



# Scholastic *Expert 21*

*Expert 21* is a comprehensive English-Language Arts program designed to accelerate students in grades 6-10 from Basic to Proficient by preparing them with the literacy expertise to thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. *Expert 21* includes:

- Explicit instruction and application in 21<sup>st</sup> century skills that students will use in college, careers and life
- Content that students want to read because it's relevant and contemporary
- Content that integrates ELA and the content areas
- *Expert Space*, the first ever Digital Curriculum and Tools for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- Inquiry-based learning activities that help students gain an understanding of the world in which they live, learn, and work

## **Instructional Content**

*Expert 21* teaches reading, writing, and thinking for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century by carefully weaving a comprehensive set of skills strands throughout the program. Reading selections emphasize development of interdisciplinary knowledge in English, Reading, Language Arts, History, Science, Geography, and the Arts. The *21 Book* emphasizes themes in Health Literacy, Civic Literacy, Financial Literacy, and Global Awareness. The program teaches the following skills and strategies:

### **Comprehension and Critical Thinking**

- Metacognitive strategies include making inferences, predicting, clarifying, questioning, summarizing, visualizing, and making connections.
- Comprehension strategies include main idea and detail, sequence of events, making inferences, drawing conclusions, fact and opinion, cause and effect, comparing and contrasting, problem and solution, as well as summarizing.
- *Expert 21* also emphasizes higher-order thinking skills, such as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis throughout the program.

### **Vocabulary and Word Analysis**

- Each *Expert 21* Workshop introduces students to vocabulary-rich literary and nonfiction texts. Nonfiction texts include academic language that students will encounter across the curriculum as well as content-area words that are specific to science, social studies, literature, and the arts.
- Vocabulary learning is transferred from reading to communicating through writing lessons that focus on the same topics and forms as the readings.
- Literary selections include short stories, novel excerpts, plays, and poetry that are filled with expressive and creative language. These texts build students' word consciousness of how words can be used to create mood, express characterization, and capture images.

### **Writing and Grammar**

- The writing lessons include instruction in expository, persuasive, and narrative writing. Students practice writing cause and effect, analytical, compare/contrast, problem/solution, persuasive opinion, and persuasive essays. They also learn to write personal narratives, fictional narratives, science fiction stories, and research papers.
- Each writing lesson introduces the elements of a writing form, provides a model, and then moves through the process of planning, drafting, revising, editing, and presenting.
- Each *Expert 21* writing lesson includes grammar and usage lessons in the editing stage of the writing process. Students gain effective control of the conventions of written English when they are given frequent opportunities to explore them in their own writing, rather than in isolated exercises.

### **Literary Skills and Concepts**

- Literary terms and concepts are defined and explained in the “Before Reading” section of the lesson.
- During reading, annotations in the sidebar of the reading selections direct students to apply their knowledge in context while interacting with the text.
- After reading students examine the concept by comparing and analyzing its use and application in multiple selections.
- In the *Strategy Check* students apply their knowledge of workshop skills in a set of activities that precede the formal assessment.
- In the online xSkills *Test*, students apply skills to a new selection.

### **Elements of Nonfiction**

- Elements of nonfiction are introduced on the “Before Reading” page, under the heading “Navigating Text,” and then reinforced throughout the reading. They are chosen to highlight the most important aspect of each selection.
- Instruction is divided among format, text structures, patterns of organization, and additional concepts drawn from state standards and/or critical to the understanding of the text.

### **21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills**

- Communication and Collaboration, as well as Creativity and Innovation are intrinsic to most activities and projects in *Expert 21*.
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Information and Media Literacy, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Literacy, and Workplace and Life Skills are the focus of direct instruction and application in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills and the *Expert Projects*.
- The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Toolkit is an easy-to-use student resource that supports, extends, and supplements activities in *Expert 21*. A set of color-coded cards in six categories allows students to choose the instruction, resources, models, or scaffolding they need to complete a particular project or strengthen skills.

### **Instructional Design**

The goal of *Expert 21* is to accelerate students from Basic to Proficient with the first contemporary, interactive 21<sup>st</sup> Century English-Language Arts Curriculum. The program is designed for students from basic to above, students exiting *READ 180*, or Early/Advanced English-Language learners. The three courses span a wide range of abilities in the classroom—from 650 to 1200 Lexiles®.

