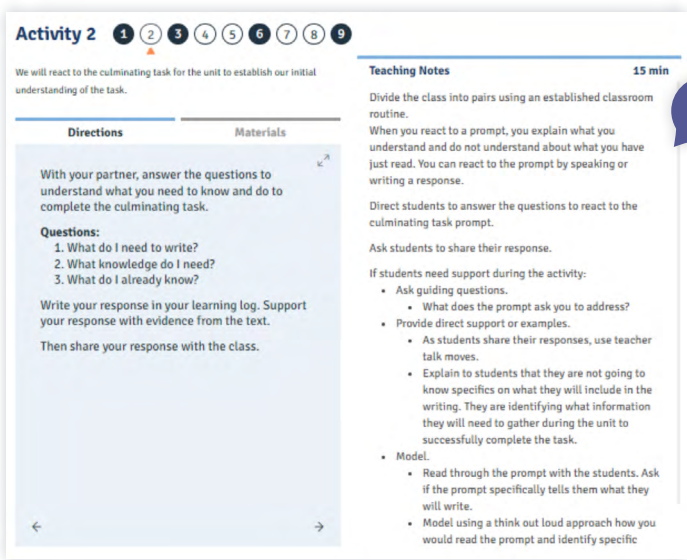
At the end of this guidebook unit, you will complete a culminating task to express your understanding of the unit texts, topics, and the central question.

**Teaching Notes** 10 min

Divide the class into pairs using an established classroom routine.

Purposefully pair students with different abilities. Give students an overview of the Lightning Thief guidebook unit structure.

Explain that students will read several texts and build their knowledge, skills, and habits as they explore the central question.



**Activity 2** 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

We will react to the culminating task for the unit to establish our initial understanding of the task.

**Directions** **Materials**

With your partner, answer the questions to understand what you need to know and do to complete the culminating task.

**Questions:**

1. What do I need to write?
2. What knowledge do I need?
3. What do I already know?

Write your response in your learning log. Support your response with evidence from the text.

Then share your response with the class.

**Teaching Notes** 15 min

Divide the class into pairs using an established classroom routine.

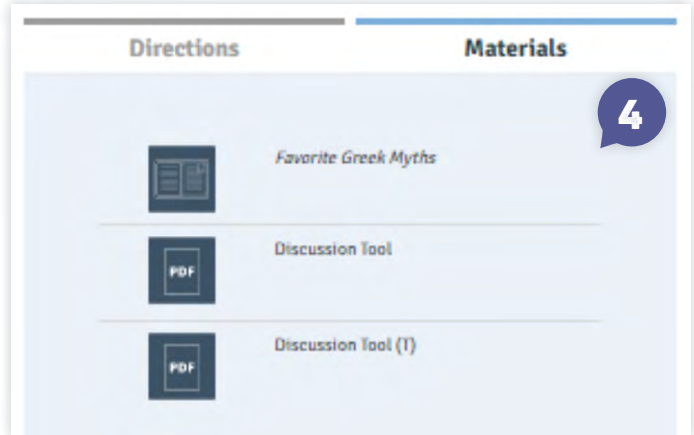
When you react to a prompt, you explain what you understand and do not understand about what you have just read. You can react to the prompt by speaking or writing a response.

Direct students to answer the questions to react to the culminating task prompt.

Ask students to share their response.

If students need support during the activity:

- Ask guiding questions.
  - What does the prompt ask you to address?
- Provide direct support or examples.
  - As students share their responses, use teacher talk moves.
  - Explain to students that they are not going to know specifics on what they will include in the writing. They are identifying what information they will need to gather during the unit to successfully complete the task.
- Model.
  - Read through the prompt with the students. Ask if the prompt specifically tells them what they will write.
  - Model using a think out loud approach how you would read the prompt and identify specific



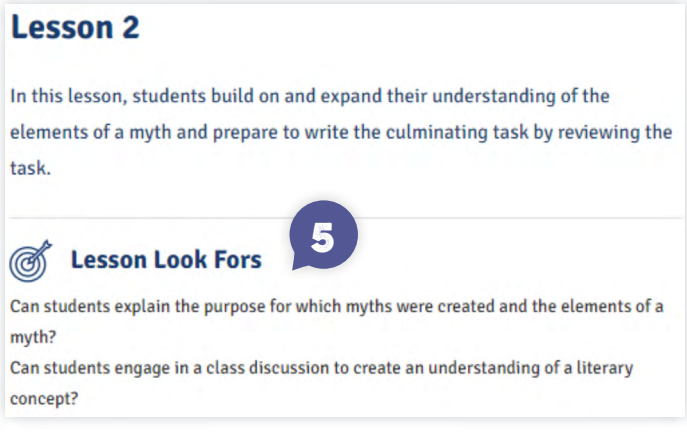
**Directions** **Materials**

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Favorite Greek Myths

Discussion Tool

Discussion Tool (T)



**Lesson 2**

In this lesson, students build on and expand their understanding of the elements of a myth and prepare to write the culminating task by reviewing the task.

**Lesson Look Fors** 5

Can students explain the purpose for which myths were created and the elements of a myth?

Can students engage in a class discussion to create an understanding of a literary concept?

- 2 Student-friendly slides
- 3 Teaching notes with directions, guiding questions, and student look-fors
- 4 Blank and completed student handouts
- 5 Daily Lesson Look Fors to monitor student understanding

# HOW DO I ACCESS AND PURCHASE ELA GUIDEBOOKS?

The ELA Guidebooks are easy to access and use through the [Louisiana Curriculum Hub](#). With an open license ([CC BY 4.0](#)), the units can be used, adapted, shared, and printed without any permission needed. To implement ELA Guidebooks, teachers will need access to the units, the books, additional texts, student materials, and training. All decisions about access are local decisions.

View detailed information on [how to access guidebook materials and communicate with schools and teachers](#).

For additional information about ELA Guidebooks, access the Louisiana Department of Education's [ELA Guidebooks webpage](#) or contact [elaguidebooks@la.gov](mailto:elaguidebooks@la.gov).