

**EDGE: READING, WRITING AND LANGUAGE LEVEL A BY D. MOORE, D. SHORT,
M. SMITH, AND A. TATUM**

Moore, D., Short, D., Smith, M., & Tatum, A. (2007). *Edge: Reading, Writing & Language*. CA: Hampton-Brown. List price: \$69.97

Reviewed by

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When I first glanced through the index of this ESL language arts text for 9-12 graders at an intermediate reading level, I was immediately impressed by the wonderful authors and reading selections I saw there. As an English major and avid reader, I saw a broad range of past and current authors from many cultural backgrounds.

The texts I viewed included a student edition, teacher's edition, and grammar and writing practice book. Within this Edge series, there are also other resources that I thought looked valuable and user-friendly including reading and fluency models on audio CDs, a leveled library with a variety of great authors representing many cultures, and e-Assessment to scan and score or administer tests online with immediate reports with links to reteaching.

The student edition text is divided into seven units containing:

- Essential Questions that seem very pertinent to teenagers (themes such as What influences how you act?, How much should people help each other?, What rights and responsibilities should teens have?, and Do we find or create our true selves?)
- Genre focus (four genres are represented with 28 different literary uses including advice column, letters, news commentary, survey, science articles, persuasive text, cartoons, eulogy, and consumer documents)
- Reading Strategy (one per unit)
- Grammar Points
- Writing Assignment

Each unit has several writing selections from which students can choose to read about the essential question. These different selections make each essential question interesting and accessible to students with various abilities and interests. Within the units, elements of literature are highlighted and academic vocabulary words are bolded and listed at the bottom of the page, as well as other vocabulary that students may need assistance with. There are also questions to monitor comprehension and think, pair, share questions. Each page is packed with information touching on all literacy and comprehension skills, but it can become overwhelming with so many separate pieces of text and questions on the page.

For each reading selection, a beginning section prepares the student for reading with an anticipation guide and key vocabulary they will need to know with pronunciation, word classification, the word used in a sentence, and examples of synonyms and antonyms. Following this is a "Before You Read" section which highlights a story element and shows it in use in the actual text. Next is a "Plan Your Reading" section which previews the story and allows students to make predictions, followed by the actual story during which students are asked to access vocabulary and use reading strategies throughout. Students are then asked to analyze the literature, vocabulary and reading strategy with discussion questions and reflect and assess on the reading using critical thinking, writing

about literature, reviewing key vocabulary, and testing reading fluency. Each selection also contains a workshop on one of the modalities and a section on integrating language arts content with grammar, literary analysis, language development, vocabulary study, research, and writing.

Throughout the text, there are beautiful pictures of artwork with connections to the stories and questions to ponder, diagrams, highlighting, bolding, pictures, labels, and charts that aid student's understanding of the text.

The Grammar and Writing Practice book aligns its instruction with the main text and presents a description of each grammar point and its usage. There are then sentences for students to correctly fill in the blanks and an editing or writing exercise. This workbook is not very creative in its methods, but it teaches correct grammar in a straightforward manner and the content page of the workbook makes it easy to locate specific grammar points that need teaching or reviewing if one wanted to use it separately from the textbook.

I thought this curriculum did an excellent job of presenting the best practices in ESL teaching today with its focus on the language modalities, reading strategies, fluency, vocabulary instruction, study and research skills, use of technology and visuals, ties to native language, and integration of the language arts content area using high interest, meaningful texts. The curriculum is inclusive, thorough, and accessible to both students and educators.

Reviewer

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