ELA/Literacy Grade-Level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool

Quality Review
GRADE 4

WCSD 2018

Washoe County School District
Every Child by Name and Face to Graduation.

Council of the Great City Schools

COMPONENT 1: TEXT COMPLEXITY

The guiding statements provided in this section will examine text complexity in order to differentiate quality and richness among the texts WCSD is considering for adoption. To address the grade four standards, the submitted materials need to create the conditions for rich and robust discussion and writing for ALL students (struggling readers, students with identified academic disabilities, English Learners, students who are performing at grade level, and advanced students).

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
Literature and Informational Text C1a. The texts present rich and embedded relationships between and among characters, ideas, and concepts that are conveyed through masterful style and structure. (See exemplars in CCSS, Appendix B.)	Texts are interesting and connected to one another within the units, but not connected throughout the whole program.	○ 4) extensive ● 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ○ 1) weak
C1b. As well as, texts that contain rich content, ideas and academic language worthy of close reading.		○ 4) extensive ● 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ○ 1) weak

C1c. The materials consistently provide opportunities to read both literary and informational texts in the grades three through five text complexity band with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.		○ 4) extensive ● 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ○ 1) weak
C1d. Materials provide strategies for grade-level vocabulary acquisition.		○ 4) extensive ● 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ○ 1) weak

OVERALL RATING: ○ 4) extensive evidence ● 3) sufficient evidence ○ 2) some evidence ○ 1) weak evidence

SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):
The mix of the text types within the units regularly allows for students to use grade level vocab skills to learn the key vocabulary.

COMPONENT 2: QUESTIONS AND TASKS

At least 80% of all questions in the submission are high-quality text-dependent and text-specific questions. The overwhelming majority of these questions reference specific text and draw student attention to the text they are reading. Text-dependent questions that address the grade four standards will be described in greater depth in Alignment Criterion II.

ALIGNMENT CRITERION I: RANGE AND QUALITY OF TEXTS

Materials must reflect a wide range of text types and genres, as required by the standards. In grade four, and across all other grade levels, there should be ample texts on topics that can support sustained study. Knowledge built at one grade level should be expanded in other grade levels. Topics should take into account individual student academic needs and interests in order to foster independent reading. It is also imperative that the included topics and themes are compelling enough to read multiple times and are aligned to district needs. Pay particular attention to the guidance provided in Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards.

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
Literature and Informational Text 1a. The range of materials, both print and digital, allows teachers and students to explore content that coherently and systematically builds knowledge and grade-level vocabulary across subjects, themes, and topics. (See CCSS Appendix B for examples of grade-level knowledge demands.) Text sets also address a wide variety of student interest, and are likely to foster independent reading.	Some stories are interesting, but most stories are boring and uninteresting.	○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ● 2) some ○ 1) weak
1b. Text sets include a diverse range of high quality, culturally-responsive and appropriate topics and themes. Texts from diverse cultures reflect the same high-quality features that are demanded of all texts.	Test included is of multiple ethnicities and interest levels, but again, they're generally boarding.	○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ● 2) some ○ 1) weak

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
1c. Materials include a rich and diverse sampling of literary texts including, but not limited to: • Stories, drama, prose, and poetry • Stories, myths, and traditional literature from diverse cultures	Besides one unit that's complete poetry, there isn't much evidence of these features elsewhere within the program.	○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ● 2) some ○ 1) weak
1d. Therangeofinformationaltexts includes elections that: • Present historical events • Describe technical procedures • Present scientific ideas or concepts • Contain at least two texts on the same topic • Present first and secondhand accountsofthe same event or topic • Contain relevant visual representations of information	THere are a couple units that feature science and history, but most stories are just single versions of one events and dont' include several different views.	○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ● 2) some ○ 1) weak
1e. Student reading materials contain a range of increasingly challenging selections that allow teachers to build students' ability to comprehend complex text and expand vocabulary throughout the school year.	Text is complex, but doesn't provide differentiation for all texts or skills needed to comprehend that text.	○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ○ 1) weak

OVERALL RATING: ○ 4) extensive evidence ○ 3) sufficient evidence ● 2) some evidence ○ 1) weak evidence

SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):
Text has variety, but is mostly uninteresting and doesn't provide scaffolding for low students to understand the complex text.

