ELA/Literacy Grade-Level Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool

Quality **Review**

GRADE K-1

WCSD 2018

Washoe County School District

Every Child, By Name And Face, To Graduation

Council of the Great City Schools

COMPONENT 1: TEXT COMPLEXITY

Assessing text complexity in kindergarten and grade one is more a qualitative than quantitative process. The guiding statements provided in this section will examine text complexity in order to differentiate quality and richness among the texts—particularly anchor texts—WCSD is considering for adoption. Anchor texts are materials designed to serve as the central unifying tool for the development of reading comprehension. While evaluations of text complexity formally begin with grade two, student reading materials, texts, and other materials in kindergarten and grade one 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.)	Knowledge units are thematic and provide multiple read aloud texts along a similar theme. Student readers are like chapter books so the same character is in multiple chapters.	○ 4) extensive ● 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ○ 1) weak
C1b. The materials consistently include short, challenging, and complete texts that contain rich content, ideas, and academic language worthy of close reading. (See exemplars in CCSS, Appendix B.)	Read aloud texts are complete and have some rich content.	○ 4) extensive ● 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ○ 1) weak

C1c. The materials consistently provide opportunities to read both literary and informational texts. For student reading materials in kindergarten and grade one, refer to the Alignment Criteria for Foundational Skills (4a-4d of this document).Read- aloud anchor texts should fall within or above the grades two through three text complexity band.	Read aloud texts seem to be a mixture of literary and informational. Of the 7 student texts, only 1 was non-fiction.	○ 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):

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 students' attention to the text they are reading. Text-dependent questions that address the kindergarten and grade one 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 kindergarten and grade one, 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 vocabulary across subjects, themes, and topics. This applies especially to texts read aloud by the teacher, which should promote speaking and listening about topics under study in kindergarten and grade one. (See CCSS Appendix B for examples of grade-level knowledge demands.) Text sets also address a wide variety of student interests, and are likely to foster independent reading.		○ 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.	All texts provided are written by the publisher. There are no additional trade books provided or recommended. I feel this limits the range of diversity one would get from reading many books in different formats by many different authors.	○ 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 poems and stories with relevant illustrations.	I did not see evidence of poems, songs or articles.	○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ● 2) some ○ 1) weak
1d. The range of informational texts include: • At least two selections on the same topic • Selections with various text features such as headings, tables of contents, glossaries, and illustrations	Student non-fiction materials did not have text features. Non-fiction read aloud about the human body had headings and illustrations but no table of contents, glossary, captions, etc. There was no evidence of "shared reading" selections where students would be directed to notice text features.	○ 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.	Student readers were heavily focused on the skill of decoding and other reading strategies were not evident in the lesson plans. Read alouds were designed to expand vocabulary.	○ 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):

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. Texts for kindergarten and grade one 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 (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: • Asking and answering questions about key details in the text • Retelling familiar stories, including key details • Identifying and describing characters, settings, and major events in a story • Identifying the main topic of a text • Describing the connection between two individuals, events, or ideas in a text		○ 4) extensive ● 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ○ 1) weak
2b. Craft and Structure. Questions and tasks require students to explicitly attend to the text, including, but not limited to: • Determining the meanings of unknown words and phrases in stories, poems, and informational texts • Recognizing and explaining the differences between common types of text both literary (such as storybooks and poems) and informational • Naming the author and illustrator and describing their roles in telling the story or presenting ideas • Recognizing and using various features in informational texts (such as headings or glossaries) to locate information	I saw a lot of lessons defining and reviewing vocabulary words for students but I did not see lessons where students were figuring out meanings of words themselves. I did not see opportunities to recognize and explain the differences between types of texts as all texts were formatted the same way.	○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ● 2) some ○ 1) weak

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
2c. Integration of Knowledge and Ideas. Questions and tasks require students to explicitly attend to the text, including, but not limited to: • Comparing and contrasting the experiences of characters in stories • Describing the key ideas conveyed in illustrations • Identifying reasons authors give to support points and the similarities between two texts on the same topic		○ 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):

ALIGNMENT CRITERION III. WRITING TO SOURCES AND RESEARCH

The writing standards for each grade level highlight distinctive expectations about student writing. In kindergarten and grade one, students perform age-appropriate writing tasks and assignments with support and guidance from the teacher. For details on text types and purposes, production and distribution of writing, research to build and present knowledge, and the range of writing in kindergarten and grade one, 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 materials a reorganized to elicit responses to sources in age-appropriate ways. This might include activities such as dictation or making pictures to express thoughts in addition to writing, with support from the teacher.	Many short writing or drawing prompts directly related to the read aloud.	○ 4) extensive ● 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ○ 1) weak
3b. Text-dependent questions generally create the foundation for students to address culminating writing tasks, including: • Opinion writing, in which students introduce a topic or name a book, state an opinion, and supply a reason for the opinion (using a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing at the kindergarten level) • Informative/explanatory writing, in which students name a topic and supply facts about the topic (using a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing at the kindergarten level) • Narrative writing, in which students recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, including details about what happened (using a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing at the kindergarten level)	Explicit teaching for these three genres was not evident in the program. However, there is a "companion" Writing Studio product that has lessons specific to each genre. These lessons are very general about each genre, not going deep into writing techniques for each. They are mostly writing prompts, not much opportunity for student choice.	○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ● 2) some ○ 1) weak
3c. Reading materials can serve as models to explore writer's craft and support student production of grade-level opinion, informational, and narrative writing.	Read aloud materials have language that could serve as a model for writing. There do not seem to be lessons on author's craft that direct students to look at the reading as a model.	○ 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 kindergarten and grade one writing standards, including: • Focusing on a topic, responding to questions from peers, and adding details to strengthen writing as needed • Exploring and starting to use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers		○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ● 1) weak
3e. Materials provide opportunities and resources for students to participate in shared research and writing projects, including: • Recalling information from experiences • Gathering information from provided sources		○ 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):

ALIGNMENT CRITERION IV: FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

Effective instruction on foundational skills in kindergarten and grade one includes explicit and systematic lessons and diagnostic support in concepts of print, the alphabetic principle, phonics, phonological awareness, vocabulary development and word recognition, 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. Building these foundational skills must be contextualized within the materials.