*Expert 21* is organized around 8 workshops per course. At each course level, students will explore various kinds of literacy, including personal literacy, content area literacy, social literacy and global literacy. Students learn that literacy has application across multiple genres. Readings are also available online to read aloud to students who may need additional support and interactive scaffolding.

*Inquiry-based instruction* engages students in activities and discussion around an organizing question or problem important in the world. In *Expert 21*, each Workshop begins with an *Expert*, or essential, *Question*. During the inquiry process, students explore and address the problem articulated by the question. Everything taught in an inquiry unit—including all attitudes, strategies, and concepts—is in the service of investigating the question, and understanding and doing things related to the question. Through inquiry, students learn how to use accepted problem-solving tools to construct understandings. Students engage in the same kind of processes and dialogues that practitioners do, and make use of the same tools, as well. They are inducted as apprentices into the ways “experts” know and do things.

*Expert 21* is flexible to fit into an existing English-Language Arts schedule.

1. Teacher-guided Exploration (30-45 minutes)—Model, mentor, monitor
2. Small Group/Independent Work (15-30 minutes)—Differentiate, collaborate, communicate
3. Whole Group Wrap-up (5-15 minutes)—Reflect, evaluate

## **Assessments**

*Expert 21* offers a variety of assessment opportunities throughout the school year. The following curriculum-based assessments are included:

- **Ongoing Progress Monitoring**—Informative Assessment checkpoints in each workshop are used to diagnose skills and strategies' strengths and weaknesses in order to differentiate instruction. These checkpoints informally assess comprehension, literary analysis, navigating text, vocabulary/word analysis, fluency, as well as grammar and punctuation.
- **21st Century Assessment**—The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Assessment measures acquisition of the following three 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills. Each component is assessed using Teacher and Student Scoring Guides.
  - **21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills**—Twice per workshop, students are given direct instruction on a skill drawn from one of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skill categories—Communication and Collaboration, Creativity and Innovation, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Information and Media Literacy, ICT Literacy, and Workplace and Life Skills. These skills are tied to readings students have already completed, and provide them with the skills they need to complete the *Expert* project at the end of the workshop.
  - **Writing Assignment**—Although students write throughout the workshop, the writing assignment focuses on a specific writing form. In each writing assignment, students work with a focused writing trait and explore the key qualities of developing ideas and organizing an essay, using student models and mentor texts from the Workshop.
  - **Expert Project**—The *Expert Project* presents students with the opportunity to apply the expert knowledge and skills they accumulated during the Workshop. The *Expert Project Scoring Guide* assesses the two 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills featured in the Workshop as well as cumulatively reviews other 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills taught in previous Workshops. The different types of projects include case study, debate, research, personal inquiry, and social action.
- **End-of-Workshop Assessment**—Two assessments measure students' acquisition of *Expert 21* Skills at the end of each Workshop.
  - The *Expert Space Strategy Check* provides an opportunity for teachers to assess how well students grasp the various concepts taught in a particular Workshop and to teach a variety of test-taking skills and strategies. The Strategy Check assesses Comprehension, Vocabulary/Word Analysis, Literary Analysis, Navigating Text, *Expert 21* Skills, Critical Thinking, and Expert Questions. The Strategy Check appears at the end of each Workshop, and includes a combination of ten multiple-choice and short answer questions.
  - The *xSkills Tests* are online, curriculum-based, and criterion-referenced assessments that measure the core skills taught in each Workshop and a selected set of recursive skills taught in previous Workshops. *xSkills Tests* will help teachers evaluate students' progress, differentiate instruction, and determine grades. They will include assessments for Reading, Vocabulary, Writing, and Grammar.
- **Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI)**—The SRI can be administered three times per year to monitor student reading progress. Use SRI at the beginning of the year for placement in literature circles, guidance on reading level for Expert Space and initial baseline progress monitoring.

