

Kentucky

High Quality Instructional Resources



The Kentucky Department of Education cited some interesting studies in a brochure about High Quality Instructional Resources (HQIRs). The first study found that when teachers didn't have access to HQIRs, they tended to go online to find their teaching resources. This led to uneven educational materials that mostly impacted low-income students of color. The second study showed that if students had access to one HQIR for four consecutive years, their performance led that of other students by 38 percentile points. The last study the Kentucky Department of Education's brochure provides shows that providing HQIRs simultaneously helps teachers and saves taxpayers' money. Using HQIRs can be almost 40 times as effective as reducing class size.¹

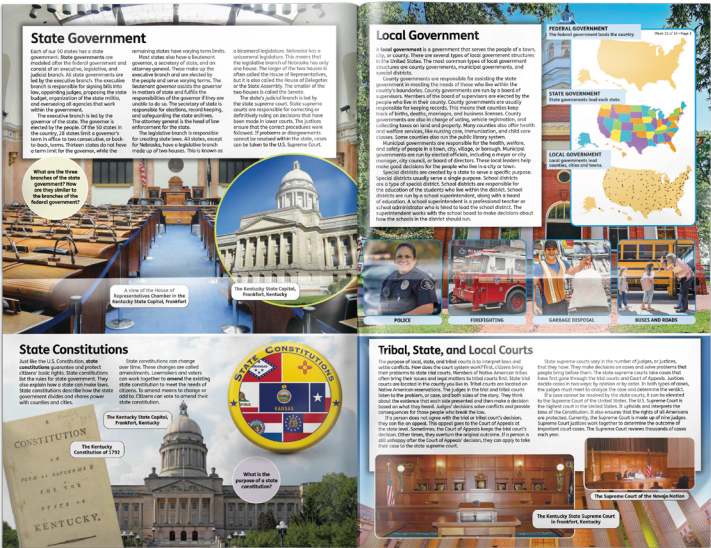
Kentucky wants to give its students as many advantages as it can, so it has implemented a program to encourage the use of HQIRs in its schools. Kentucky defines HQIRs as materials that are:

- Aligned with the Kentucky Academic Standards
- Research-based and/or externally validated
- Comprehensive to include engaging texts (books, multimedia, etc.), tasks and assessments
- Based on fostering vibrant student learning experiences
- Culturally relevant, free from bias
- Accessible for all students

These definitions show that Kentucky knows

that a good education goes far beyond what the student sees. It must rest upon state standards and use research-based teaching strategies. It must also take all students into account, creating a learning environment that engages students from a wide variety of backgrounds. These rigorous requirements are designed to encourage schools to adopt only the highest quality materials.

One popular HQIR is Studies Weekly, which provides a comprehensive set of curricula for social studies, science, and wellness. Current standards correlations that show how materials align to Kentucky state standards are available. For example, in social studies, 4.C.PR.1 mandates that students be able to "Describe the processes people use to change rules and laws." Studies Weekly covers this over the course of four weeks:

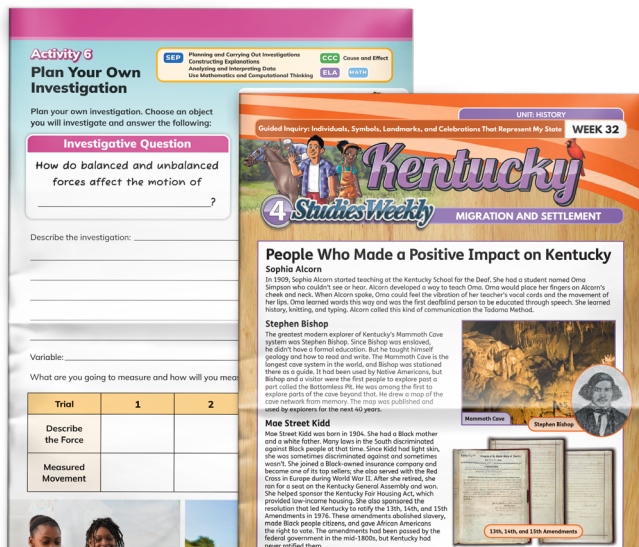


Kentucky Studies Weekly: Grade 4 Week 22

"Foundations of Government and Law;"
"Structure and Functions of Government;"
"Tribal, State, and Local Governments;"
and "Road to Statehood and Government."
Standards correlation documents are avail-

able within Studies Weekly Online in the Teacher Resources section.

The Studies Weekly student edition is a colorful, newspaper-style consumable that can