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 kindergarten and grade one *Reading Standards for Foundational Skills* (CCSS), including concepts of print, phonological awareness, letter recognition, phonics, word recognition, and reading fluency in a research-based and transparent progression. (Refer to CCSS Appendix A for the research detailing the advancement of foundational reading skills.)	Heavy focus on phonics, especially blending and segmenting words. Many worksheets, a lot of phonics work in isolation.	○ 4) extensive ● 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ○ 1) weak
4b. Materials include a variety of opportunities that allow for systematic and frequent practice of all foundational skills through such features as engaging texts, games, digital materials, etc.	Very small amount of student reading, low volume of text read in small group or independently. Also no shared reading. Majority of ELA time spent in whole group either working with letters and words in isolation or listening to a read aloud.	○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ● 2) some ○ 1) weak

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
4c. Materials provide regular practice in encoding (spelling) and decoding (reading) the sound symbol relationships of English.		○ 4) extensive ● 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ○ 1) weak
4d. Materials guide students in reading emergent reader texts for kindergarten and grade-level texts for grade one 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).	Main focus is on the skill of decoding. Student texts are controlled for recently taught phonics. Recent or "tricky" phonics patterns are actually bolded or underlined in the student texts.	○ 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):

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 and knowledge (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 kindergarten and grade one are designed to help build student understanding and use of: • Upper- and lower-case letters • Question words • Recognition and use of end punctuation • Frequently occurring nouns in kindergarten, and common, proper, and possessive nouns by grade one • Frequently occurring verbs in kindergarten, and use of verbs to convey past, present, and future actions in grade one • Complete sentence in kindergarten, and compound declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences in grade one • Capitalization of the first word in a sentence in kindergarten, and of dates and names of people in grade one • Correct spelling, by sounding out simple words phonetically in kindergarten and applying common spelling patterns to spell words in grade one Grade One • Regular plural nouns, with matching verbs • Personal, possessive, and indefinite pronouns • Conjunctions and determiners, such as articles or demonstratives • Frequently occurring adjectives	I did not see lessons specific to these language standards.	○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ● 1) weak

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
Vocabulary Acquisition and Use 5b. The materials provide context, support, and strategies for teaching vocabulary acquisition skills, including: • Identifying new meanings for familiar words in kindergarten • Using sentence-level context clues to unlock the meaning of words in grade one • Using frequently occurring inflections and affixes as clues to the meaning of words • Using root words (such as look) and their inflectional forms (looks, looked, looking) in grade one		○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ● 1) weak
5c. The materials provide embedded opportunities for students to encounter and develop an understanding of 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):

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, as outlined in the standards. If kindergarten and grade one 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.

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
6a. *Comprehension and Collaboration.* Materials provide a frame that guides student participation in academic conversations by: • Agreeing on rules for discussion, taking turns speaking • Confirming understanding of texts read aloud • Asking and answering questions to clarify and gather information	Many opportunities for student discussion during read alouds. Specific suggestions for speaking frames.	○ 4) extensive ● 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ○ 1) weak
6b. *Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas.* Materials include tasks that promote oral responses in a range of collaborative discussions, and support students in: • Describing people, places, things, and events • Using visual displays to add details • Speaking audibly and completing sentences		○ 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):

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*** *kindergarten and grade one students, the materials must include supports for students to apply concepts of print, phonics, vocabulary development, syntax, and fluency in comprehending texts. Supports and scaffolds should draw students back to the text and provide strategies for vocabulary acquisition. All scaffolding and supports require ongoing formal and informal assessments that provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their proficiency and inform instruction.*

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.

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 • 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 (such as where, when, and how key events occur)	Flip books and picture cards	○ 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 and that build student ability to read and comprehend grade-level text • Strategies to gradually increase difficulty as students' 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	Heavy focus on listening comprehension, not so much on reading comprehension. When students are reading the focus is on decoding with the idea that comprehension will come later once decoding is automatic. Some assessments may indicate that a student is not "ready" for a particular unit and there was a suggestion about how to use other grade level teachers to address those types of deficits. I did not see clear advice for a teacher by his/her self.	○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ● 2) some ○ 1) weak
7d. The materials provide support for students with varying learning styles and modalities (i.e., there are provisions for print, digital, and other multimedia sources for information attainment).	Nice picture support. Digital copies referenced. Low access to volume of text and alternative types of text.	○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ● 2) some ○ 1) weak
7e. The materials include developmentally appropriate materials and instructional sequences specifically designed for students in the primary grades (such as role-play, songs, games, etc.).	Same as above	○ 4) extensive ○ 3) sufficient ○ 2) some ● 1) weak

GUIDING STATEMENTS	SPECIFIC EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT/MATERIALS	EVIDENCE RATING
7f. 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	Pausing point days to review concepts not yet mastered. Reference to reading records.	○ 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):

Integration of Interdisciplinary Content Standards; Building Knowledge Systematically

THEMATIC	SPIRAL	NGSS	NVACSS	SEL	ELD
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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