

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH) would like to extend our thanks to the Institute for Education Policy at Johns Hopkins School of Education for taking such great care during their review of the *Into Reading* program. The Institute’s report highlighted the depth and breadth of the program’s table of contents by noting that the texts cover a wide range of topics and subject areas, and are organized into cohesive units. As a result, *Into Reading* scored extremely well on the Institute’s evaluation.

*Into Reading* was designed to ensure all students see themselves in the literature they are reading. HMH is dedicated to creating relevant, respectful, and meaningful content that reflects our diverse world. *Into Reading* fosters a love of reading through a wealth of award-winning culturally relevant texts in a wide variety of genres, including fiction, informational text, persuasive text, poetry, biography, drama, and media.

*Into Reading* systematically builds students’ understanding of meaningful topics and academic vocabulary. *Into Reading* topics and text sets are thoughtfully sequenced to build knowledge within a module, within a grade, and across the program. The strong results of the *Into Reading* program on the Institute’s evaluation demonstrate HMH’s commitment to building students’ knowledge. That said, it is also important to note that there are many other factors that influence text selection, such as covering state standards, building a strong research-based foundation for reading, instilling a love of reading in students, and providing texts that are both windows and mirrors for students, where they can learn things about the outside world and also where they can see themselves and identify with the characters and the subjects.

All of the *Into Reading* units were rated as either high-quality (70%+) or acceptable (60%+). The only exception was Grade 2 Unit 2 (Look Around and Explore!), because, as stated in the report, the reviewers thought that “[t]here is no clear topical theme in this unit, leading to the lower coherency score” (p. 28). When this unit was conceptualized and the texts for it were selected, a conscious decision was made to not limit the scope and variety of the texts. Doing so would have gone against the unit’s intent, which was to spark children’s curiosity and encourage them to explore the wide world around them and beyond.

We wanted to take this opportunity to call attention to covered topic areas that may have been unintentionally overlooked during the review process. While the Institute noted that “[t]he results of our quality analyses reveal generally strong texts across the entire curriculum,” (p. 2), it is important to also note that the Institute only analyzed “a representative sample based on materials provided by the system” (p. 1). A comprehensive list of *Into Reading* texts, by topic area and grade level, is available upon request from HMH, addressing knowledge areas which may have been missed in the sampling review process.

As the review by the Institute for Education Policy points out in their report, “Overall, texts within the *Into Reading* curriculum are generally high quality, revealing that students accessing the curriculum are consistently reading well-written materials.” Houghton Mifflin Harcourt is committed to maintaining this level of quality in our texts as we continue to iterate the *Into Reading* program.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Please note: By “a representative sample based on materials provided by the system,” the Institute means that it reviews all student-facing materials, *excluding level readers*, due to the innate variation in such material.