Explore Science: Grade 3 Week 8

Kentucky Studies Weekly: Grade 4, Week 32

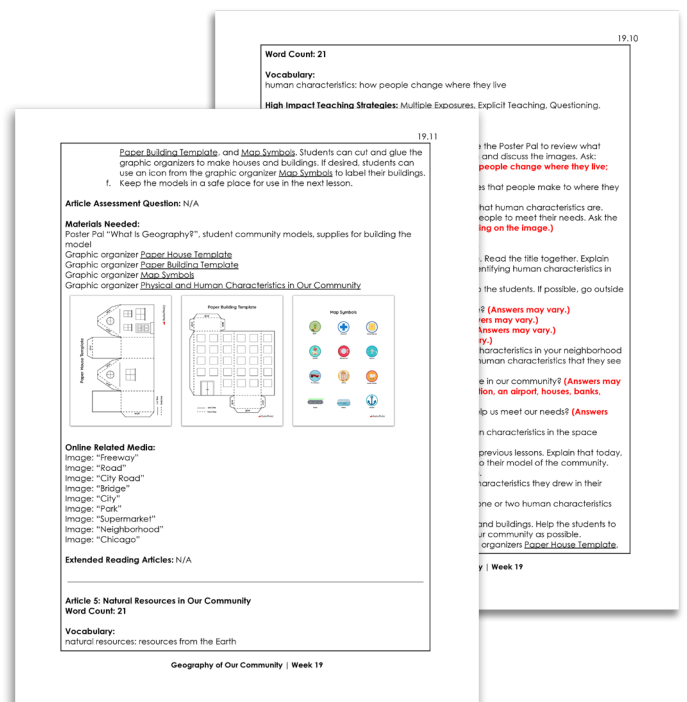
be sent home each week or can be highlighted, and cut and glued into interactive notebooks. Each week contains articles and other content, including engaging tasks, formative quizzes, and summative assessments to support and measure student understanding of the content.

As publications are developed, a neutral lens is paramount. While the content is written with age-appropriate reading levels and interests are targeted, articles, activities, and other resources are intended to be free from bias and include no political or social agendas.

While the student editions provide engaging and explicit standards coverage, even more value can be found in the Teacher's Edition. This guide provides teaching material and

strategies for each article or activity from the student edition, including background knowledge, vocabulary words, lesson plans, classroom activities, reteaching strategies, ELA connections, assessments, literature connections, and even videos to foster a vibrant learning experience. The curriculum is vetted by outside sensitivity readers from various races, cultures, and groups to ensure a lack of bias.

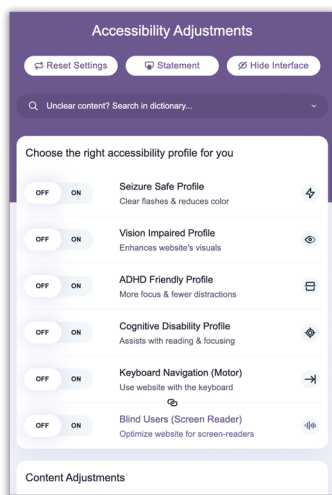
Studies Weekly lessons are designed to be accessible for all students. For example, in this social studies detail from Kentucky Studies Weekly: Grade 1 Week 19, students are learning about human characteristics of a place. In addition to engaging informational text, this detail from a lesson plan shows the hands-on activities in both the student edition and in the included printables so that students can have engaging activities, support from manipulatives, and opportuni-



Kentucky Studies Weekly Teacher Edition: Grade 1 Week 19

ties to show understanding in both limited English and academic English-supported contexts.

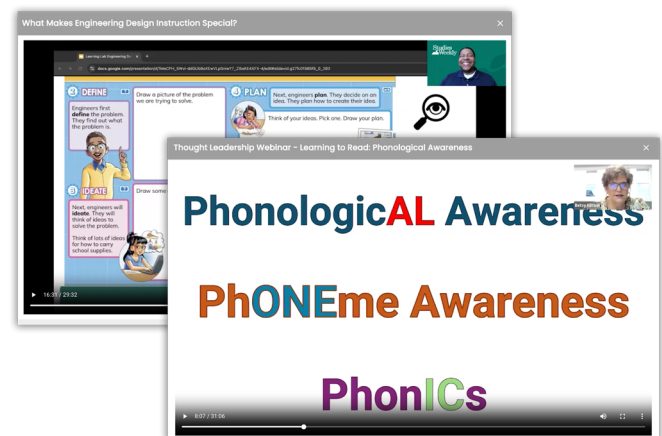
While having equal access to content and language is important, it does not go far enough to accommodate the needs of all learners. For that reason, Studies Weekly has included a customizable-by-student suite of tools, so the online platform can provide additional supports, such as human-recorded audio at variable speeds or ADHD-focused reading panels.



Embedded accessibility tools, teacher can enable for student use.

Professional development is key to the success of any program, and any teacher for that matter. While Studies Weekly provides a wide array of paid professional development opportunities, the Training and Resources area of the online platform includes an incredible library of videos and resources to help teachers onboard, grow, evolve, and thrive. Whether learning about NGSS and 3-dimensional learning, ideas to support students in developing grit and a growth mindset, or how to incorporate English language arts strategies into any content area,

the training and resources materials included in the subscription help teachers thrive every step of the way.



Training and Resources in Studies Weekly's online platform.

Whether supporting students or teachers, Studies Weekly gives the teacher an abundance of high quality materials to work with as teachers increase their own education and strive to use sustaining practices to reach all their students.

Development of a state-specific publication begins with the standards, and rigorous research using primary sources and high-quality secondary sources is key to an accurate publication. In social studies, a research-based educational resource is two-fold. In addition to research-based teaching strategies, a strong social studies curriculum must be based on quality content sources. Upon request, Studies Weekly provides a bibliography of sources used as the base for creating the publication. The Library of Congress and Kentucky state museums and archives are key sources.

Regardless of the publication, Studies Weekly brings a comprehensive and high-quality experience to any Kentucky classroom.

¹"High-Quality Instructional Resources," Kentucky Department of Education, https://www.education.ky.gov/curriculum/standards/kyacadstand/Documents/High-Quality_Instructional_Resources.pdf.