ALIGNMENT CRITERION II. QUESTIONS AND TASKS SUPPORT STUDENT LEARNING

Questions posed to students in the materials under review should support student learning in building reading comprehension, in finding and producing the textual evidence to support responses, and in developing grade-level academic language and domain-specific words and phrases. Text for grade four students must include text-dependent questions that require the use of higher order thinking skills. There should be a range of questions that require students to attend to the author's language as his/her vehicle for conveying meaning, as well as to support specific inferences with explicit details from the text. Most questions should require that the student refer to the text in several places in order to devise an answer—rather than asking only literal, "right there" types of questions—and should require the student to begin comparing texts, authors, and opinions (CCSS).

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
Literature and Informational Text 2a. *Key Ideas and Details.* Questions and tasks require students to explicitly attend to the text, including, but not limited to: • Referring to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says and when making inferences • Summarizing text • Determining the theme of a story or main idea of a text from key details • Describing characters, settings, or events in depth • Explaining events, procedures, ideas, or concepts covered in historical, scientific, or technical reading selections, including what happened and why	Lessons within each unit of the whole program provide simple ideas for questioning (main idea & details, character traits, etc). But they don't tell how those ideas link to the writing or implementation of the programs.	○ 4) extensive ● 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ○ 1) weak

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
2b. *Craft and Structure*. Questions and tasks require students to explicitly attend to the text, including, but not limited to: • Determining the meaning of words and phrases as used in the text, including general academic and domain-specific words as well as those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (such as *Herculean*) • Explaining the differences between drama, prose, and poetry • Describing the overall structure of a text or structural elements of poems and drama • Comparing and contrasting the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including first- and second-hand accounts of the same event or topic, or first- and third-person narrations of a story	Low on first/second hand accounts, but high in using grade level vocab skills to understand the meaning of a word in context.	○ 4) extensive ● 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ○ 1) weak
2c. *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas.* Questions and tasks require students to explicitly attend to the text, including, but not limited to: • Explaining how an author uses reasons and evidence to support points • Making connections between the text of a story or a drama and prose • Interpreting information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively • Comparing and contrasting the treatment of similar themes, topics, and patterns of events in literature • Integrating information from two texts on the same topic	Besides two units that come with things that can be put up visually, there is only a guideline of anchor charts that the teacher can create with students. There aren't a lot of things to look at visually besides what's in the individual student readers.	○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ● 2) some ○ 1) weak

OVERALL RATING: ○ 4) extensive evidence ○ 3) sufficient evidence ● 2) some evidence ○ 1) weak evidence

SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):
Different accounts of the same topic are missing, and is weak in most areas besides the whole units on Mythical things and poetry.

ALIGNMENT CRITERION III. WRITING TO SOURCES AND RESEARCH

The writing standards for each grade level highlight distinctive expectations about student writing. For details on grade-level writing expectations and writing exemplars for grade four, see the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy. The metrics below show key characteristics to look for in your review of materials.

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
3a. Writing assignments are explicitly connected to what students are reading, and routinely include writing over shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) and extended time frames (for research, reflection, and revision) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.		● 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ○ 1) weak
3b. Text-dependent questions generally create the foundation for students to address culminating writing tasks, including: • Writing opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information • Writing informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly • Writing narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear sequences of events		● 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ○ 1) weak
3c. Reading materials can serve as models to explore writer's craft, demonstrate use of domain-specific words and phrases, and support student production of grade-level opinion, informational, and narrative writing.		● 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ○ 1) weak

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
3d. Materials include explicit support to teachers, either in the teacher's edition or classroom materials, for writing instruction linked to the grade four writing standards, including: • Producing clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience • Developing and strengthening writing by planning, revising, and editing • Using technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing, as well as to interact and collaborate with others, demonstrating sufficient keyboarding skills • Graphic organizers, chart, etc. to aid in explicit teacher instruction Materials should also guide the teaching of specific components of grade four writing standards 1-3 (See CCSS).		● 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ○ 1) weak
3e. Materials provide opportunities and resources for students to conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic, including: • Investigating different aspects of a topic • Recalling relevant information from experiences or gathering information from print and digital sources • Taking notes and categorizing information • Providing a list of sources • Drawing evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, or research		● 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ○ 1) weak

OVERALL RATING: ○ 4) extensive evidence ● 3) sufficient evidence ○ 2) some evidence ○ 1) weak evidence

SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):
The writing program is great and has the ability to write for short and extended periods of time. The writing connects with what the lessons/readings are, and has students write twice on each type of writing (2 info, 2 narrative, 2 opinion). The program falls short with identifying the connection between the text and their independent writing.