## **Motivation and Engagement**

Each workshop in *Expert 21* follows a consistent pattern designed to lead students through an inquiry process. Students begin by exploring an *Expert Question* crafted by Dr. Jeffrey Wilhelm, the country's leading voice on motivation and engagement in reading instruction. Each workshop culminates in a real world case study.

To fully engage students in text before they begin reading, *Expert 21* provides students with the background knowledge they'll need. Each workshop is launched with an anchor video that provides an introduction to the Expert as well as a preview of the workshop readings. These videos provide students with background knowledge that will improve comprehension. Adolescents are motivated to read when they have a clear purpose for reading. The *Expert Question* establishes a relevant, meaningful reason to read. It helps students understand why they are reading before they engage with what they are reading. Unlike traditional literature programs, the *Expert Question* asks students to apply what they're reading to real world situations.

Each workshop in *Expert 21* features six readings plus an *Expert Reading*. Half are literary and half are informational. Classic and contemporary fiction offers adolescents a mirror to themselves and a window to the world. Selected for their ability to provoke critical thinking, each literary reading in *Expert 21* helps students develop the comprehension and literary analysis skills they'll need to be lifelong readers.

Adolescents love to learn about their world; they crave nonfiction. Research indicates that exposure to nonfiction can build their literacy skills while simultaneously building bridges to the content areas. Informational, nonfiction text increases students' motivation for reading. At the end of every workshop, students engage in the *Expert Project*, by applying their newly acquired skills to solve real world problems.

Throughout the program, students will encounter several different types of culminating projects—case study, research paper, social action, personal expressions and debate. Each culminating project includes multiple links to relevant *Expert Spaces*. This encourages students to delve deeper, gather more resources and leverage the research tools in *Expert Space* to plan and complete longer assignments.

## **Differentiated Instructional Strategies**

*Expert 21* includes embedded support for differentiated instruction. Through the Teacher's Edition, teachers are guided on how to differentiate for varying levels of proficiency in the classroom. In addition, teachers are provided with explicit guidance on how to make instruction accessible to English-Language Learners. Prompts throughout the Teacher's Edition are aligned to *Response to Intervention* (RTI). Instruction is included for all three RTI tiers, English Language Learners and Students in Special Education, Teachers are also directed to the *Scholastic Achievement Manager* (SAM) for additional resources for differentiating instruction.

Students can explore each workshop in depth and get the scaffolding they need to be successful within *Expert Space*. Leveraging the principals of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), *Expert Space* can help make text accessible to all students. *Expert Space*, a comprehensive digital curriculum, includes more than 100 topics and 125,000 articles, aligned to the most commonly taught subjects in Science and Social Studies. *Expert Space* includes several supports for students, including:

- Read Aloud—Reluctant readers and English Language Learners can have the text read aloud
- Leveled Text—Articles are written at three reading levels, which students can adjust themselves. These levels are based on the Lexile Framework for Reading.
- Spanish Language Support—Many of the articles are available in Spanish.
- Dictionaries—An embedded dictionary allows students to build their vocabulary by looking up any word in an article.
- Anchor Videos—Each *Expert Space* includes an anchor video which helps students build background knowledge and create a mental model of text.

## *Expert 21* Program Overview

The Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) reviewed *Expert Space* to ensure that it aligns with the principals for Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which was created to provide equal access to technology for all students.

### **Home-School Connection**

Students are able to access *Expert Space* any time, any where. They can extend their learning outside the classroom, whether they are at home, at the library or a community center.

### **Professional Development**

A comprehensive Professional Development Guide is included for all teachers. This guide includes:

- Program Overview
- Research Foundations
- Instructional Routines
- Literature Circles
- *Expert Space*
- Assessment and Reporting

Start-Up and Follow-Up training is available for all teachers. Start-Up Training includes:

- Program Background
- Teaching With *Expert 21*
- Assessment and Data-Driven Instruction
- Using the Web-Based Technology
- Managing a 21st Century Classroom
- Your First 21 Days
- Personal Inquiry

Follow-Up Training includes dedicated seminars on the following topics:

- Differentiating Instruction
- Managing the Instructional Model
- Inquiry-Based Learning
- Using *Expert Space*

 For additional information about *Expert 21*, visit [www.scholastic.com/expert21](http://www.scholastic.com/expert21).