time to level up

Calibrated Instructional System for the 21st Century

Common Core Language Arts driven through Next Generation Science and History-Social Science

For more information contact:

415.887.2210

info@uplevel.co

http://www.uplevel.co
Our Story

We began our journey as classroom teachers. We were bright-eyed and bushytailed looking to make the world a better place. Our excitement beamed out of us as we took our idealism into our first classroom. We were bouncing with excitement. That bounce was contagious and our students felt it.

After our first year of slaving for our precious students, we were exhausted but it was all worth it. Our students soared with achievements: reading skills, language levels, writing ability, social skills, science mastery...We were ecstatic!

But of course the first thought of “those” students with a first year teacher outperforming all the gifted students was you must have “cheated”. After investigations and retests (usually our students did even better on retests), we were exonerated.

Happy ending, right? Not for us, we asked why did we get suspected of cheating in the first place. Was it because it’s almost impossible to achieve that level of success and progress with that textbook? “Yes!” was our thought. The old system gets what it’s designed to get (poor system=poor results). We got great results because we taught with a different system even though we still covered the same standards, we taught them with a different approach.

As teachers, researchers, and professional development facilitators, we took our amazing process and the Award Winning teaching pedagogy on the road with phenomenal success. We gained successes in all schools that fully implemented regardless of student demographic across the nation.

Unfortunately, not all schools could fully implement the teaching strategies. It was challenging for schools to re-design the old textbooks that created better learning opportunities for students. One school district even spent 5 years and many valuable resources on trying to develop their own integrated units with the support of numerous experts but only ended up with one almost complete unit per grade level.

Over the course of two decades, schools, districts, and states have asked and pleaded with us to build an integrated and well-calibrated set of curriculum. We avoided this task, as it is a monumental undertaking.
We finally said yes after seeing the struggle in getting a comprehensive integrated system that pulls together award-winning processes such as:

- Be GLAD®
- Project GLAD® OCDE/NTC®
- SEAL®
- Project Based Learning
- Inquiry Learning
- STEAM
- Flexible Seating
- Integrated ELD
- Blended Learning

We found amazing teaching is effective for all students regardless of the program or model name put on it. What was needed was a system that pulled it together as curriculum.

Uplevel is a group of educators (classroom teachers, administrators, and school counselors), who had phenomenal success using incredible teaching practices and put it into a structure. We developed the materials from the ground up with the freedom to focus on effective pedagogy.
What is the Uplevel System?

Uplevel books engage, enlighten, & motivate students to become self-directed lifelong learners. This system has been 20 years in the making. It is research-based and field-tested using the most current methodology. Uplevel is the beginning for students as a platform and springboard for students’ own inquiry-based learning and projects.

Uplevel uniquely integrates Common Core language arts skills and standards in and through academic content; typically the hardest place for students to apply reading and writing skills. We stray from the average approach of using language arts skills with easier short stories, which are less academically rigorous.

Instead our system applies reading and writing literacy skills that students will need to apply later in college and career with the academically rigorous science and social studies topics that make up real world requirements.

When the teacher models and actually teaches reading and writing skills in academically challenging topics, students are more motivated to learn and it allows them to apply the same skills to other areas more easily. Students are also not intimidated by academic topics after reading and writing in academically rigorous material such as Uplevel. Our students embrace and seek out challenging topics to explore.

We find when we teach students how to read and write with the hard materials of science and history-social science with us as teachers helping; then everything else they do is easier.

Teach with the hard and release to the easy.

When the instruction is of high quality, students learn hard concepts quickly and then we focus on the skills of reading and writing it. With our U.S. Department of Education’s Academic Excellence Award winning strategies, we can amplify high-level academic concepts and language for all students.

We amplify, not simplify.

Inside you will find a sophisticated textbook that intricately weaves language arts skills
in science (NGS) and history-social science (HSS) topics. It presents the academic material in extremely comprehensible and memorable ways. The pneumonic devices utilized in this book come from a multidisciplinary approach: neuroscience, child & adolescent development, cognitive psychology, neurolinguistics, and multiple learning approaches.

It is argued by neuropsychologists that everything we’ve ever learned is in our brains. So it is no longer a learning issue, it is a remembering issue. The design of this system specifically addresses this concern. It presents complex concepts and ideas in multiple modalities in an extremely structured process that allows for an ease of access. The easy retrievability promotes synthesis and rich analysis of concepts. Domain specific thought processes are ingrained that creates an ease of acquiring higher tiered academic vocabulary.

Uplevel Teacher’s Editions (TE) are built on the foundation of Project GLAD®, Be GLAD®, the highly celebrated instructional model that is quickly becoming the most revered professional development program in the nation.

Since each unit has a similar delivery process (instructional model), teachers don’t have to learn how to do new activities with every lesson. This allows teachers to master instructional methods and free their working memory to focus on their students: on differentiation, on interventions, on celebrations!

On the other side, students learn how to learn from familiar instructional strategies. Students know what each strategy is teaching them in terms of content and language skills. It makes for a truly powerful learning environment that’s rich with functional academic language matched to NGS and HSS.
Academic social skills are an important and unique feature of the Uplevel system. Every book has a Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) from whole class modeling, collaborative team projects, and individual application. It builds not just intelligence in the traditional sense but also emotional control for a well-rounded academic experience. We find teaching students how to be socially and emotionally aware doesn’t happen in a 30 minute lesson on coping skills; it happens while working on academically rigorous projects with others.

It models how the real world works.

Most importantly, classrooms implementing this system will find classes full of excited and exuberant students and a delightfully pleased teacher.