ALIGNMENT CRITERION IV: FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

Materials provide guidance and support for explicit and systematic instruction and diagnostic support in grade-level phonics, vocabulary development, syntax, and reading fluency. Students must be able to recognize and pronounce words fluently in order to focus on the major goal of reading, which is comprehension. Effective foundational skills instruction in grade four includes an explicit and systematic focus on phonics and practice in applying phonics for students who are struggling. Building word analysis skills and fluency must also be contextualized within the materials (CCSS).

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
4a. Materials provide teachers with guidance and support for explicit and systematic instruction of the grade four *Reading Standards for Foundational Skills* by providing instruction in phonics, word analysis, and reading with fluency to support comprehension. (Refer to CCSS, Appendix A for the research detailing the advancement of foundational skills in reading.)	Fluency assessment at the end of the unit	○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ● 2) some ○ 1) weak
4b. Materials include a variety of opportunities for students to develop and apply word analysis and decoding skills, including: • Understanding grade-level vocabulary using an integrated approach (including affixes, multi-syllable words, etc.) • Understanding multisyllabic words in context and out of context • Self-correcting using word recognition skills and context clues, rereading text purposefully as needed • Developing fluency with grade-level regular and irregular spelling patterns • Spelling patterns and morphology		○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ● 1) weak

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
4c. Materials provide regular practice in reading grade-level prose and poetry with accuracy, at an appropriate rate, and with appropriate expression.		○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ● 1) weak
4d. Materials guide students in reading grade-level texts with purpose and understanding, making frequent connections between the acquisition of foundational skills and access to the meaning of texts (including a set of text-dependent or text-specific questions to check for understanding).		○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ● 1) weak

OVERALL RATING: ○ 4) extensive evidence ○ 3) sufficient evidence ○ 2) some evidence ● 1) weak evidence

SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):
Besides the fluency assessment at the end of each unit, the program doesn't provide the skills or lessons to help students who are significantly below grade level. There is no prescribed spelling or word study program and utilizes on root/Greek morphology in isolation.

ALIGNMENT CRITERION V: LANGUAGE

The Common Core State Standards for language focus on ensuring that students gain adequate mastery of a range of language skills and applications. Students are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills, knowledge, and vocabulary gained in preceding grades (CCSS).

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
Conventions of Standard English 5a. There is evidence that grade-level grammar and conventions are addressed using an integrated and contextualized approach in daily instruction. Materials and tasks in grade four are designed to help build student understanding and use of: • Relative pronouns • Progressive verb tenses • Modal auxiliaries such as *can*, *may*, or *must* to convey various conditions • Correct ordering of adjectives within sentences • Prepositional phrases • Complete sentences and editing fragments and run-ons • Correct spelling and capitalization • Commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech or quotations • Commas before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence		○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ● 2) some ○ 1) weak
Knowledge of Language 5b. The materials support instruction on: • Choosing words and phrases to convey ideas precisely • Choosing punctuation for effect • Differentiating between contexts that call for formal and informal English		○ 4) extensive ● 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ○ 1) weak

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
Vocabulary Acquisition and Use 5c. The materials provide context, support, and strategies for teaching vocabulary acquisition skills, including: • Using context clues to unlock the meaning of words • Using Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of words • Consulting reference materials to determine pronunciation or the meaning of words		○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ● 2) some ○ 1) weak
5d. The materials provide embedded opportunities for students to encounter and develop an understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.		○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ● 2) some ○ 1) weak

OVERALL RATING: ○ 4) extensive evidence ○ 3) sufficient evidence ● 2) some evidence ○ 1) weak evidence

SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):
All of these ideas are taught in isolation when in the writing lessons, but isn't available for repeated comprehension when writing. Greek/Latin roots are used in isolation with units (a few lessons here and there), but aren't practiced throughout the units or curriculum.

ALIGNMENT CRITERION VI: SPEAKING AND LISTENING

To be CCSS-aligned, speaking and listening must be integrated into lessons, items, and tasks. These must reflect a progression of communication skills required for eventual college- and career-readiness. If grade four students are able to listen to others, discuss what they are learning, and voice their own confusion or misunderstandings, their learning becomes deeper and more meaningful. They are exposed, at this level, to points of view that may differ from their own, and they learn how to agree and disagree, express their own thoughts, and ask questions when they don't understand or need more clarification (CCSS).

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
6a. *Comprehension and Collaboration.* Materials provide a language framework for student participation in academic conversations, including the ability to: • Come to a discussion prepared • Follow agreed upon rules/roles • Pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information • Review key ideas and explain their own ideas • Use accurate, grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases		○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ● 2) some ○ 1) weak

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
6b. *Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas.* Materials provide a language framework for student planning of effective presentations, focusing on: • How to report on a topic using evidence to present findings from their research • How to tell a story or recount an experience in an organized manner • How to use appropriate facts and relevant details to support main ideas and themes • How to speak in complete sentences when appropriate to the task and situation clearly and at an acceptable pace • How to differentiate between contexts for formal English and situations where informal discourse is appropriate		○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ● 2) some ○ 1) weak

OVERALL RATING: ○ 4) extensive evidence ○ 3) sufficient evidence ● 2) some evidence ○ 1) weak evidence

SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):
Students will often interview each other or listen to another students ideas, but they aren't asked to group and speak in a prolonged discussion with each other very often, if at all. The students are asked and prompted by the teacher on their thoughts about a question, but it would require the teacher to create the discussion availabilities on their own, since it's not presented in the curriculum outlines.

ALIGNMENT CRITERION VII: SCAFFOLDING AND SUPPORTS

While scaffolds are not a part of the standards themselves, it is important to support teachers in meeting the needs of the range of students in their classrooms. In order to meet the reading, speaking, and writing needs of all grade four students, the materials must include supports for students to comprehend texts at the grades three through five-complexity band as required, and at the high end of this complexity band with scaffolding. Supports and scaffolds should draw students back to the text and provide strategies for vocabulary acquisition. All scaffolding and support requires ongoing formal and informal assessments that provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their proficiency and inform instruction.

It is important to note that scaffolding is not just intended for struggling students, but also for students who are ready for above grade-level work. As text complexity increases and tasks get increasingly challenging, the need for appropriate scaffolds for above grade-level access is equally important (CCSS).

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
7a. The texts promote differentiated instruction and instructional conversations about text to support student learning of: • Academic language • Linguistic frames for student talk and writing • Repeated grammatical structures and language		○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ● 1) weak
7b. The materials include student supports such as: • Multiple digital and media versions of texts • Illustrations • Graphs and charts • Maps and photographs • Visual cues/notes that draw attention to words in the text that signal sequence or offer clues to meaning (i.e., where, when, and how key events occur)	No digital student resources seen	○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ● 1) weak

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
7c. The materials are designed to support teacher instruction by use of: • Explicit instructional directions accompanied by materials that are clearly aligned to stated goals and objectives that build student ability to read and comprehend grade-level text • Strategies to gradually increase difficulty as students' comprehension skills strengthen • Strategies to support student acquisition of knowledge supporting specific common core standards • Clear and detailed teacher directions and guidance for introducing new concepts and skills • Clear guidance for documenting student progress toward meeting grade-level standards		○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ● 2) some ○ 1) weak
7d. The materials provide support for student learning through varying modalities (i.e., there are provisions for print, digital, and other multimedia sources for information attainment).	Teacher has access to the online portal which gives access to printable material and resources, but that's another thing the teacher has to do.	○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ● 1) weak

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
7e. The materials include assessments along with: • Suggestions for next steps to address a spectrum of performance levels and needs based on assessment results • Opportunities for students to demonstrate their expertise through the use of performance tasks • Pieces of challenging and complete text that can be used to assess student understanding and next instructional steps • Reading selections and questions that progress in a logical sequence for gradual release[1] • Enrichment tasks for students who are on target for meeting grade-level expectations • Steps to take when evidence suggests that students are starting to fall behind	Has sections for ELL students- shows directions on how to get them engaged in the group and understand topics based on what "group" they're in (emerging, bridging, etc). Also has a section for students who are doing well with the ideas and can have a challenge task. But it has ZERO assistance for students who don't understand the concept and need remediation.	○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ● 2) some ○ 1) weak

OVERALL RATING: ○ 4) extensive evidence ○ 3) sufficient evidence ● 2) some evidence ○ 1) weak evidence

SUMMARY STATEMENT (Explain why the materials received this overall rating):
See above

1 Gradual release: scaffolding of instruction so that students develop the ability to read and complete tasks and assignments independently and proficiently.