**Uplevel teaches students to think:**

Uplevel was written knowing the old curriculum of major publishers was based on “information scarcity” as Chris Lehmann mentions in his TEDxPhilly talk (https://youtu.be/tS2IPfWZQM4). As seasoned educators, we remembered the power of being able to find information. It was the Holy Grail of education but now it is the opposite; we have information overload or “infomania”.

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In the Uplevel System, we guide students in the process of filtering and making sense of information. It is about your students learning what to do with it. They learn to navigate and sort knowledge while figuring out the gaps that need to be discovered.

Then apply that knowledge to real world problems that exist that are grade and age appropriate. Child development specialists, psychotherapists, and neuropsychologists directly contributed and guided the development of our system from the ground up. It wasn’t just an add-on at the end. It is in the very fabric of the design.

Uplevel takes curriculum instruction to a new level. Are you ready to soar to new heights?
What’s included?

The TE includes in-depth support to teachers with scope and sequence lesson plans (weekly and daily), Common Core ELA, Next Generation Science (NGS), & History-Social Science (HSS) based curriculum year maps, CCS breakdowns matched to strategies for each unit, content and thematic units matched to lesson plans, and formative and summative assessments.

K-5 standards have been horizontally and vertically articulated for Content and Scope & Sequence of Skills:* 

*Units within a grade level may be taught at any time during that grade year.

Each grade level has been carefully evaluated to develop a clear and easy to follow platform that supports educators in reaching even the most distant student in their respective classrooms. Join us in discovering the power of a genuine instructional guide that will empower your students to reach limits they thought they could never achieve!
Common Core Concepts included:

- Reading Literature Standards
- Reading Informational Standards
- Reading Foundational Standards
- Language Standards (for appropriate grade levels)
- Daily and Project Writing Standards: Information, Persuasive, Argumentative, Poetry, Narrative, Opinion
- Listening and Speaking Standards
- Guided Reading

- Close Reads
- Habits of Mind
- World Language Standards
- Depth of Knowledge
- Problem Solving
- Real World Phenomena

Next Generation Science (NGS) included:

- Weekly hands-on experiments
- Inquiry based
- Domain specific vocabulary and thought processes
- Real world applications
- Research text
- Technology links for blended learning opportunities
- Project Based Action Plans

Research Based System to acquire skills and concepts

*Weekly hands-on experiments

*Inquiry Based

*Technology
History-Social Science (HSS) included:

- Frameworks for enduring questions
- Community based Action Plans
- Home-School Connections
- Visual and Performing Arts projects and presentations
- Inquiry based learning opportunities

The books are a 3 in 1 system. It includes NGS, HSS, and CCS-ELA. For grades K-3, each grade level has 6 books. For 4th grade, there are 8 books. For 5th grade, there are 9 books.

We provide 1 professional development (PD) day* in the use of the materials. We recommend all teachers have their own set of materials for the highest levels of implementation and collaboration.

*With the purchase of a K-5 collection.
Uplevel DATA

Pilot District – Smarter Balanced Assessment 2017

- *20% Reduction in ELD Students
Integrated ELD

In every unit, integrated ELD supports and strategies are explicitly included in the instructional routine. Here’s a small sample:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>10/2 discussions</th>
<th>Craft appropriate Depth of Knowledge (DOK) questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>“Say it with me!” / “Read it with me.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Add ASL</td>
<td>American Sign Language / hand gesture (world language)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>“Prove it” “How do you know?” “Show me.” - cite your source</td>
<td>Predicting: ask: What picture do you see when you hear or see the word? Do you see any small words in the big word? What words does it sound like? (more focus on process, not just recall / restate facts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Paraphrase - ask them to paraphrase correctly</td>
<td>a/b partners (summarize / analyze idea) Kagan Partners / Fractal Partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Add a sketch or visual (design / apply concept)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Use color coding (connections)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What happens when you get Uplevel?

On behalf of our principal, we wanted to thank you and all of BE GLAD for the Uplevel units you created for grades K-5. They have been very valuable in our implementation of the Project GLAD model at our elementary school. I can see the hard work that you and all of BE GLAD have invested to make these units high-level, and relevant to students. We are currently in Unit 4 or 5 for each grade-level. Even though our teachers are still new to the GLAD model of instruction, they like it and most of all, students are engaged in learning high-level science and social studies content.

We also wanted to thank you for your facilitators who came to provide professional development around the Uplevel Units. They were both very professional, knowledgeable, and well prepared and the teachers had very positive things to say about the knowledge they gained from both their presentations. In August, they gave a good review of the GLAD model and the Uplevel units and yesterday, Your trainer was able to clarify misconceptions the teachers had around the pictorial input chart, expert groups, process grid, and cooperative strip paragraph.

Again, thank you for your hard work in developing the Uplevel Units. Having the units done has helped immensely in implementing the Project GLAD model.

-Academic Coach at an Elementary School in Southern California
(text has been edited to remove confidential information)

Our staff, comprised of 17 teachers, really appreciated the training and the units. We are impressed with the amount of work that you at Uplevel have put into creating these units as well as the quality.

It is just what we needed not only to provide students with excellent instruction and access to the content and Common Core ELA standards, but it is what some teachers needed to enjoy teaching again. At the end of today, everyone on our staff was working on getting their first unit ready to go. There was a positive atmosphere in our staff room.

Those who were GLAD trained said this was an excellent refresher, and it gave them, and me, new insights into the strategies. They also said it revitalized them.

-Certified Project GLAD trainer
(text has been edited to remove confidential information)
To hear more about the system:

✓ Watch our [video](https://uplevel.co/#video)

✓ Check out our [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/UplevelED)

✓ Say “Hello” with an [email](mailto:info@uplevel.co)

✓ Say “Hello” with a call to (415) 887-2210

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